



League Friday
Forums

League of Women Voters of Needham Friday Forum Invasive Plants: More than Just a Nuisance

Friday, September 18
9:30 a.m. Refreshments
9:45 a.m. Speaker
Needham Public Library

- How do invasive plants damage local food webs?
- What are the invasive plants in our area?
- How can we recognize them?
- How can we eliminate them from our own yards and community?



Speaker: Dr. Eric Olson

Dr. Olson is a professor in the Sustainable International Development Graduate Program at Brandeis University, with a PhD in evolutionary biology and ecology, specifically in the ecology of "tri-trophic" interactions: host plants, the insects that feed on these plants, and the wasps, birds, and other predators that feed on those insects. He also teaches courses in water & sanitation, climate change, ecotourism, environmental impact assessment, and environmental health.

Dr. Olson traces his interests in plants, insects, and other living things back to his childhood, when his father helped him start an insect collection. Anyone who hunts for and raises caterpillars quickly learns that most insects are highly specialized: monarchs on milkweed, luna moths on hickory or walnut, and so on. He eventually researched this question of specialization, working in Costa Rica.

In addition to academic work he is Chairman of the Newton Citizens Commission on Energy. His main contribution is closely monitoring the energy consumption across all sectors (transportation, municipal, residences, businesses and non-profits) and expressing this consumption in units of greenhouse gas emissions.

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A question and answer period will follow.
Light refreshments will be served.
The event is free and open to the public.

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