

INVADERS

IN YOUR GARDEN

How to recognize and control invasive plants



WHAT ARE INVASIVE PLANTS?

Invasive plants are non-native species* that have somehow been transported into natural ecosystems. Sometimes they come in by accident such as in shipments, or attached to vehicles, boats, pets and clothing. Sometimes they are introduced intentionally such as nursery stock sold for landscaping and hanging baskets. There are many invasive plant species on Vancouver Island, including the 8 listed here.

*It's important to note that not all non-native (alien) species are invasive. If a plant has been introduced to an area but is not invasive, it is often called an "exotic".

WHY ARE THEY A PROBLEM?

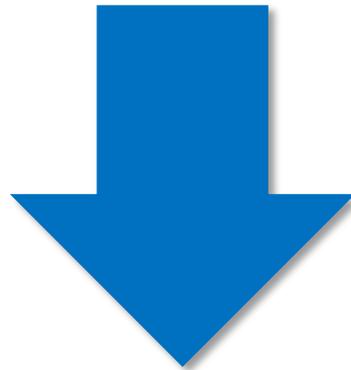
Invasive plants are extremely aggressive, outcompeting native species for space, water and sunlight. Invasive plants can easily spread from urban gardens into wild spaces, often when yard or lawn clippings are dumped into natural areas – reducing the diversity of native plant communities which in turn can have a devastating impact on the wildlife that depend on them.

HOW CAN YOU CONTROL INVASIVES?

You need to develop a long-term, realistic program for invasive species removal. Once invasive plants have arrived and spread, it becomes a management issue of controlling new growth while working diligently to reduce the area of spread.

There are many species of Invasive Plants in BC
We have compiled a list of **8** offenders commonly found
in our local gardens and parklands

Check them out below!





YELLOW ARCHANGEL

(*Lamium galeobdolon*) a.k.a. False lamium

Why it's a Problem: These handsome plants are often integrated into hanging baskets. Unfortunately, Yellow Archangel spreads vigorously and can easily escape gardens, spreading into nearby ravines and woods where it chokes out native plant species

Control Methods:

- Dig
- Trace runners
- Hand-pull
- Smother

It's best to dig out when the soil is moist. Remove as much root as possible. Trace each runner and hand-pull by their root nodes. Alternately, smother Archangel - using layers of cardboard, then a deep (6") bed of woodchips. Plant native species or other non-invasives on top. Monitor over several seasons, removing new sprouts as they appear.

CAUTION: DO NOT COMPOST

Double bag all trimmings and dispose of in your regional landfill or designated invasive plant disposal facility

SUBSTITUTE

If you like the look of YELLOW ARCHANGEL try VANILLA LEAF



Vanilla Leaf (*Achlys triplylla*) is a low-growing native plant species that can often be found at your local Native Plant nursery. This three-lobed, fan shaped plant flowers in sprays on single stalks in the spring. When dried, the leaves have a vanilla-like aroma – great for potpourri!



PERIWINKLE

(Vinca minor and Vinca major)

Why it's a Problem: Periwinkle has lovely dark green foliage and vibrant blue flowers that make it attractive to gardeners. However, it spreads rapidly and if it escapes your garden it will quickly take over your neighbour's garden or a neighbouring park. It crowds out other plants and if left unchecked can take over an entire forest floor.

Control Methods:

- Dig
- Hand-pull
- Smother

The roots of Periwinkle can grow more intensively after disturbance, so dig only to loosen the soil around plants. Hand-pull to remove as much root as possible. As new growth erupts, continue carefully excavating and pulling. Alternately, smother Periwinkle - using layers of cardboard, then a deep (6") bed of woodchips. Plant native species or other non-invasives on top. Monitor for several seasons.

CAUTION: DO NOT COMPOST

Double bag all trimmings and dispose of in your regional landfill or designated invasive plant disposal facility

SUBSTITUTE

If you like the look of
PERIWINKLE
try
BUNCHBERRY



Bunchberry (*Cornus Canadensis*) is a low growing groundcover with lovely dogwood-like flowers. It is native to BC and may be found at your local Native Plant nursery. It produces red berries in summer.

