

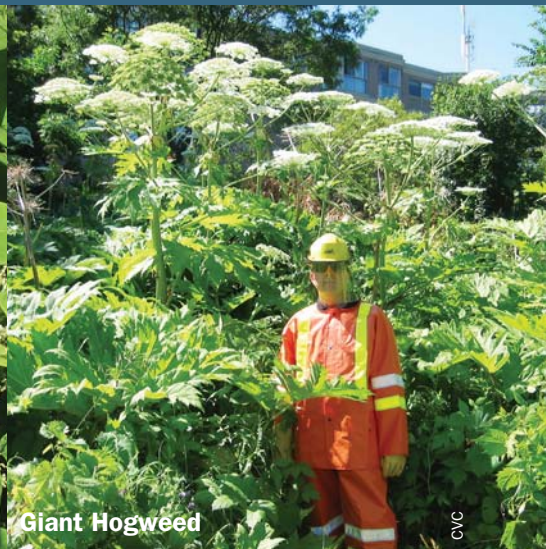
# Identifying and Tackling Invasive Plant Species



Dog-strangling Vine



Japanese Knotweed



Giant Hogweed

CVC

## What are Invasive Plants?

An invasive plant species is one that grows and spreads quickly because it can adapt to a variety of growing conditions. They are non-native (introduced from other areas) and lack the usual predators or environmental conditions that control their population.

There are non-native species which can coexist with native species without becoming a problem. Concerns arise when a non-native species overtakes an area, suppressing the native vegetation. This is when a plant species becomes *invasive*. Invasive species exist amongst all groups of living things including fish, mammals, insects, fungus and plants.

## What are the Impacts of Invasive Plants?

Invasive plants have the ability to displace native plant species from an area entirely and reduce the overall richness and biodiversity of the ecosystem. When native plant species are displaced it can also displace wildlife such as insects and birds, because the invasive plants may have little to no value as a food source. Many native wildlife species have adapted with our native plant species and are dependent on them. For example, Monarch caterpillars feed exclusively on plants of the milkweed family.

Invasive plants are not only impacting natural areas but also affect other areas of our life negatively. Certain plants can invade farm fields resulting in dramatically lower yields and increased applications of herbicide, while other invasive plants increase costs for trail and park management. Then there is Giant Hogweed which is highly toxic for people and can cause severe skin reactions.

### na•tive spe•cies

A species that existed in a given area prior to European settlement.

### non•na•tive spe•cies

A species that has been introduced to a new geographic area, often as a result of human relocation, deliberately or not. There are many non-native species which are not invasive.

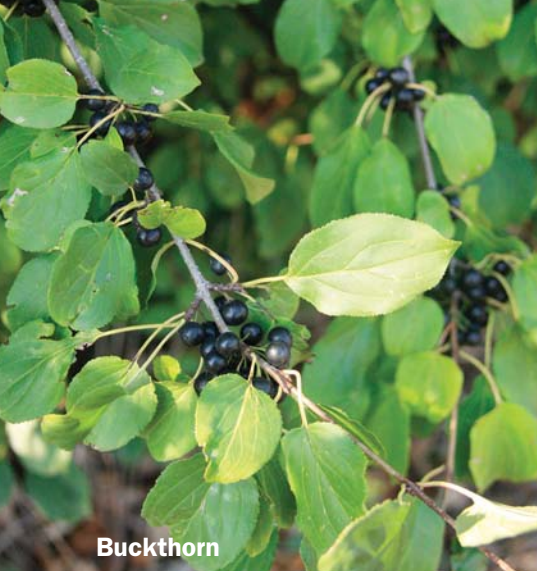
### in•va•sive spe•cies

A non-native species that grows and spreads quickly because it can adapt to a variety of growing conditions and lacks the usual predators or environmental conditions that control their population.

### bi•o•di•ver•si•ty

A term used to describe the number and variety of organisms found within a given geographic region.





Buckthorn



Garlic Mustard



Periwinkle

## What you can do

- Avoid purchasing plants which are known to be invasive. Many of these plants are still available at local nurseries and are not usually labelled as invasive. Things to look out for are descriptors such as spreading, quick growth, groundcover or dense mat.
- Strive to purchase species which are native to Ontario. We have many beautiful and showy native plant species that look good and will also provide habitat in your yard for pollinators and birds.
- Learn how to identify invasive plant species by attending free workshops, using free resources or having a stewardship technician visit your property to help you.
- Remove existing invasive species from your yard. This is especially important for landowners living adjacent to natural areas where the spread of invasive plant species could have significant impacts.



There are many free resources and tools available for private landowners to use online to learn about specific species and management strategies. We have created a list of links to those resources on our website at [www.cootestoescarpmentpark.ca/landowner-resources](http://www.cootestoescarpmentpark.ca/landowner-resources)

REFERENCE: Much of this content was sourced from A *Landowner's Guide to Managing and Controlling Invasive Plants in Ontario*, and [ConservationHalton.ca](http://ConservationHalton.ca)

## Invasive plants to manage on your property

This is a list of 5 invasive plant species you should try to manage on your property. This is not an exhaustive list and we would encourage landowners to manage all invasive species on their property. Consider inviting our Stewardship Technician onto your property to help you assess your invasive species situation and develop a strategy for management.

1. **Dog-strangling Vine** – Green vine that produces pink to dark purple star shaped flowers.
2. **Garlic Mustard** – Biennial woodland herb that has a white flower; smells like garlic.
3. **Periwinkle** – Groundcover with a violet flower, leaves stay green through the winter.
4. **Common Buckthorn** – Mid-sized shrub that has small thorns and produces a black berry.
5. **Japanese Knotweed** – Bamboo-like shrub that grows in dense patches. White flower.

## Contact

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