

## **Conservation Commission**

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### **Norfolk Conservation Commission to Offer Ornamental Plant Exchange**

Who can resist the nursery catalogs offering “burning bush” with its attractive shape and brilliant fall color, or barberry, with its rows of dangling red berries? Many Norfolkiens have heeded the siren call and placed these shrubs in prominent spots in their yards. Unfortunately, these bushes are highly invasive alien species, with birds and small animals spreading their seeds into neighboring woodlands, where they outcompete native plants. Native caterpillars cannot eat the foliage of these alien plants, and a loss in biodiversity occurs. Japanese barberry has even been linked to an increase in Lyme-disease-bearing ticks.

To provide an incentive for landowners to correct the landscaping mistakes of the past, the Norfolk Conservation Commission will offer an exchange. Norfolk residents who remove winged euonymus (“burning bush”) or Japanese barberry from their yards can come to the Conservation Commission booth at the Norfolk Farmers Market on June 12 to receive a free native plant to put in its place. Twelve native plants, ranging from grasses to trees, have been donated by Pride’s Corner Farm in Lebanon, Connecticut. Each participant is limited to one plant, first come first served while supplies last. The Conservation Commission needs to see proof of removal, such as a photograph, and proof of identity, such as a branch from the removed shrub.

“We hope residents will take advantage of this offer,” says Sue Frisch, the Conservation Commission Chair. “Removing mature seed sources will reduce the number of invasive shrubs that will germinate in the forest.”

The Norfolk Conservation Commission was formed in February 2009. Members are Sue Frisch, Chair, Shelley Harms, Vice Chair, John Anderson, Secretary, Libby Borden, Ed Machowski, and Alternates Nash Pradhan and Elizabeth Potter.