ENGLISH IVY

(*Hedera helix*)



Why it's a Problem: English Ivy is a beautiful plant that looks quite fanciful growing up the sides of buildings and over stone walls. Unfortunately, it grows vigorously and frequently escapes gardens where it can become a dense ground cover, smothering everything in its path. It also climbs and strangles native trees, killing them slowly.

Control Methods:

- Cut
- Hand-pull
- Prune back flowers

Cut ivy in a 'lifesaver' ring from the base of compromised trees to about 2 metres up. Leave ivy on upper section tree to die off naturally. Handpull from wherever it grows over the ground, try to remove as much root as possible. Prune back any flowers so they can't mature into fruits (that will be eaten and transported by birds and animals). Monitor over several seasons.

CAUTION: WEAR GLOVES - Ivy can be irritating to the skin. **DO NOT COMPOST** Double bag all trimmings and dispose of in your regional landfill or designated invasive plant disposal facility

SUBSTITUTE

If you like the look of ENGLISH IVY try CLIMBING HYDRANGEA



Climbing Hydrangea (*Hydrangea petiolaris*) Is not a native plant to BC but it grows much more slowly than English Ivy and is therefore easier to control. It blooms with white, lacy flowers in late spring but takes several seasons to become established.



HIMALAYAN BLACKBERRY

(*Rubus armeniacus*)

Why it's a Problem: Many of us have happy childhood memories of sticky purple fingers from picking the delicious fruit of Himalayan Blackberries. Unfortunately, they readily spread into impenetrable thickets, smothering out native species, in any sunny location.

Control Methods:

- Cut
- Hand-pull
- Dig
- Smother

Cut to the ground before fruiting. Cut new growth from July-Oct. Hand-pull seedlings as they come up. When soil is soft dig out as much of root crown as possible. Smother with a thick layer of cardboard, mulching deeply to prevent seeds in soil from sprouting. Grazing by goats can also be an effective control method!



CAUTION: WEAR HEAVY GLOVES - Himalayan Blackberries have sharp thorns!

DO NOT COMPOST. Allow to dry out and burn where permitted. Otherwise Double bag all trimmings and dispose of in your regional landfill or designated invasive plant disposal facility

SUBSTITUTE

If you enjoy
BLACKBERRIES
try
TAYBERRIES



Tayberries (*Rubus fruticosus x idaeus*) are a cross between a Blackberry and a red Raspberry. Tayberries grow on canes much like raspberries do. They are much easier to control than Himalayan Blackberries - even easier if you keep them confined to containers!



GORSE

(*Ulex europaeus*)

Why it's a Problem: The cheery yellow flowers of Gorse can be appealing. However Gorse crowds out native plants and creates a fire hazard due to the volatile oils it contains and its tendency to grow in dense thickets. Gorse is also heavily armed with spines, making it difficult to remove.

Control Methods:

- Cut back
- Dig
- Hand-pull

Cut mature plants to the ground when gorse is in bloom and before seeds are set. Dig carefully to remove as much of the root as possible. Try not to overly disturb seed beds as this will stimulate germination. Pull seedlings and young plants by hand as they come up. Monitor over several seasons pulling new seedlings as they erupt.

CAUTION: WEAR VERY HEAVY GLOVES and WORK CAREFULLY - Gorse has sharp spines! DO NOT COMPOST. Double bag all trimmings and dispose of in your regional landfill or designated invasive plant disposal facility

SUBSTITUTE

If you like the look of GORSE try FORSYTHIA



Forsythia (Forsythia hybrids) are flowering shrubs that do not have a tendency to be invasive. They offer the same cheery bright yellow blooms as gorse and grow to approximately 3 metres tall.



SCOTCH BROOM

(Cytisus scoparius)

Why it's a Problem: Much like Gorse Scotch Broom wears a spring coat of bright yellow flowers. However, it invades sunny disturbed areas along roadsides and on the edges of forests. It outcompetes native conifer seedlings such as Douglas-fir and can displace essential native grasses and plants on rangelands. Because of its tendency to grow rapidly into dense, dry thickets it also creates a fire hazard.

