



# Yellow Flag Iris

## *Iris pseudoacorus*



### What are invasive species?

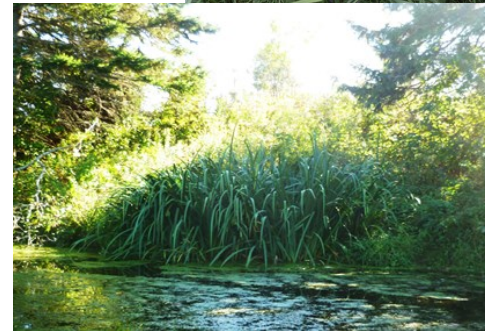
Invasive species are species that are introduced to an area outside of their native range. They can be introduced intentionally or unintentionally.

### 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. Invasive species 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. Invasive species can also adversely affect the economy and human health, and interfere with recreational activities.

### CONCERN

Yellow flag iris can establish in wet and dry soils. It grows in large clumps and has an extensive root system. Spreading occurs by seed, rhizomes and root fragmentation. Flowering does not occur until the plant is 3 years old, which makes it difficult to identify and remove immature plants. Once mature, individual plants are capable of producing as many as 200 seeds annually. Seeds and root fragments often end up in waterways, creating infestations downstream. Yellow flag iris clumps can increase sedimentation and block streams. In addition, resin produced by the plant tissues causes skin irritation in humans.



### CONTROL METHODS

#### DIGGING

Digging can be an effective control measure for Yellow flag iris but should be done before the plant has gone to seed. Shovels and other garden tools can be used to remove as much of the plant and root system as possible, as roots left in the ground will give rise to new plants. Sites should be monitored after treatment to ensure any regrowth is removed. Protective equipment should be worn when removing the plant to avoid the irritating resin.

#### MOWING

Repeated mowing may eventually result in complete mortality of Yellow flag iris as it prevents photosynthesis, gradually depleting the energy stored in the rhizomes which is necessary for plant growth. Mowing also impedes the plant from producing seeds, depleting the seed bank. It is necessary to repeat cutting practices yearly to inhibit regrowth. Mowing should occur before plants go to seed.

#### BURNING

Burning is not a recommended control method for Yellow flag iris. Burning does not damage the underground root system, which supplies the energy for plant regrowth. In addition, the increased light due to loss of vegetation from burning can promote germination of Yellow flag iris seeds.



## CONTROL METHODS

### CHEMICAL CONTROL

Chemical control methods are not recommended by the PEI Invasive Species Council. Herbicide application may negatively impact native species. Herbicides may not be used near watercourses on PEI. Care should be taken in herbicide application, and chemical control should only be considered as a final option.

### DISPOSAL

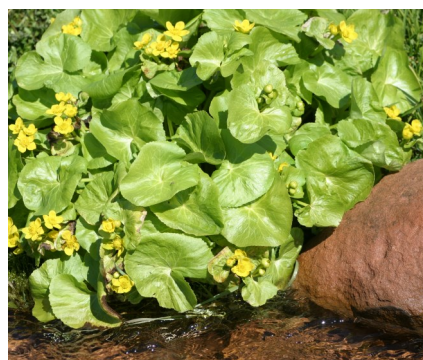
Plants removed from a site should be transported in plastic bags to a waste management facility for incineration. In addition, it is important that native species be planted where invasive plants were removed to prevent future invasions. Repeated monitoring of habitat where Yellow flag iris was removed is essential to identify and remove new sprouts and shoots.

### GARDEN ALTERNATIVES

There are many native plant alternatives available for Yellow Flag Iris. Please refer to the Invasive Alien Species of PEI: Yellow Flag Iris fact sheet for more information on the garden alternatives.



**Harlequin Blue Flag Iris**  
(*Iris versicolor*)



**Yellow Marsh Marigold**  
(*Caltha palustris*)



**Sensitive Fern**  
(*Onoclea sensibilis*)

### PREVENTION

The most effective and cost efficient way to avoid infestations of invasive species is to learn about potential invaders and be on the look out for them before they get a chance to establish. To learn more about how you can get involved in preventing invasives in PEI, contact the PEI Invasive Species Spotter's Network at: [peiinvasives@gmail.com](mailto:peiinvasives@gmail.com).

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## How can you help?

Here are a few things you can do to help stop the introduction and spread of alien 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
- When disposing of invasive species, they should be placed in a clear or dark plastic bag and taken to Island Waste Management for incineration
- Report a sighting

## How to report:

If you think you have seen this invasive species on PEI, please report your sighting to the PEI Invasive Species Council at: [www.peiinvasives.com](http://www.peiinvasives.com) or email [peiinvasives@gmail.com](mailto:peiinvasives@gmail.com)