



Yellow flag-iris in shallow water



Flowers in bloom



Seed pods

Maple Ridge Noxious Weeds Program

Yellow Flag-Iris

(*Iris pseudacorus*)

Designation: Provincially Noxious

History:

Native to the UK, Western Asia, North Africa and the Mediterranean, it has become established and spread quickly in wetlands and along roadsides throughout North America.

How to Identify:

Size: Perennial herb, growing to 1.5 m tall

Flowers: Yellow flowers blooming from May to July have 3 small slender petals facing up and 3 larger ones hanging down.

Leaves: 0.5 - 1.5 m long, slender, fleshy, sword-shaped with a distinctive ridge in the mid-vein. Dark green to blue/green and may remain green during mild winters

Location: Most commonly found growing in ditches, irrigation canals, marshes, and margins of lakes, ponds and slow-moving rivers in water up to 25 cm deep. Prefers part shade or full sun exposure.

Mistaken Identity: Can be confused with yellow bearded iris, or, when not flowering, bulrush or bur-reed.

Danger / Impact

Colonizes and spreads in dense stands, out-competing native wetland plants and reducing resources available for wildlife.

Plant roots can alter waterways by compacting soil, trapping sediments and increasing elevation.

Very difficult to eradicate once established.

Dispersed by broken rhizomes and seeds.

Seed pods are buoyant and can remain afloat for up to 7 months, allowing it to spread very long distances.

Distribution in DMR:

Small groups of plants found in only a few areas.

Management:

As this species is easily spread and difficult to eradicate, the first priority should be to deplete future seed resources by removing all flowers and seed heads.

For small populations, dig up and remove manually. For large populations, clip seed heads off to prevent further spread. Cut plant materials close to the ground and clean debris away. Expose rhizomes and cut to their full depth in 10 – 15 cm strips using a sharp tool such as a mattock. Remove the strips with the mattock or a crow bar ensuring that you go the full depth of the plant (up to 30 cm deep).

Caution: All plant parts are poisonous (contact causes skin irritation; ingestion causes nausea; wear gloves!)

Disposal: The best option is to place all plant parts in garbage bags labelled “invasive species” and take to the landfill. Do not compost as flowers can still form viable seeds after removal.

Follow-up: Address any recently sprouted seedlings in the summer (July) and monitor regularly for re-growth. Remove any new plants that appear.

Restoration and Planting Alternatives:

Plant native or non-invasive species including:

Native Plants:

- Hardhack (*Spiraea douglasii*)
- Red-osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*)
- Willow species (*Salix spp.*)
- Common bulrush (*Typha latifolia*)

Non-Native Plants:

- Blazing star (*Liatris spicata*)
- Tall delphinium (*Delphinium elatum*)
- Bloody iris (*Iris sanguinea*)
- Hardhack (*Spiraea douglasii*)
- Spike speedwell (*Veronica spicata*)



Yellow Bearded Iris – A non-invasive garden iris easily mistaken for Yellow Flag-Iris.

Who Do you Call?

- 1) **REPORT PROHIBITED WEEDS** – Report-A-Weed: www.reportaweedbc.ca 1-888-WEEDSBC
- 2) **DMR: 604-467-7363** – AND SEE: <http://www.mapleridge.ca/714/Invasive-Plant-Species>

Information and photos:

<http://www.saanich.ca/living/environment/pdf/invasive/yellow-flag-iris-alert-web.pdf>

<http://www.bcinvases.ca/invasive-species/invasive-plants/yellow-flag-iris>

<http://iscmv.ca/target-species/species-profiles>