

Semi-Aquatic
Invasive
Plant

Yellow Iris

Iris pseudacorus



What is it and Why is it a Problem?

Yellow Iris is a perennial semi-aquatic plant that invades wetlands and the edges of lakes and rivers. This plant quickly takes over an area and displaces native vegetation using fast-spreading rhizomes that grow new shoots above and below the ground. As a result, water levels can be drawn down and the thick mats of rhizomes can interfere with water flow. This invasive plant also reduces available habitat for fish and nesting birds along the shoreland.

Be careful! This plant is poisonous to humans and animals - if ingested it can cause dermatitis (skin irritation).



What Does it Look Like?

- Flowers bloom in April to July and are entirely yellow, with three larger drooping sepals that have purple-brown markings, surrounding three smaller upright petals
- Stems grow between 30 cm - 1 m tall in groups of 2 - 10
- Leaves are flat, 2 - 3 cm wide and up to 1 m long
- Seeds are enclosed in capsules 4 to 8 cm long

Note: may look very similar to native Blue Flag Iris when not in bloom; however, Blue Flag Iris has smaller leaves (10 - 80 cm long) and stems (30 - 60 cm long), and blue-purple flowers.



How Can it be Managed?

- Report sightings of any invasive species online through [EDDMaps Ontario](#), a web-based mapping system which also has an app, or through the [Invasive Species in Ontario](#) project on [iNaturalist.org](#).
- Learn how to identify it so you can avoid accidentally spreading it to other areas.
- Do not buy, sell or plant Yellow Iris for garden use. Ensure you know the difference between Yellow Iris and Blue Flag Iris and only plant native plants in your garden. You can refer to the [Grow me instead: Guide to Planting Native Plants in Southern Ontario](#) to determine what native flowers to plant.
- You can use heavy rubber matting or thick tarps to place over the infested area. This will hinder the plant from receiving sun and can be effective at eradicating it if used for around 70 days. Ensure you follow [OMNRF's rules](#) regarding invasive species removal.
- Put plants in sealed bags to be disposed of in the garbage - do not compost or burn.

References

[Great Lakes Nonindigenous Species Information System](#), produced by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[Invasive Aquatic Plant Species: A Quick Reference Guide](#), produced by Ontario's Invading Species Awareness Program and Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters

[Ontario Invading Species Awareness Program](#), developed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), and the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH).