

Invasive Plant Species Top 10 Troublemakers

1 Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)

Found in a variety of wetland habitats, this plant will gradually dominate over time. It is highly poisonous to eat or touch.

Description: Flat, white flowers, a hairy stem with purple spots/blemishes and large-lobed leaves two to five feet wide. It can be confused with the regionally rare cow parsnip, which is similar in appearance but lacks purple spots/blemishes on the stem. Grows from 1-10ft.



2 Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)

Imported as an edible green by European settlers, this plant dominates the forest floor, crowding out native vegetation and altering soil chemistry that reduces forest productivity.

Description: Heart or kidney-shaped leaf with white flowers at the tip of its stalk. Garlic mustard smells like garlic and onions when crushed. Grows from 0-3ft.



3 Dog Strangling Vine (*Cynanchum rossicum*)

Native to Eurasia, dog strangling vine will dominate both meadows and forest habitats, literally choking natural areas to death. Please be careful not to confuse this plant with some native milkweeds.

Description: This climbing vine has lance shaped leaves with pink to purple flowers. Slender bean-like seed pods appear in late spring or early summer.



4 European Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*)

Native to Europe, this shrub is becoming common in our forests, dominating and crowding out native plants, impacting their long-term survival.

Description: Egg-shaped leaves. Twigs often have a sharp spine at their tip and small dark berries in late summer. The leaf edge has tiny rounded teeth. Grows from 3-10ft.



5 Bush Honeysuckles (non-native) (*Lonicera spp.*)

Introduced to Canada from various regions of Asia and Europe, non-native honeysuckles crowd out native forest shrubs and tree saplings. There are many regionally-rare types of native honeysuckles, so caution should be exercised in identifying species for control.

Description: Honeysuckles have rounded, egg-shaped or tear-drop shaped leaves that can be slightly hairy, although some species can have smooth leaves. Stems tend to be brittle and light brown in colour. Grows from 3-7ft.



6 Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*)

Introduced from Europe, Norway maple grows in dense stands shading out all other native trees and shrubs.

Description: Can be confused with native sugar maple. The leaf stem emits a milky sap when squeezed. It is often attacked by black spot fungus, leaving dark or mildew-like white splotches on leaves. Grows from 60-90ft.



7 Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*)

Introduced from Europe, common reed dominates the edges of wetlands and streams, crowding out native species. Grows from 6-10ft.

Description: Dense cascading 'broom-like' flower head with a 'cottony' appearance when mature. Stems are rough and ridged. A tuft of brown hair can be noticed where the leaf meets the stem. Grows from 2-8ft.



8 Periwinkle (*Vinca minor*)

Periwinkle is a common garden plant that spreads rapidly and can crowd out many native plants when it escapes into forested habitats.

Description: Vine-like ground cover with glossy lance-shaped leaves and showy purple/blue flowers.



9 Rough Manna Grass (*Glyceria maxima*)

A grass of marsh edges and stream banks, rough manna grass reproduces rapidly, pushing out native species and creating monoculture stands.

Description: Robust grass-like plant with alternating leaves. The stem sheaths are rough and the flowering broom-like head is fairly erect, whereas similar native manna grasses cascade and bend over towards the ground.



10 Goutweed (*Aegopodium podagraria*)

Many people are familiar with the cultivated form of goutweed with its white and green variegated leaves. In naturalized plants the variegation is absent. This aggressive ground cover spreads rapidly, pushing out native plants.

Description: Groundcover with serrated compound leaves (several leaves on one stalk) that spreads rapidly, crowding out native plants.



If you suspect an invasive plant may be growing on your property or in a natural area please contact Credit Valley Conservation at 905-670-1615 or cvc@creditvalleyca.ca. CVC can help you identify invasive plants since they can be confused with some native varieties. Visit: www.creditvalleyca.ca/invasives for more information including tips on how to control and remove invasive species from your property. Suspected species can also be reported to the Provincial Invasive Species hotline : 1-800-563-7711