INVASIVE SPECIES OF PEI

Multiflora Rose
Rosa multiflora

PEI invasive species council

What are invasive species?

Invasive species (IS) are species that are introduced to an area outside of their native range and have the ability to outcompete native species. IS can be introduced intentionally or unintentionally.

Why are invasive species a problem?

Once they establish, invasive plants can reproduce quickly because they have no natural predators or pathogens to keep them in check, and they often become the dominant species in an ecosystem. This can have devastating effects on the environment. IS can displace native plants by monopolizing space, light, water and other resources needed for growth. They can completely alter native plant communities and drastically lower biodiversity. IS can also adversely affect the economy and human health, and interfere with recreational activities.

HISTORY

Multiflora rose was originally introduced to North America from Asia, as rootstock for ornamental roses. It was later promoted by a variety of government agencies in both Canada and the US for its use in erosion control, as a "living fence" and to attract wildlife. Seeds have been spread widely by birds.

IDENTIFICATION

- Medium-sized, thorny, perennial shrub. Can grow up to 5m tall.
- Forms dense, knotted clumps that exclude native vegetation and are at times impassable.
- Branches form wide arches that often touch the ground (this is how they spread)
- Leaves are divided into sharply toothed leaflets (with 5 to 11 leaflets per leaf)
- White to pink showy flowers are found in clusters of multiple flowers (hence the name) and are highly fragrant
- Blooms in May or June
- Small bright red hips remain on the plant throughout the winter.
- Thorns at leaf axils point back toward the roots.
- Leaf stalks have stipules (small leaf-like structures at base of leaf stalks) with red bumps.

CONCERN

Multiflora rose is a widespread and hardy invader capable of establishing in numerous varied habitats such as disturbed sites, woodlands, hedgerows, fields, meadows, banks, and more. It creates dense hedges that exclude native vegetation and reduce local biodiversity. This invasive plant is a prolific seed producer, with some reports estimating as many as 500,000 seeds produced by an individual annually. Multiflora rose can tolerate full sun or partial shade, allowing it to persist beneath a forest's canopy. As an infestation continues, decaying leaves dropped from multiflora rose will release compounds into the soil, making the area more difficult for other plants to colonize. Dense thickets can block trails and impact one's ability to enjoy recreational activities. Management costs can be significant, as the plant will continue to regrow from a steadfast seed bank that can remain dormant in the soil for 10 or even 20 years.

Stipules and thorn.

Fruits or "hips".

How can you help?

Here are a few things you can do to help stop the introduction and spread of invasive species:

- Learn more about invasive species in PEI, including how to identify species of concern.
- Choose native species whenever possible.
- Carefully inspect and clean clothing, gear, animals, and vehicles before visiting a new natural area.
- Never dump garden or pond waste in a natural area.
- Report your IS sightings to the PEIISC.

How to report:

Record any invasive species sightings at:
https://www.eddmaps.org/report/
OR https://www.inaturalist.org/
OR contact
peiinvasives@gmail.com

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Prince Edward Island CANADA

PREVENTION AND CONTROL

It is important to protect yourself during management. Wearing thick gloves, eye protection, and clothing that covers the arms and legs is recommended. Control efforts should begin before fruit forms (July) to prevent further spread. If management occurs during the spring and summer, it is important to watch for nesting birds.

Physical removal is a recommended method of control for multiflora rose. This can be accomplished by digging up the plant, roots and all. If the roots are not removed, the plant will resprout. It may be necessary to cut the stems down to access the roots. Using a shovel, winch, or mechanical lever will prove effective in uprooting the plant. Seedlings can be hand-pulled.

Mowing multiflora rose can be an effective control measure if regularly repeated. Mowing an infestation three to six times annually for several years has been proven to kill the plants over time, but will not provide immediate results. This may be the best option for larger patches or for those with few labour resources. Disturbed soil should be tamped down to prevent exposure of additional seeds. The site can be covered with a thick black tarp to suffocate any new growth that appears after management. In any case, you will need to revisit the site regularly to remove any new growth, as multiflora rose has a long-lived seed bank.

The PEIISC does not provide advice on chemical control measures. If using chemical control, it is imperative that all local legislation and manufacturer's instructions be followed during application.

After work is completed, it is important that all equipment be cleaned thoroughly and all plant parts are removed from boots and clothing before leaving the area. All plant parts must be collected, bagged, and properly disposed of. Multiflora rose can re-root from stem tips that touch the ground, fruits can release more seeds into the environment, and roots will resprout if not properly disposed of.

DISPOSAL

Place invasive plants in a clear plastic bag and secure. Write plant name (or "invasive plant") on the bag. Place in waste cart (you can also have up to 2 excess bags beside your cart) OR bring them to any Waste Watch Drop-Off Center and pay applicable waste disposal fee. Businesses and residents disposing of loads greater than what would fit in a half-ton truck require a permit from the Department of Environment Energy, and Climate Action Special Waste Disposal Permit | Government of Prince Edward Island. After receiving the permit, businesses and residents will be directed to an appropriate final disposal facility. Please note that only loads for which permits have been issued will be accepted at these facilities. Please check the IWMC sorting guide www.iwmc.pe.ca/sort (type Invasive Species in the search window) to ensure these instructions are up to date.

GARDEN ALTERNATIVES

Carolina rose

Virginia rose

Shining rose

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