

LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

Ivy Removal | Mosquitos | Free Trees

The first thing you should know is that my granddaughter is named Ivy and there are times I would approve of her removal, but the *ivy removal* in the Mews is about the ivy surrounding many of our structures. First note that ivy is an invasive species in both Arlington and Alexandria. Don't let its calm demeanor fool you - this is a demon unleashed. It climbs bricks and erodes them. It climbs trees and smothers them. Wooden structures like our fences, deteriorate under their shiny leaves. It is a breeding ground, let me repeat that, BREEDING ground for mosquitos, mice and vole. Worse yet, once it gets established, it is wicked hard to remove.

Ivy and ivy



As you can see, my little Ivy is not invasive. The ivy behind my daughter and granddaughter is. It's climbing a tree and if not removed, will eventually kill it. Are there trees like this in the Mews? Please let the Landscape Committee know.

Mosquitos



This is a Mosquito mask from the Heiltsuk (formerly Bella Bella) in BC and is used in the Weather Dance.

The Landscape Committee has been removing ivy for at least the last ten years. In a recent tour of the Mews grounds and we identified several areas for ivy removal and clean up.

Court 4 - 4642 A and B South 36th Street
 Court 8 - 4680 - South 36th Street
 Court 10 - 4602 electrical box clean up
 Court 12 - 3544 Wakefield Street
 Court 15 - 4661 B South 36th Street
 4641 South 36th Street

Mosquitos

No doubt about it, it's mosquito season. Some people are lucky in the fact that mosquitos do not like them. Others step out the door and are covered. As a child my family vacationed on a barrier island where mosquito spraying took place daily. What seemed like a good idea then was an environmental disaster, one that still continues today.

Scientists across the planet are recording record insect declines with one of the causes being the use of pesticides. Insects are vital to our existence. Without insects, all other species slowly disappear, including us. So why not spray the little demons? What

Native Plant of the Month



Eastern Red Columbine

These are actually growing in New Jersey, but are a Virginia native as well. If these can withstand the winds of the Jersey shore, they can survive anything.

Helpful Links

Fairlington Gardeners

<https://www.facebook.com/FairlingtonGardening/>

See the article in the All Fairlington Bulletin, May 22 about the Mews, "Wanted: Native Shrubs to Bring Back Pollinators"

http://www.fca-fairlington.org/wp-content/uploads/may_2022_afb.pdf

happens is that sprays do not discriminate. All insects are killed, even those that prey on mosquitos. Repeat this over the course of several years and the problem is only greater.

First, here are the facts about how they breed. Emergence begins in the spring when temperatures warm to at least fifty degrees. Females lay eggs in **standing water**, that is water that doesn't evaporate in a day (there will be more on that later), and as little as a tablespoon. The eggs need 2 to 3 days to hatch, and then 7 to 10 days to mature into adults. In other words, that water has to be there for at least a week or more.

The best and most environmentally acceptable way forward is to find the standing water and get rid of it. Look around your patio and start thinking about where that water might be. A flower pot saucer? Bird bath? Shady areas? Corrugated drain spouts? Child's toys? How long has the kid's water table been here? Don't forget to talk to your neighbors.

Some of the plants around your home might be a problem as well. Ivy is a notorious breeding area, plus it's an invasive species. Replanting with a native plant is a good alternative. They have longer roots than most others and suck up excess water. The new plants along the King Street fence are all natives and are doing a good job at controlling the run off after rain events.

Still having problems? One idea is to put an oscillating fan on your patio. Most insects won't land if the air around them is moving.

Free Trees

Arlington County is continuing free tree distribution this fall. The Landscape Committee has been very successful in obtaining trees for the Mews.

Do you think your courtyard needs a new tree? Talk to the Landscape Committee representative in your court.

Current Landscape Committee Representatives

Court 1: Nancy Sween

Court 2: Martha Taggart and David Krane

Court 5: Jackie Livingston

Court 8: Gretchen Martin

Court 12: Elta Wilson

Choices include:

- [American hornbeam](#)
- [Pin oak](#)
- [River birch](#)
- [Sugarberry](#)
- [American sycamore](#)
- [Swamp white oak](#)
- [American linden](#)

What? You don't have a court representative. It might be time for you to volunteer.

Contact Sue Davis at Shoeboxsue@gmail.com