

# Partners in Parks activity information sheet

One-time stewardship activity in parks

## Managing invasive buckthorn in natural areas

Neighbourhood or community groups and corporate teams can help reduce the spread of invasive, non-native buckthorn trees in city parks in Waterloo. Help create healthy habitat for pollinators!

**Common buckthorn** (*Rhamnus cathartica* L.) is an invasive, non-native shrub that can invade a variety of habitats such as woodlands, hedgerows and open areas, where it often forms dense stands. Buckthorn produces berries that are eaten and spread widely by wildlife.

## TECHNIQUES

We follow [Ontario Invasive Plant Council](#) Best Management Practices for guidance on managing invasive plant species in Ontario, using mechanical control measures.

**Hand-pulling:** Using spades or extractors, we mechanically remove plants that are less than 2" diameter, roots and all!

**Solarization:** This process involves covering a cut tree stump with black tarp or buckthorn baggie, to prevent new leaves and deprive the plant of sunlight and nutrients.

**Critical period cutting:** This process involves cutting large trees early spring, leaving a 4-to-5-foot stump. Regular pruning of sprouts during the growing season is required to eventually deplete the plant of sunlight and nutrients in approximately two years.



Use of extractors to remove buckthorn



Buckthorn Baggie



Critical cutting period method

## Group participants

- Group Leader must be 18 years of age or older; activity is geared to ages 14+ years.
- Minimum of 10 and maximum of 25 participants per group.
- Moderate physical exertion required such as bending, walking, lifting up to 20 lbs and pushing wheelbarrows carrying harvested plants.

## Time and place

- Natural area near your neighbourhood park (view City of Waterloo's [online map](#)) or near the City's Pollinator Working Group wildflower project area in Bechtel Park.
- May to October as a one-time stewardship activity led by city staff.
- A two-hour activity, typically during the weekday between 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. or a weekday afternoon directly after 4 p.m., or Saturday morning.