

Plant Poaching

By Greg Sykes (greg@grsykes.com)

Invasive Management Area (IMA) volunteers have worked hard over the years to rehabilitate parklands surrounding Royal Lake, especially by the park entrance at the corner of Gainsborough Drive and Claridge Court. Recently, several of the native ferns planted by scouts were dug up at the little Fern Gully site (previously covered in English ivy). Habitat restoration is a long process and removing native plants is counter productive and against park rules. As we are glad people like these species, purchasing them from a reputable nursery is the best way to both help the environment and encourage the industry to grow more natives.

Furthermore, IMA volunteers continue to remove yard debris that someone keeps wheeling and dumping into this same area. On both problems, the easiest policy to remember is, "Take only pictures, leave only footprints when visiting a park." Complete park regulations are posted here: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parkpolicy/app7regs.pdf. To learn about future IMA workdays, send an e-mail to greg@grsykes.com asking to be on the IMA Volunteer distribution list. Thank you.

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