

# Heritage Park Invasive Species Removal Project, Oconee County GA 2019-2025

## Legend

### Invasive Species

- Autumn Olive
- Autumn Olive Removed

### Facilities

- Buildings
- Waste and Recycling Site

### Water Body

- Waterline
- Lake/Pond

### Parks and Recreation Trails

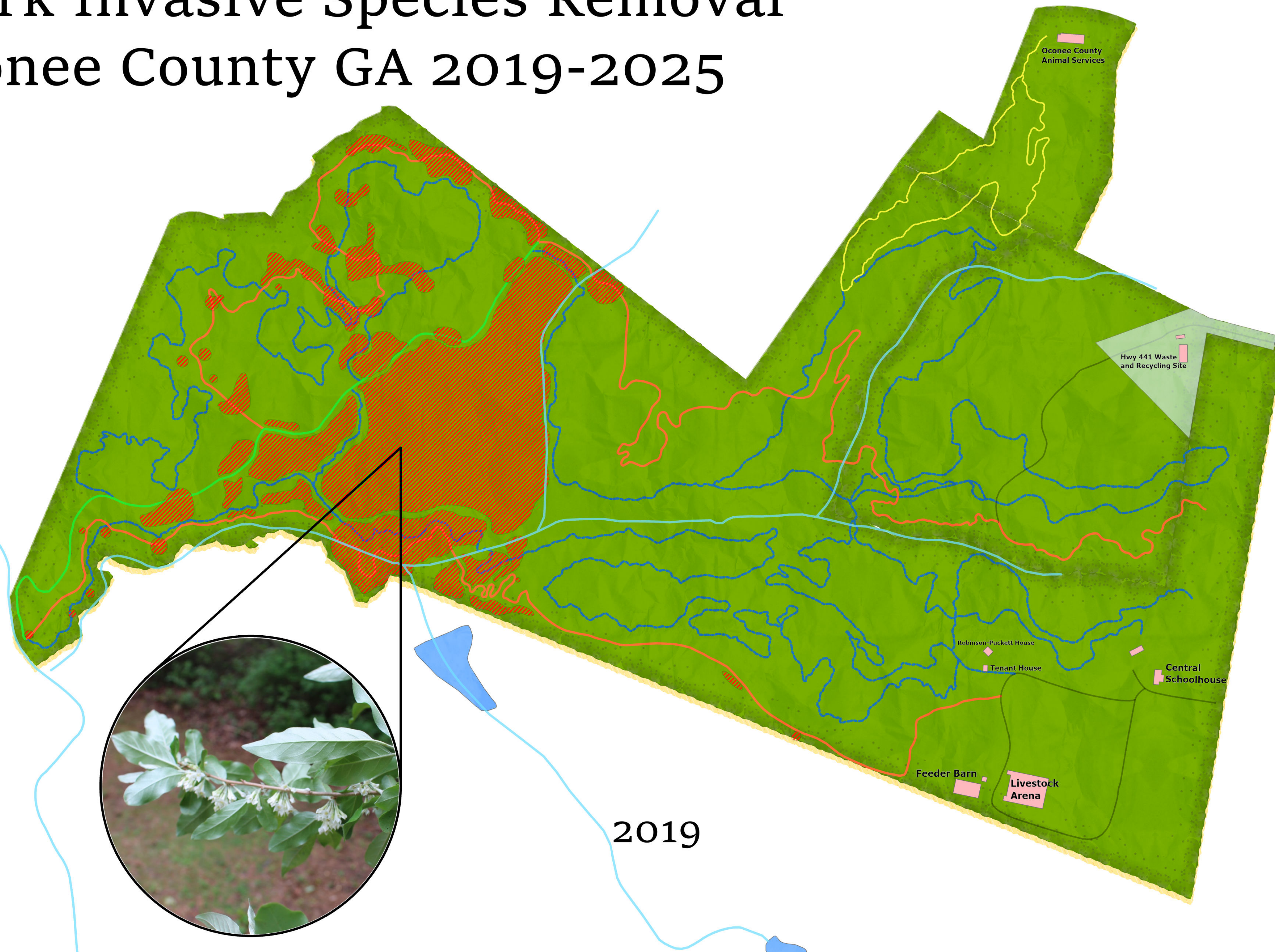
#### Trail Type

- Bicycle
- Horse
- Walking
- Multi-use
- Road

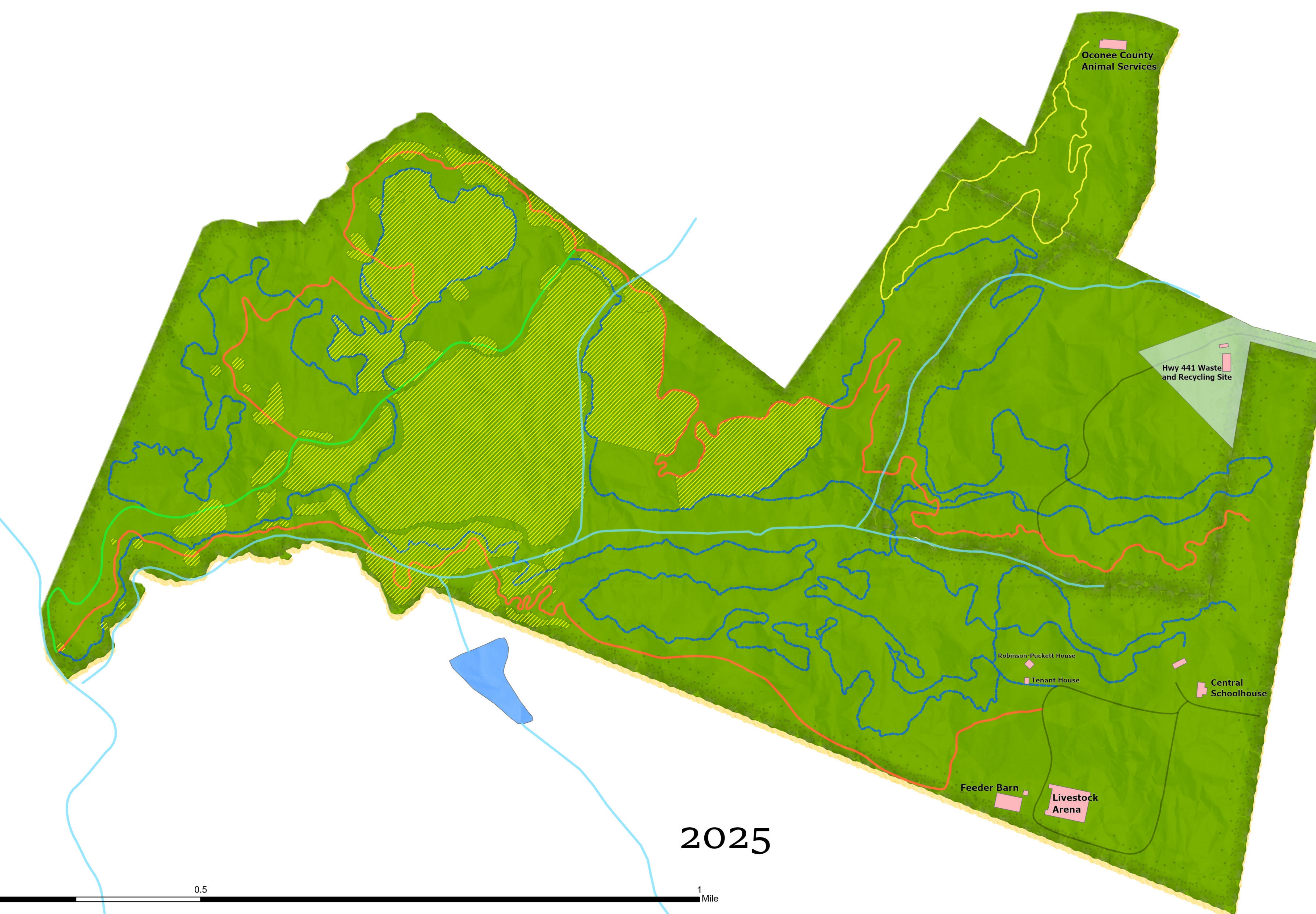
### What is Autumn Olive?

Autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*) is a deciduous shrub native to Asia that has spread as an invasive species throughout the United States. Once thought as the best way to control erosion and provide wildlife habitat, it is now a major hassle. The plant's positive attributes are quickly outweighed by its rapid and uncontrollable spread across forest edges, roadsides, meadows and grassland, where it displaces native plants.

Autumn olive can grow 20 feet tall and 30 feet wide. Its leaves are elliptically shaped and can be distinguished from other similar shrubs by the shimmery look of the silver scales found on its lower leaf surface. Autumn olive's bell-shaped flowers are a cream or pale yellow color and bloom in early spring. They bring on red berries dotted with silver scales, which has led the plant to also be known as silverberry.



2019



2025

### Why is Autumn Olive a problem?

Autumn Olive outcompetes and displaces native plants. It does this by shading them out and by changing the chemistry of the soil around it, a process called allelopathy. Loss of native vegetation can have cascading effects throughout an ecosystem, and invasive species are one of the major drivers for a loss of biodiversity.

