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**Green file 2**

# INVASIVE NON-NATIVE PLANTS



## DEFINITION AND IMPACT



## 6 INVASIVE SPECIES



## LIMITING THE SPREAD OF INVASIVE SPECIES



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## WHAT IS AN INVASIVE NON-NATIVE PLANT?

An invasive non-native plant is defined as a plant that is transported, either voluntarily or involuntarily, from its native environment to an area where it was previously absent.

## WHAT IMPACT DO INVASIVE NON-NATIVE PLANTS HAVE?

They take up space and resources that are no longer available to other native plants. They alter the functioning of the entire ecosystem by modifying the environment.



## 6 INVASIVE NON-NATIVE PLANTS

### 1) PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE (LYTHRUM SALICARIA)

An emergent perennial wetland plant that can grow anywhere between 1 and 3 m in height depending on environmental conditions.

- **Habitat:** Varies, mostly wetlands such as swamps, trenches and riverbanks.
- **Flowering:** From June to September. Long terminal spikes of small purple or pink six-petaled flowers.

*Purple loosestrife*



Purple loosestrife is used as an ornamental plant and can make its way into natural environments or be affected by its abundant seed production or as a result of plant remains discarded in the wild.

### 2) COMMON BUCKTHORN (RHAMNUS CATHARTICA)

Large shrub or small branched tree that can reach a height of 6 m.

- **Habitat:** Wide variety of soil and light conditions, woodlands, fields, forest edges, roadsides, riparian strips and along hydroelectric corridors.
- **Flowering:** Flowers appear in early spring. They have 2 to 6 small greenish-yellow petals grouped together at the base of the leaves.

*Common buckthorn*



The plant spreads through its seeds, which are dispersed by birds, animals or waterways.



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### 3) JAPANESE KNOTWEED (*FALLOPIA JAPONICA*)

Japanese knotweed is a perennial herbaceous plant that can reach 4 m in height. It grows early in the spring and its rapid growth allows it to form mono-species clumps that create shade for native species. **Its root system is believed to release toxins that inhibit the growth of other species.**

- **Habitat:** Grows in wetlands, along bodies of water, on beaches, in ditches, irrigation canals, embankments and other disturbed habitats.
- **Flowering:** Flowering takes place in September/October. The small five-petaled flowers form in clusters.

Japanese knotweed



The plant reproduces vegetatively. In fact, a tiny fragment of stem or rhizome is all that is needed to create an entirely new plant. Rhizome fragments can even remain dormant in the soil for many years!

### 4) COMMON REED (*PHRAGMITES AUSTRALIS*)

Perennial wetland plant that can grow up to 5 m in height. The common reed forms dense monospecific colonies.

- **Habitat:** Occupies marshes, drainage channels as well as road and highway rights-of-way.
- **Flowering:** Flowering appears from late summer to early autumn and consists of feathery panicles.

Common reed



The species spreads through its seeds, rhizomes and runners.

### 5) GIANT HOGWEED (*HERACLEUM MANTEGAZZIANUM*)

Perennial herbaceous plant reaching 2 to 5 metres in height and whose sap contains toxins activated by ultraviolet rays. **Contact with the sap, combined with exposure to light, may cause skin lesions similar to burns.**

- **Habitat:** Cool and wet disturbed environments, riverbanks, railway and road ditches, meadows and vacant or cultivated land.
- **Flowering:** Flowering appears around June-July. The inflorescence is composed of flat-topped umbels (resembling inverted umbrellas) that are 20 to 50 cm wide and have white or, more rarely, pink flowers.

Giant hogweed



This species spreads only through its seeds.

### 6) WILD PARSNIP (*PASTINACA SATIVA*)

Short-lived biennial or perennial plant that can grow up to 2 metres high. **Contact with the sap, combined with exposure to light, can cause skin lesions similar to burns.**

- **Habitat:** Colonizes open disturbed sites such as roadsides, lanes and trails. It can also be found in abandoned fields and lots.
- **Flowering:** Wild parsnip is a biennial plant. It flowers only once and dies after flowering. Its yellowish-green flowers form umbrella-shaped clusters that are 10 to 20 centimetres wide.

Wild parsnip



This species spreads only through its seeds.

## LIMIT THE SPREAD OF INVASIVE PLANTS



Spread of invasive plants can be limited if they are not transplanted, moved or composted.

### An environmentally friendly way to control invasive plants

The best way to control the spread of invasive plants is to rip them out by hand. Mechanical control methods (pulling, cutting) can disturb the soil, making the site susceptible to rapid invasion. It is therefore important to plant native species quickly to prevent the return of invasive species!

Reference :

<http://www.mdelcc.gouv.qc.ca/biodiversite/especes-exotiques-envahissantes/sentinelles.htm>

