

# Weed wrangling in the Belmont-Hillsboro neighborhood 11/7/2020

**Our mission: Rid trees of the non-native invasive vine  
Euonymus fortunei (winter creeper)**



Micah Hargrove and I spent a few hours on a sunny fall afternoon doing a number on the Euonymus (winter creeper) vines growing up the trees in his front yard. More fun than you might think!

Our first patient was a white ash tree with a vine extending halfway up the tree



Micah used a circular saw to make two separate cuts in the Euonymus 'trunk', one at chest height, one at knee height. He set the blade depth to make shallow cuts through the vines and not into the tree bark.





Then he used a 15" flat pry bar and a maul to separate from the tree trunk the segment between the two cuts. (If the middle segment is not removed the vine's vascular tissue will re-connect through the cut and continue to feed the upper parts.) We left the section of vine above the removed section in place, to die and drop branches in the months to come. (Pulling the vine away from the tree could damage the bark.)



Our next patient was a hackberry tree, with extensive overgrowth of Euonymus. We started by trimming away the small Euonymus branches/twigs that were at ground level and up to shoulder height with loppers and pruning shears, so we could see what we were dealing with.





Micah again made two cuts, upper and lower, in each of the fused groups of Euonymus vines, resetting the blade depth to accommodate the size of each group. The thickest vine group was too thick for the circular saw to cut completely through, so Micah finished the job with a hand saw.



Success, and a great feeling! And now to watch the Euonymus leaves and branches in the sections above the cut-out sections slowly die over the course of the next year. We didn't treat the surface exposed at the lower cut with weedkiller, so we will need to monitor regrowth from the Euonymus roots in successive years and cut again, but loppers should be sufficient to cut back new growth from now on.