

James Wheaton, Sussex County

Mr. Wheaton, from Seaford, Delaware, is extremely proud of his landscaped backyard. In his 2 or so acres he has a pond reaching a depth of 8 feet, a meandering stream, and a very rare plant in the state of Delaware called horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*). Unfortunately, English ivy (*Hedera helix*) spread extensively throughout his property even reaching the tops of trees and out competing shrubs and herbaceous plants for sunlight on the forest floor.

Recognizing the repercussions of hosting an invasive species like English ivy, Mr. Wheaton enrolled his property in the LIP to have it removed and to propagate the rare horsetail. When making any alterations to his backyard Mr. Wheaton always considers wildlife and their associated habitats, “as a former hunter/trapper I am interested in wildlife species and I know what habitat they are attracted to.” By enrolling his property in the LIP, Mr. Wheaton “learned a great deal about my property, plant and animal life, and the things that could be done.” The obvious benefit was the removal of an invasive species, but the habitat enhancement has given Mr. Wheaton something else,

“...the feeling that of all the hunting and trapping I have done, I may be putting something back. I receive the satisfaction of seeing a disappearing thing and the knowledge that there may be some hope that God’s earth will not be completely destroyed.”

Mr. Wheaton was unaware smaller pieces of land were eligible for the LIP and hopes other landowners, no matter what acreage, will consider the program. The majority of English ivy has been removed and shrubs and trees were planted in an effort to reestablish vegetation on the property.



Mr. James Wheaton



Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*)



Before and after treatment of English ivy on the Wheaton property.

Photo credit: Division of Fish and Wildlife

Landowner: Mr. James Wheaton

City: Seaford

Acreage enrolled: 2 acres

Type of Restoration: Invasive Species Control
Reforestation

Length of LIP contract: 3 years

Why did you enroll in the Delaware LIP? To remove invasive species (English ivy) and to propagate an endangered plant (horsetail).

Is your property enrolled in any other conservation programs? (such as: WHIP, CRP, easements, etc) No, I do all my own landscaping.

How do wildlife species influence or play a role in the way you manage your land?

The landscape of my backyard is entirely influenced by wildlife species. I take wildlife into consideration before any altering of the land. As a former hunter/trapper, I am interested in wildlife species and I know what habitat to plan for in order to see them.

What benefits do these species give you? I receive the satisfaction of seeing a disappearing thing and the knowledge that there may be some hope that God's earth will not completely be destroyed. Also, the feeling that of all the hunting and tapping I've done, I may be putting something back.

Have you seen the results you expected from LIP? LIP removed the majority of the ivy. I will attempt to contain the rest.

In your opinion, what is (are) the best feature(s) about the LIP? I learned a great deal about my property, plant and animal life, and the things that could be done.

How did you learn about this program? I was contacted by a state wildlife biologist.