Control Methods:

- Cut
- Hand-pull
- Re-vegetate

Cut large plants in bloom, down to or just below the ground - before seeds are set. Hand-pull young seedlings and small plants. Try not to overly disturb seed beds as this will stimulate germination. Re-vegetate areas with native species. Monitor over several seasons, pulling new seedlings as they erupt.



CAUTION: WEAR GLOVES - Broom bushes are tough and can cut hands.
DO NOT COMPOST. Double bag all trimmings and dispose of in your regional landfill or designated invasive plant disposal facility

SUBSTITUTE

If you like the look of
SCOTCH BROOM
try
KERRIA



Kerria (*Kerria japonica*) Is a flowering shrub that is not native to BC but it does not have a tendency to be aggressive or invasive. It produces rich yellow pom-pom-like flowers starting in the spring and can grow to 3 metres tall.



KNOTWEED

(*Fallopia spp.*)

Why it's a Problem: Knotweed grows rapidly and crowds out native species especially in riparian areas that are susceptible to soil erosion. Its primary mode of spread is via a very extensive network of rhizomatous roots. The large leaves also shade out native plants resulting in a loss of local flora and fauna.

Control Methods:

- Hand-pull
- Cut or mow
- Smother
- Re-vegetate

Hand-pull young plants. Cut or mow new growth of established plants throughout the entire growing season. After cutting to the ground, smother with thick layers of cardboard, then mulch over top and replant with native species. It's important to note that disturbance of roots will promote rapid re-sprouting so you must be vigilant and think long-term to combat this tenacious invader.

CAUTION: DO NOT COMPOST. Double bag all trimmings and dispose of in your regional landfill or designated invasive plant disposal facility

SUBSTITUTE

If you like the look of
KNOTWEED
try
RED- OSIER
DOGWOOD



Red-osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*) is native to BC. It may be found at local native plant nurseries. It flowers in spring with white berries following in summer. It grows up to 6 metres tall.





DAPHNE

(*Daphne laureola*)

Why it's a Problem: *Daphne laureola* is a poisonous plant that has attractive rich green foliage, similar in appearance to a rhododendron. It is readily available for purchase at many garden centres. Unfortunately, this shade-tolerant plant displaces native vegetation, taking over forested areas and even altering the chemistry of the soil around it.

Control:

- Dig
- Remove root
- Hand-pull

Wear protective clothing! Dig deeply around plant and remove as much of the root as possible. Dig when plants are in flower, not when they have berries, to avoid spread. Hand-pull smaller plants. Monitor over several seasons.

CAUTION: DAPHNE IS HIGHLY TOXIC! - resin, fruit, and fumes. **WEAR PROTECTIVE CLOTHING and HEAVY RUBBER GLOVES.** **DO NOT COMPOST.** Double bag all trimmings and carry in the trunk (not cab) of your vehicle - the noxious fumes are dangerous! Dispose of in your regional landfill or designated invasive plant disposal facility.



SUBSTITUTE

If you like the look of
DAPHNE
try
PACIFIC RHODODENDRON



Pacific Rhododendron (*Rhododendron macrophyllum*) is native to BC. It grows to 2 metres or more and may be found at local native plant nurseries. It produces pink, bell-shaped flowers in Spring.

OTHER THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP:

- Don't buy or plant invasive species in your garden
- Talk to your local nurseries and encourage them to discontinue stocking these problematic plants
- Consider a native plant garden
- Be cautious with mixed wildflower seeds as they may contain invasives
- Inform your friends and family
- Volunteer in local Broom Bashes and other invasive plant removal events in your community
- Confirm the proper disposal method for invasive plants in your area by checking with your local municipality or regional district

Keep an eye on the plants in your garden, if something is taking over or spreading out of your yard - it's a problem!

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VANILLA LEAF

Lisa Cross, TLC Staff, 2016

PERIWINKLE

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ENGLISH IVY

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KERRIA

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RED-OSIER DOGWOOD

Lisa Cross, TLC Staff, 2017

DAPHNE

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PACIFIC RHODODENDRON

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