



INVASIVE SPECIES THREATEN HABITAT

Level 1: The forest floor of the woodlands in the Emerald Necklace is populated by an aggressive invasive plant called **Garlic Mustard** (*Alliaria petiolata*). Introduced to North America as a culinary herb in the 1800s, it has since become an invasive species in much of the region. Once colonized, it persists and spreads, becoming the dominant under-story species. The conservancy's ongoing program to remove garlic mustard in the Olmsted Park woodlands with the help of volunteers and public partners is making an impact - the population of this plant has dwindled.

Level 2: A common plant found in this level of the forest is **Japanese Knotweed** (*Fallopia japonica*). A large herbaceous perennial plant native to eastern Asia, it is classified as invasive in the United States and is found within the Emerald Necklace. Removal of this invasive plant is done in collaboration with our public partners and with competent contractors. Once the Knotweed has been removed, volunteers help to replant the sites with native species that are appropriate to the woody habitat and pre-approved by our public partners.

Level 3: A common invasive vine found in the tree canopy of the Emerald Necklace, **Oriental Bittersweet** (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) has a silver to reddish brown bark on its spindly vines and is easily recognized in the fall by its distinctive red seeds encased in yellow-orange pods. When Oriental Bittersweet grows by itself, it forms extensive thickets, but when near a tree or shrub, the vines aggressively twist themselves around the trunk, strangling and eventually killing the host tree. The leaves of this plant are round and glossy, 2–12 cm long, have toothed margins and grow in alternate patterns along the vines. All parts of the plant are poisonous. Volunteer groups manually remove the vines from trees and shrubs thereby making a significant difference to the health of these heritage woodlands of the Emerald Necklace.