Autumn olive's nitrogen-fixing root nodules allow the plant to grow in even the most unfavorable soils. Once it takes root, it is a prolific seed producer, creating 200,000 seeds from a single plant each year. Through fruit, birds will spread these seeds far and wide throughout pastures, along roadsides and near fences.

### How to Remove Autumn Olive

Hand pulling autumn olive seedlings is an effective way to rid yourself of the plant. Attempting to remove autumn olive by cutting or burning from your property can cause unwanted spreading, as the shrub germinates easily.

Control efforts before fruiting will prevent the spread of seeds. If the plant is too big to pull, herbicides will be necessary to eradicate the plant from the general area of invasion. You will need to cut and apply herbicide to the trunk repeatedly, from summer through winter. Make sure to read and follow the directions on the herbicide label precisely.

You can also help by continuously being on the lookout for this pesky invasive species during hikes or walks through your neighborhood.

**INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL** 2024 | 2025  
**HERITAGE PARK** WORK DAYS  
 706-769-3965  
**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** Athens Land Trust

Help with removing an invasive species from Heritage Park

AUG	SEPT	OCT
27	10 & 24	8 & 22
NOV	DEC	JAN
5 & 19	3 & 17	14 & 28
FEB	MAR	
11 & 25	11	

9A-1P | Heritage Park

Autumn Olive, though beautiful, is crowding out native species causing ecological harm to our forest and its inhabitants.

No training or experience is required; each volunteer will be trained in identification and removal.

Volunteers must pre-register: <http://www.oconeecounty.com/HeritagePark>

