

HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE

to invasive plants in riparian ecosystems

Riparian ecosystems are the transition zone between the dry upland and open water. They occur along creeks, rivers, wetlands and lakes. These areas help to protect water quality, reduce erosion, manage floodwater and recharge groundwater. Riparian areas support moisture-loving plants and are rich in biodiversity. Common species include black cottonwood, trembling aspen, waterbirch, willow, red-osier dogwood and wild rose. The vegetation provides important habitat for insects, birds, amphibians, and other wildlife, and shade for fish. About 80% of the Okanagan's wildlife species directly depend on riparian ecosystems for feeding, nesting, shelter or as travel corridors. Rare species that live in riparian ecosystems include Western Screech-owl, Yellow-breasted Chat, Great Blue Heron and a variety of bat species.

One of the primary impacts to riparian ecosystems is invasive plants.

Invasive plants are not indigenous to Canada and lack the natural enemies that keep them in check in their native habitats. They are competitive, spread quickly, and can be difficult to control.

How do I control invasive plants?

- Identify the species on your property and understand their biology and life cycles.
- Map the outbreak and areas of disturbed soil that are prone to invasion.
- Consider vectors of spread that may be moving invasive plants around your property.
- Develop a plan that considers a variety of strategies including manual control, chemical treatment, biological control and seeding (or planting). Using a single management practice will not result in effective control.
- Implement your plan and monitor the results
- Contact OASISS or another specialist if you need advice.
- Be patient and diligent - it may take repeat treatments to effectively control the plants.

Common Invasive Plants



Knotweed
Fallopia sp.



Russian Olive
Elaeagnus angustifolia



Burdock
Arctium lappa



Hound's Tongue
Cynoglossum officinale

For a more extensive list of invasive plants in the Okanagan-Similkameen, check out: www.oasiss.ca



How you can help prevent the spread.

Be invasive-wise

- Minimize soil disturbance
 - Retain natural vegetation as much as possible
 - Seed or re-plant disturbed areas with native plants or non-invasive drought-tolerant species
- Use mulch, gravel or fill that are not contaminated with invasive plants
- Properly dispose of invasive plants
 - Do not put them in compost or yard waste
 - Take to the landfill and inform attendant you have invasive plants
- Avoid wildflower and bird seed mixes
 - These often contain seeds of invasive plants
- Educate your neighbours
- Host an invasive plant removal event in your community

Learn to identify invasive plants

- Download our [Guide to Identifying Invasive Plants and Weeds](#)
- Visit www.oasiss.ca and browse through the species profiles



Don't plant invasive species

- Download our [Plantwise Guide](#)
- Be suspicious of plants promoted as "fast spreaders" or "vigorous self-seeders" as these are often invasive plants.



GET ADVICE

For more information about invasive species contact:

www.oasiss.ca



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Okanagan and Similkameen
Invasive Species Society

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