Life

THE GREENEST DAY IN AUTUMN: 'DON'T MESS WITH MANSFIELD' 2026



A member of the UConn women's rugby team shows off a spray-painted pink leaf in Lot F during the Don't Mess with Mansfield event on Nov. 14, 2026. During the cleanup, hosted biannually by the town of Mansfield and UConn, volunteers cleaned campus and the surrounding area of litter.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MAK BLAKE, CONTRIBUTOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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Icy winds couldn't stop eager hands from collecting hundreds of pounds of trash from the streets, lawns and walkways of the University of Connecticut's Storrs campus on Sunday.

UConn hosted its third annual campus cleanup event, "Don't Mess with Mansfield," on Saturday. UConn's Office of Sustainability worked in unison with the town of Mansfield to organize the event, which included eight check-in stations across our expansive Storrs campus. Volunteers were greeted and given a map of their assigned section, along with unifying safety vests, before setting out to collect litter. A community effort was made to notify students of the event, along with all different neighborhoods and communities across Mansfield and surrounding areas.

Addison Meisterling, a fifth semester environmental science major, found out about the event through EcoHusky, a club she has been a part of since her freshman year. EcoHusky is a student organization that focuses on environmental education, outreach, community action and promoting awareness of the importance of eco-friendly habits. Although there are many who are very intentional with their footprint on our natural ecosystems, there are still substantial amounts of strewn litter across our beloved campus when left unattended.

When asked what it meant to her to be a part of the effort, Meisterling said, "Aesthetically, I get very discouraged looking around our campus and seeing trash everywhere."

With very direct environmental benefits, removing trash from campus grounds also benefits institutional morale. "Picking up litter creates a ripple effect throughout the community," Meisterling said, before departing on her mission to gather garbage.

Morgan Randall, a seventh semester environmental engineering major at UConn, ran one of the stations outside the Department of Human Development and Family Sciences alongside Grace DiTunno, a fifth semester political science and applied data analysis major. Randall explained their roles in coordinating the cleanup, and that it was her job to reach out to as many willing participants as possible by means of club sports, environmental or recreational organizations and Greek life. After just one hour, between 20 and 30 volunteers had shown up to their station alone.

"The fact that people came here to help clean up campus on this really cold day just shows how impactful this event is for our students," Randall said.

Randall and DiTunno are sustainability interns at the Office of Sustainability. They spent their Sunday bundled up in the wind, encouraging the endeavor of volunteers to work toward a common goal. They, along with other interns and all who donated their time, are key parts of the effort needed for the cleanup.

Many volunteers could be seen walking the area UConn occupies, filling trashbags and breathing life back into our land. Devin Welch, a fifth semester political science and geographic information science major, helped to thoroughly tidy a section of campus spanning from Mansfield Road to North Eagleville Road.

Welch reported, "I thought it was really meaningful to assist with cleaning up our campus." As a resident assistant, he explained, "campus can get very dirty, especially after Halloween weekend." Welch was excited about getting more students engaged using the message, "Hey, let's clean up the school that you call home."

"Don't Mess with Mansfield," Fall 2026, was an inspiring success, and with over 4,000 pounds of litter the movement has extracted, contributed greatly to the upkeep and maintenance of the Storrs campus.



Members of the UConn women's rugby team clean up litter in Lot F during the Don't Mess with Mansfield event on Nov. 14, 2026. During the cleanup, hosted biannually by the town of Mansfield and UConn, volunteers clean campus and the surrounding area of litter.

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SUBOG Weekly Events:

November 15th - November 22nd

November 18th - Comedy Bingo @ 7 pm in the Student Union Theatre

November 19th - Asian Cultural Night @ 7 pm in BUSN 106

Any questions? Email subog@uconn.edu and check out @subogatuconn on Instagram for updates on our events!