

# Help stop invasive plants from hurting Kingston area

## Why should I care?

Invasive plants are everywhere. They can hurt your family, your animals, your property values and your life outdoors (work or play). It's a national problem and here in Kingston it could create damage we can't repair!

## What exactly is an invasive plant?

- An aggressive plant species that grows and reproduces rapidly.
- Not native to the area and displaces or threatens the areas' native plants including trees.
- Negatively impacts human and animal health, our environment and our economy.

## What can I do as a resident?

Learn to identify invasive plants and take precautions to stop them from spreading. Encourage your neighbours to do the same. The steps on the reverse side of this flyer will get you started!

## Why is this a concern NOW?

Invasive plants are already HERE, transported by humans. When you move through areas where these plants grow wild, their stems/seeds/roots can "hitch a ride" on your vehicle, footwear, your camping gear, your bike and your boat. The longer we wait, the more expensive it will be to eradicate them. Prevention is the best solution – it's low cost and do-able NOW.

## How are these plants dangerous?

- **Injure your family and your animals.** Some are poisonous for horses and dogs. On humans, they can cause burns, blistering, skin rashes, eye irritations and cuts from thorns – a concern when enjoying the outdoors e.g. hiking and fishing.
- **Invade your property (and your neighbor's).** They compete with – and *overpower* – desirable plants including trees. Not only does this impact your enjoyment of your gardens, it affects your property value. If your livelihood is tied to the land e.g. farming, ranching – these plants are a real concern.
- **Disrupt the health/regeneration of our areas' natural habitats.** They cause issues in our forests, wetlands, meadows, lakes and rivers that threaten fish and wildlife populations, limit uses of the land, and reduce land value.

## What plants do I watch for?

The Ontario's Weed Control Act (1990) identified 25 plant species that must be destroyed. We're lucky: only eight species are gaining a foothold now in the area:

- Dog-Strangling Vine
- European Buckthorn
- Giant Hogweed
- Wild Parsnip
- Multiflora Rose
- Japanese Knotweed
- European Water Chestnut
- Common Reed-*Phragmites*



For more photographs of these plants plus specific information, go to: <https://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/resources/> and look for FACT SHEETS.

## How can I do my part to prevent spreading?

1. **Learn to identify invasive plants.** Report them to BSB (Big Sandy Bay) management. When in doubt about a plant or how it should be controlled, contact the “Invading Species Hotline” at 1-800-563-7711 or [www.invadingspecies.com](http://www.invadingspecies.com) or [www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca](http://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca)
2. **Mow regularly and often, and clean up properly.** To prevent spread of invasive stems, roots and seeds, be sure to clean bottoms of shoes/boots, mower blades, chain saws and wood chippers.
3. **Clean boat motors** and practice good boat & bait hygiene when moving to different water bodies.
4. **Dispose of cut/pulled plants/seeds properly.** Plastic bag it and put in the garbage (not compost, unless solarized in black plastic for a month – then it can be composted).
5. **Replant with native plants/seeds** after removing invasive plants – add some compost too.
6. **Don't share or plant invasives.** Check out alternatives here: <https://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/resources/grow-me-instead/>
7. **Use invasive weed-free hay and feed for your animals.**
8. **Volunteer to help locate, inventory or control invasive plants.** Residents are in the best position to spot problems early and act on them. This is the most cost-effective way to eradicate small infestations and prevent new ones. We will let you know about upcoming volunteer activities.
9. **Pass it on!** Tell your friends and family about this problem. **Educate people who visit the area on prevention methods.** Visit <https://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/>

## What is the city doing?

- Prevention by mowing/spraying.
- Early detection, rapid response control and management.
- Supporting and monitoring counts and locations around the area.
- Helping with disposal.

**There is no one miracle fix for controlling invasive plants.** The best approach is a combination of methods tailored to the site and the species. It might involve chemical control (herbicides), biological control (insects or pathogens) and/or mechanical control (pulling or cutting). There are usually unintended consequences of using chemicals so that is only a last recourse. **With early detection and prevention, we can avoid chemicals!**

## What is the province doing?



Ontario Invasive Plant Council (excellent online resources)

[www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca](http://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca)

Ontario's Invading Species Awareness Program

[www.invadingspecies.com](http://www.invadingspecies.com)

Best online management practices, field support, education

[www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/resources](http://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/resources)

Grow Me Instead booklet (see #6 above) & list of garden

plant/seed suppliers at [www.nanps.org/commercial-growers](http://www.nanps.org/commercial-growers)

## What's next?

Stay tuned to [www.rideau1000islandsmastergardeners.com](http://www.rideau1000islandsmastergardeners.com) for helpful info and practical activities to help you identify and remove invasives. For more info, contact email [MGRTIcoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:MGRTIcoordinator@gmail.com)

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