



Volume 3
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Summer/
Fall 2009

Unwanted Invaders

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New Legislation to Protect Manitoba from Invasive Species!

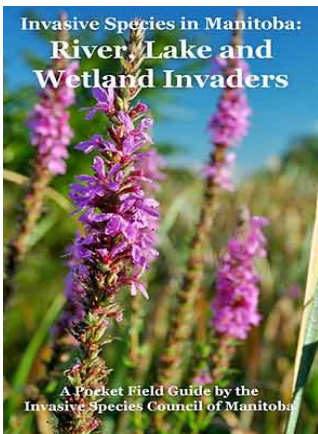
The **Forest Health Protection Act** was proclaimed in May with the goal of protecting Manitoba's forest resources from invasive threats. The act concerns invasive pests and diseases which have not yet entered Manitoba, as well as threats which are already a problem in the province. These include the mountain pine beetle, which has caused significant forest damage in B.C. and Alberta, the emerald ash borer, which has been a major problem in Ontario, and the gypsy moth, which has recently been experiencing population growth in certain areas of Manitoba.

A more familiar threat is that of Dutch elm disease. This new act replaces the Dutch Elm Disease Act and modifies restrictions on the movement of elm tree material. It prohibits people from bringing harmful forest pests or

certain types of wood into Manitoba, which is significant as invasive pests are often spread through shipments of wood and wood products. It also outlines actions that can be taken by provincial officials to prevent or control invasive outbreaks, such as restricting land access in certain areas or issuing quarantine orders prohibiting moving or tampering with potentially infected forest products. The act allows for the creation of forest threat response zones, where certain types of forestry work can be prohibited or trees removed in order to reduce/eliminate threats, and also regulates licensing for professional arborists in Manitoba.

It is hoped that these measures will better protect Manitoba's trees and forests, and in turn the provincial economy, the forest industry and the province's natural landscapes.

NEW Fact Sheets & Booklets Available!



ISCM's NEW WEBSITE
Coming in September!

www.invasivespeciesmanitoba.com

Watch for
Announcements!

Invasive Species Council Takes a Trip Down the Souris River

By: Ashleigh Hall, ISCM Mapping Assistant
Photos by: Ashleigh Hall & Kristin Pingatore

A big concern of the ISCM is the threat of an invasion of the shrub Salt Cedar (*Tamarix spp.* See Page 4 for details). Although naturalized clusters of the shrub have not yet been found in Manitoba, there is a huge problem with Salt Cedar in the northern and central plains of the United States, in particular Montana and North Dakota. This is a concern for the ISCM because the Souris River flows through North Dakota close to areas of known Salt Cedar presence before it enters Manitoba in the southwest corner of the province. As Salt Cedar puts out hundreds of thousands of seeds that can float downstream along waterways, it is likely that the Souris River Valley will be the first pathway for this species into Manitoba.

To investigate this possibility, in July the ISCM sent two Mapping Assistants, Kristin Pingatore and Ashleigh Hall, to take a trip down the Souris River starting at the Canada/US border to see if they could spot any Salt Cedar growing along the river's banks. As part of the planning process ISCM contacted the West Souris River Conservation District. As luck would have it, employees from the WSRCD as well

as the Turtle Mountain Conservation District were going to be undertaking their own trip down the Souris to conduct a riparian assessment and so kindly invited Kristin and Ashleigh to join them on their journey. On July 6th the groups met up in Melita and drove south to the border where the boats were put in under the southernmost bridge over the river. With eyes peeled and a GPS at the ready, Kristin and Ashleigh set off on their adventure.



The river's water level was higher than usual for the time of year, and so, along the section surveyed, the river was mostly bordered by marshland which then led into pasture-

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land. As a result it was easy to scan the surrounding area for Salt Cedar and, fortunately, Kristin and Ashleigh did not find evidence of its presence. They ended up surveying approximately 20 kilometres of the Souris, ending at the campground by the Snyder Dam. Based on the fact that no Salt Cedar was seen up to that point along with the degree to which the river twists and turns along its way, it was a logical place to end the trip. However, downstream of the campground area the riverbank becomes more forested and so a lengthier survey covering this portion of the river may be valuable in the future, such as if the ISCM decides to undertake this surveying trip annually.

This trip had the obvious benefit of the ISCM being able to see firsthand whether or not Salt Cedar has infiltrated Manitoba via the Souris River Valley. Another positive that arose from this experience, which was not expected at the beginning of the planning process, was the formation of new relationships with both the West Souris River and Turtle Mountain Conservation Districts. This helps the ISCM raise awareness of invasive species in Manitoba and de-



velop connections which may be valuable in the future. In terms of the specific threat of Salt Cedar to Manitoba, there is now a group of individuals living and working in the southwest part of the province who are aware of the issue and will be keeping a lookout for this invasive species, prepared to report any sightings to the ISCM.

The ISCM would like to thank the Turtle Mountain and West Souris River Conservation Districts for inviting Kristin and Ashleigh to join them on their trip down the Souris River. We look forward to the opportunity to partner with them again in the future.

