

Eco-goats are latest graze in Maryland

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Brian Knox, owner of Eco-Goats, a business based in Davidsonville, Maryland, said the hungry animals graze on dense vegetation and munch unwanted weeds and invasive plants while also leaving fertilizer behind for the grasses that people want.

Cities and organizations in the US state of Maryland have found an original and ecologically sound method to cut the weeds from their parks and gardens: Bring in the goats.

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Maryland, said the hungry animals graze on dense vegetation and munch unwanted weeds and [invasive plants](#) while also leaving fertilizer behind for the grasses that people want.

"There is poison ivy and all kinds of stuff that you know people don't want to go in there for, and the [goats](#) don't seem to mind that much," he said.

Eco-Goats, which has been in business for three years, often brings dozens of goats to the site that a customer hopes to clear, then puts up electric fences and allows the goats to graze for days.

One group of 30 goats can clear 100 square meters of brush per day, according to Eco-Goats. Because the animals are agile and good climbers, they can often get to hard-to-reach vegetation.

When the work is finished, the goats have left behind their droppings which serve as fertilizer, said Eco-Goats, which charges about \$5,750 for 2.5 acres.

In Gaithersburg, Maryland, the conservation group Izaak Walton League of America (IWLA), in partnership with the city, called on the goats to remove harmful, invasive species in the parks that it protects.

"It's such an innovative, sustainable way of removing invasive species, and you get to hang out with some cute goats while you're doing it," said Rebecca Wadler, an IWLA Sustainability Education Program Associate.

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