

EXOTIC INVASIVE PLANTS

Exotic invasive plants are plants that have been intentionally or accidentally introduced into an ecosystem and are a detriment to indigenous plants. Their proliferation is considered one of the main causes of biodiversity loss throughout the world, and can have serious ecological, economic and health consequences. Preventing the introduction and proliferation of these exotic plants is the best way to avoid or reduce their negative impacts.



European Common Reed



The European Common Reed (*Phragmites australis* subsp. *australis*), also known as phragmite, is an exotic widely found in Québec, especially in humid, non-forested areas.

! Do not confuse it with an indigenous reed (*Phragmites australis* subsp. *americanus*) which has a much thinner and less dense head.



Giant Hogweed



Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) can reach up to 5 metres in height and is often found in cool, humid habitats, such as on the shores of waterways, in ditches and along railway lines. Its sap, when in contact with skin and ultraviolet light, causes lesions similar to burns.

! Do not confuse it with a similar indigenous species, Cow Parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*), which does not have a speckled stem.



Japanese Knotweed



Japanese knotweed can reach 4 metres in height. Its rapid growth can form dense growths which outcompete native species. It generally grows in humid soil, but will tolerate difficult conditions such as high salinity and drought.

! Do not confuse it with Bohemian Knotweed (*Fallopia x bohemica*) or Giant Knotweed (*Fallopia sachalinensis*)



European Watermilfoil



This rooted underwater plant, which can rise to the surface, forms dense growths. It can grow in depths of from 1 to 10 metres. It is found in lakes, rivers, wetlands and canals. European Watermilfoil spreads rapidly from cuttings. Cuttings can be carried by currents, boats, trailers, clothing and animals.

! Do not confuse it with native species of Watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum sp.*).

Alder Buckthorn



This shrub can attain 7 metres in height, will tolerate moist conditions but prefers sunny areas, such as abandoned fields, forest clearings, forest edges, prairies and gardens. The leaves are a dark green, with pinnate ribs. The leaves turn yellow in late fall. The fruits are small red berries with a centre stone, which darken at maturity. (MDDELCC)

Common Buckthorn



This species is in the same family as the Alder Buckthorn. It can attain a height of 6 meters and grows in wooded areas, forest edges, along roadsides and waterways and in powerline corridors. Leaves are oval, toothed with 3 or 4 curved ribs, they stay green until the end of autumn. It produces dark purple berries, which often remain on the tree all winter long. (MDDELCC)

What to do if you believe that you are dealing with an exotic invasive plant

1. **Be sure** to properly identify the plant in question
2. **Contact** your local municipal environmental inspector to advise them of your observation
3. **Notify** the Québec Government's sentinels site of your observation at: www.pub.mddefp.gouv.qc.ca/scc
 - i) Create an account
 - ii) Enter the information regarding your observation:
(Species observed, the date it was seen, a description of the location, the number of plants, the extent of the colony, etc., ...)
 - iii) Include one or more photos of the plant and the location
 - iv) Save the observation to share it with the Government and other citizens
4. If the plant is on your property and you wish to **know more on how to control it**, contact the Québec Council on Exotic Invasive Species (<http://cqeee.org/>) or Gestion Sève (<http://www.gestionseve.com/>).

