

Invasive plants :

The Dog-Strangling Vine



Invasive plants are becoming more and more widespread in Chelsea and in the surrounding area. These unwelcome invaders are disrupting natural ecosystems, replacing and eliminating native species and reducing our region's unique and diverse biological resources.

Therefore, the identification and control of invasive species is of great importance.

A workshop on identification of invasive plants will be held on June 22, 2010 in the basement of the library at 100 Old Chelsea Rd, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Contact Marie-Ève at 819-827-6201 to register.

If you see an invasive plant in Chelsea, please contact Isabelle Pitre at 819-827-6227, to report your sighting. We are working on mapping local invasions in an attempt to better understand and control this problem.



Dog-strangling vine

Description

Dog-strangling vine (*Cynanchum rossicum*), is a non-native perennial, twining vine from Eurasia. The vines can grow up to 2m in height, and have small pinkish to dark maroon flowers that start to appear in late May to early June. Opposite leaves are ovate, dark green, smooth, and shiny. The seed pods begin appearing in late June and are mature by mid to late July. Each pod produces numerous wind-borne silky-haired seeds.



Reproduction

DSV can reproduce by seed and by its massive underground root system (rhizomes). The seed is extremely viable once it germinates and the rhizomes can also propagate many new plants.

Ecological threat

DSV grows well in the sun, the shade and all soil conditions, making it extremely difficult to control. The vines can form dense colonies, smothering short plants, and can grow over small shrubs and trees causing deformities and possibly death.



Management options

- Digging up the plant and the entire root crown before the seeds mature.
- Ploughing and planting an annual crop until the seed soil bank is depleted.
- Mowing the plants when the seed pods are starting to appear and covering the area with mulch.

Warning!

The sap of this plant can cause an allergic reaction in some people. Wear gloves when handling it and wash exposed skin with soap afterward.

Disposal of the plants

Small infestations :

- Place the seeds and roots in paper bags to dry them out, and burn them.
- Boil the seeds for at least ten minutes to ensure that they will never germinate.
- Store the seeds in water until they rot (several months).
- The stalk and leaves can be composted.

Large infestations :

- Place the seeds and roots, or whole plants, in paper bags and keep them until they can be safely burned.
- Add water to the plants in heavy duty plastic bags and leave them out in the sun for a few months. The resulting stew can be disposed of safely in a compost pile.

Chelsea residents can bring their dog-strangling vine plants to the municipal garage on **October 16, 2010** from **10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**, provided that they are placed in paper bags.

Information

http://www.ofnc.ca/fletcher/research/swallowwort/index_e.php
<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/cyro1.htm>
<http://www.toronto.ca/trees>

Chelsea Web Site:
www.chelsea.ca/environnement/index_e.php

Photos:

1 and 3 – www.onfc.ca © Christine Hanrahan
2- www.pbase.com/fwg/april_blob_april_2009 © Christine Hanrahan
4, 5 and 7 - ©John M. Randall/The Nature Conservancy
6- <http://guildwoodgardens.blogspot.com>