Response to the Riparian Invasion

17th Annual

North American Weed Management Association Conference and Trade Show

September 21-24, 2009. Holiday Inn, Kearney, NE.

“Improving the health of our riparian areas”

The North American Weed Management Association (NAWMA) is a network of public and private professional weed managers who are involved in implementing any phase of a county, municipal, district, state, provincial or federal noxious weed law. Each year a conference is hosted by a different province or state highlighting that province or state's efforts regarding invasive plants.

This year's conference will be held in Kearney, Nebraska, hosted by the Nebraska Weed Control Association and its many partners. The focus will be on the riparian plant invasion on Nebraska's river systems, including prob-

lems, responses and future plans.

At right: Eurasian Watermilfoil photo courtesy of A. Fox, University of Florida, www.bugwood.org



Riparian plant invaders are a serious threat across North America. Conference attendees will hear about and see the results of Nebraska's two-year effort to combat this issue, which included a riparian vegetation management task force and vegetative management grant program projects, as well as amendments to the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act.

Speaker topics will also include the North American situation concerning Phragmites, and methods of preparing for future riparian plant invaders, such as through Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR). There will also be a tour on the Platte River, providing attendees with an opportunity to view its problems with invasive plants and associated management responses.

In all there will be a full schedule of events with nationwide speakers. For some extra entertainment, there will also be a banquet and awards ceremony as well as the Great Platte River Chuck Wagon barbeque and show.

Riparian areas are a very important component of many healthy ecosystems in Manitoba, as well as the rest of North America. It is key that we do all we can to protect them from unwanted invaders.



The 17th Annual NAWMA Conference will provide an excellent opportunity to discuss this issue and share ideas and solutions for tackling the problem. ISCM hopes to carpool with people interested in attending the conference. Please contact Cheryl Heming at (204) 232-6021 for more information.

Adventures in Sturgeon Creek: Biodiversity Day

Article & Photos by: Danica Wotton, past ISCM Assistant Coordinator

In partnership with the Assiniboine Watershed Network, the ISCM participated in an education and awareness day on Sturgeon Creek. ISCM celebrated the International Day of Biodiversity on May 22, by coordinating an invasive species GPS hunt. The participants were a group of grade 10-12 students from Westwood Collegiate.

In the morning, the students moved through three stations which included fish sampling, macro invertebrate sampling, and the invasive species hunt. For each of these activities organizers challenged the students to analyze the pur-



pose and importance of monitoring and recording this information.

For the ISCM GPS hunt students broke into four groups of approximately 3-4 people and had to locate the five stations entered into their GPS units. Each station had a photo of an invasive species and the groups had to identify them and answer related questions. Everyone was given a copy of the ISCM *Invasive Species in Manitoba: River, Lake and Wetland Invaders Pocket Field Guide*, to help them find the answers.

The results of this activity were invaluable! Individuals gained knowledge on the invasive species they researched and ways they can be identified. They became more aware of the harm invasive species can cause to our economy and environment. We also discussed as a group why it is important to prevent and control the spread of invasive species.

Participants were very efficient in using the GPS units and finding their coordinates. Some groups decided to run from site to site while others took their time at each, answering the questions before moving on to the next location. Whatever their method, everyone benefited from this activity. The reward for all their hard work was a free ISCM t-shirt, which the students were ecstatic to receive.

The day started off cool but eventually the sun came out and it turned out to be a beautiful spring afternoon. After lunch we spent our time planting trees on the east side of the creek. A couple of groups were very efficient and we got the job done in no time. Some people wandered the creek in hip waders picking up debris and filling buckets. Other duties included shoveling, carrying trees, filling holes, and eating freezies brought by MLA Jim Rondeau, who stopped by to dig a hole or two.

Overall the day was an absolute success. There was great interest and participation in the activities and students gained hands-on experience using sampling equipment and GPS units. But best of all was that everyone involved got to help improve the riparian area of Sturgeon Creek and better our environment.



NCC Leafy Spurge Pull

Article & Photo by: Kristin Pingatore, ISCM Mapping Assistant

The Leafy Spurge pulling volunteer event July 11 at the Stony Mountain Prairie Reserve was a wonderful success. The ISCM and the Nature Conservancy of Canada both had a hand in organizing the morning, and staff from both organizations were present at the event. Stony Mountain's reserve is a plot of native prairie patched with burr oak and aspen forest that is now in the possession of NCC.

Previously delayed by rain, this morning was sunny and breezy – great outdoor weather. Everyone was toured around by NCC staff to get a good look at the extent of the mining operation that continues to

disturb the area as well as the recovery of the prairie on top of the 'mountain'. During our tour, everyone delighted in the many native flowers blooming in a unique colourful display that few people ever get to see. At the first sighting of ripe saskatoons, the group excitedly dashed forward to sample these fruits of summer – leaving two non-prairie folk standing there questioning until we



brought a sample back for them to try. Soon everyone was pulling and bagging spurge from several threatening patches, noting the odd caterpillar or moth cocoon from earlier releases of biological Leafy Spurge control. The moths seemed most successful at creating a population, and their spurge flower-inhibiting cocoons were spotted all over the weed patches.

