

## SUSTAINABILITY DEPARTMENT



WELCOME TO OUR

# Monthly Newsletter

Welcome to the eighth issue of our monthly newsletter! We are thrilled to be able to share what we are doing at the Athens-Clarke County Sustainability Department with you. Join us each month as we explore all things sustainability and how you can get involved!

## *Putting Energy into Greener Spaces*



**In this newsletter you will find:**

Latest projects, free resources, and upcoming events!

# TIPS FOR A GREENER LIFESTYLE!

## *How can we live sustainably?*

IN THIS SERIES WE EXPLORE HOW WE CAN BE SUSTAINABLE TOGETHER, RIGHT HERE IN ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY!



THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

## NEED A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION?

HANNAH CHAFFEE

Why not start the new year out right with a sustainability themed resolution? Start small and pick something that excites you. And if you need some inspiration, check out some of the ones we came up with below:

### **Do a 'No-Buy Month'**

Try not buying anything unnecessary for a month. This could mean no unnecessary online shopping or take-out. Maybe you decide that you can still spend money on used items or experiences. Whatever you chose, try to cut out something specific and small to help build a long term habit.



### **Set a goal to use less energy!**

Help the planet ...and your wallet! Track your process with your energy provider. Check out energy saving tips [here](#).



**Do you have a resolution to read more? Or start working out?**  
Why not build on that by reading a sustainability book or listening to a sustainability audiobook or podcast while you workout. Two resolutions at once? Wow, you're a self-improvement rockstar!



### **Recycle, Reuse and Repair with ACC!**

Make a goal to visit [CHaRM](#) to recycle items that can't be processed through standard recycling, attend a Creative Reuse Open House with the [Teacher Reuse Store](#) to find second hand supplies for your next craft or attend an event with the [ACC Repair Cafe](#) to learn how to fix that broken item you've put off for six months.



# AUTUMN OLIVE

## INVASIVE OF THE MONTH!

BAY NOLAND-ARMSTRONG

Winter holidays are full of festivities and decorations that sometimes spill out into our yards, but autumn olive is one plant you don't want crashing the party.

Standing anywhere between 3 to 20 feet tall, it's easy to spot thanks to its simple, alternate leaves that show off a silvery, dotted underside –almost like they're wearing metallic makeup. Which you have to admit totally matches the New Year's theme!

From February to June, autumn olive gets all dressed up with small white or yellowish flowers that smell as nice as they look. But don't let that fool you. Come late summer to fall (August to November), it shows off clusters of red berries that may look tasty but don't pack much nutrition compared to our native plants. Wildlife might snack on them, but it's like eating junk food –low on protein and fats.



PHOTO CREDIT: CHRIS EVANS, BUGWOOD



JOIN US EACH MONTH IN THIS NEW SERIES AS WE LEARN ABOUT DIFFERENT INVASIVE SPECIES!



Autumn olive didn't mean to cause trouble. Native to China and Japan, it arrived in the U.S. in the 1830s as a pretty garden ornamental and later got a job preventing erosion and providing wildlife habitat. Sadly, it wasn't long before the autumn olive's stay turned sour. This hardy shrub quickly spread across the eastern U.S. especially in disturbed areas like old fields and woodland edges. Its superpower? Forming dense, impenetrable thickets that push out native plants and take over entire ecosystems. Birds spread its seeds, and with climate change in play, autumn olive could soon be popping up even more.

You're left with one question: how do you kick out a guest who's overstayed their welcome? For autumn olive, the best way to remove them is to hand pull small seedlings while they're still young and manageable. Once the plant is large enough that hand pulling is not an option, the plants should be cut and hit with a systemic herbicide on the fresh cuts to stop it from growing back. Timing is key —it's crucial to remove the plant before it's fruiting to avoid spreading even more seeds.

Whatever your holiday traditions are, don't be afraid to kick out these party poopers! Protect your local habitats by giving this invasive shrub the boot. Native plants (and the wildlife that depend on them) will thank you!



PHOTO CREDIT: PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES, BUGWOOD



PHOTO CREDIT: JAMES H. MILLER, BUGWOOD



# UPCOMING EVENTS:

Keep Athens-Clarke County Beautiful

Bring One for the Chipper!

**RECYCLE YOUR TREE**



Items should be unbound and free of decorations. We do not accept artificial versions or other household items.

Bring your undecorated Christmas tree to one of the following locations and receive a FREE tree seedling!

**January 4, 2025**  
9 AM to 1 PM

Drop-off Locations (January 4 Only):

Clarke Middle School  
Sandy Creek Nature Center  
Johnnie Lay Burks Elementary School  
UGA Veterinary Teaching Center  
Athens Extension Office

Recycling Centers at:

Lexington Road Tag Office  
The CHaRM  
Winterville Public Works  
ACC Landfill

CHaRM can also accept Wreath Metal and lights.  
See [www.accgov.com/CHaRM](http://www.accgov.com/CHaRM) and [www.accgov.com/landfill](http://www.accgov.com/landfill) for hours

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT: [WWW.ACCGOV.COM/CHIPPER](http://WWW.ACCGOV.COM/CHIPPER)**

PUTTING ENERGY INTO GREENER SPACES  
Athens-Clarke County Sustainability Department

[www.accgov.com/green](http://www.accgov.com/green)

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