



# Native Understory Restoration



The understory of this patch of forest was recently dominated by Japanese stiltgrass, garlic mustard and barberry. These invasive species were transported from their native habitats to the Catskills by humans.



Due to lack of predators and immunity to disease, invasive species thrive and push out native understory plants. Wildlife dependent on the native plants often can not use the invaders for food or shelter, which can cause declines in ecosystem health.



After clearing the area of invasives, we planted native ferns, shrubs and other understory species. The chosen natives won't be overbrowsed by deer. They will spread rapidly and prevent stiltgrass from resprouting. Mulching between ferns and shrubs provides extra protection against returning invasive plants.



We will monitor the mulched areas for the return of invasives and compare with invasive growth in non-mulched areas. Over time, the understory will again become a diverse mix of native plants. Wildlife will once more thrive in a healthy forest.

## How You Can Help

**Learn** to identify invasive species in your area. Once you learn, you can avoid spreading them, and remove any you find on your property.

**Use** plants native to your region for gardening or landscaping. Ask your local nursery about attractive native species.

**Clean** your hiking boots, car tires or boat after each use. You'll knock off any seeds or sprouts and won't spread invasives to new areas.

**Avoid** disturbing natural areas. Invasive species rapidly take over disturbed areas like roadsides and clearcuts.

**Volunteer!** Join a workday and remove invasives or plant natives. Gather data on the spread of invasive species using iMapInvasives.



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The Catskill Regional Invasive Species Partnership (CRISP) is one of eight Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management in New York State. Hosted by the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development in Arkville, CRISP promotes education, prevention, early detection and control of invasive species to limit their impact on the ecosystems and economies of the Catskills.