In no time at all, the reserve was cleared of spurge, which was bagged for pick-up by a local councillor who had offered to burn the plants to prevent the ripening seeds from spreading. Volunteers were each given a folder containing information on Leafy Spurge, as well as an ISCM calendar, pocket guide, and NCC's newsletter "The Ark".

Protect our Province from Invasive Species

By: Danica Wotton, past ISCM Assistant Coordinator

As we enjoy nature this summer and fall through camping, angling, gardening, or hiking, it's hard to believe that with only the slightest slip we could be contributing to the decline of biodiversity in these environments. Every year people travel across North America to enjoy the great outdoors, but this activity increases the threat of unwanted invaders coming and going to new ecosystems.

Invasive species have become a major threat to the world's ecosystems, and Manitoba's lands and waters are no exception. While some invaders, such as Purple Loosestrife, Leafy Spurge and Canada Thistle, are well established and widespread in the province, others are just starting to find their way into natural areas. At this point, it is still possible to prevent their spread altogether.

Invasive species are the second most significant threat to biodiversity, after habitat loss
(World Conservation Union).

The following are a couple of species we would like you to watch for this summer and fall, especially if you are in natural areas, or moving from province to province. By reporting any sightings of invasive species to the ISCM you can help contribute to the preservation of Manitoba's natural areas.

Photo credits: Middle: J. Dowding, CFIA
www.inspection.gc.ca

Top Right: S. Dewey, Utah State University,
www.bugwood.org

Emerald Ash Borer

Across southwestern Ontario, this highly destructive insect has single-handedly destroyed millions of ash trees. Moving firewood from place to place is the quickest way for this bug to get around, so Federal Ministerial Orders have prohibited the movement of ash wood from infested areas of Ontario in an attempt to slow the spread. Another effective method of prevention is awareness; if we can recognize the symptoms of an infected ash tree we can conduct inspections and report any sightings of the insect immediately. This way the infestation can be contained and eradicated as soon as possible to avoid further spread.



Although the adult insect eats the leaves of the ash tree, the real damage is done by the larva which chew tunnels in between the trees' bark, cutting off essential nutrients and eventually killing the tree.

Infected ash trees can be identified by looking at their crowns, which will be thinning with lost leaves and displaying dead branches. The trunk may have vertical cracks or long shoots growing from it and if a piece of the bark is removed s-shaped tunnels filled with fine sawdust will be visible.

Salt Cedar



Salt Cedar (*Tamarix ramosissima*, *T. parviflora*), commonly known as "Pink Cascade" or "Tamarisk", is one of the top 10 worst weeds in the United States and has escaped to wild and natural areas from Florida to California and up to North Dakota.

Salt Cedar is not yet on the Manitoba Noxious Weeds List and as a result it can be found at nurseries and garden centers throughout the province. It has been identified as an invasive alien species by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, named as one of The Nature Conservancy of Canada's "dirty dozen" weeds, and listed as one of the World Conservation Union's 100 "worst invaders" (Nature Conservancy of Canada).

An individual Salt Cedar is capable of using 750 litres of water per day, significantly lowering the amount of available water for native species. Also, its leaves secrete salt which increases the salinity of the surrounding soil, and it can clog waterways with its roots. This species tends to be very aggressive, producing up to 500,000 seeds a year. These characteristics can cause significant damage to the ecosystems Salt Cedar invades. Help prevent the spread of Salt Cedar in Manitoba by reporting sightings and promptly removing any on your property.

Success! Scentless Chamomile Gall Midge in Manitoba

By Jane Thornton, MAFRI

Serendipity is a marvelous thing. Last year I met Harvey Anderson from Saskatchewan's Invasive Alien Plants Group Planning Advisory. The conversation turned to Scentless Chamomile and Harvey graciously offered to send me plants infected with the Gall Midge in September. True to his word the bus depot called me in September and three releases arrived.

Two releases were planted in the Erickson area and one in the Morden area.

This spring we excitedly went to check on the little critters, and nothing! But wait, seven weeks later the producers reported to me that they survived and have spread!

The Scentless Chamomile Gall Midge is a delicate little fly that lays its eggs in the growing points of the plant. The eggs hatch and feed on the growing points. The galls can be found in the rosette, bolting stem, leaf axils or flowers and are identified by the hard gall and stunted leaves

that look more moss-like. In Manitoba the midge will likely go through two generations per summer and its populations can increase 150 fold! If populations seem stable we will be harvesting and moving the gall midge to new locations in the fall.

Saskatchewan reports that they have had good survival of the Gall Midge so we are looking forward to continued success in Manitoba.

Upcoming Invasive Species Events

August 2009

- Aug 8 Prairie Day at Manitoba Tall Grass Prairie Preserve, Tolstoi, MB.
Information at 204-425-3229, or email tgpphq@mts.net
- Aug 10 Community Thistle Party at Sturgeon Creek, Winnipeg, MB.
Contact Amber (Assiniboine Watershed Network) at 204-986-7235
- Aug 15 Tansy Pull and Stroll at the Tall Grass Prairie Preserve, Tolstoi, MB.
Information at 204-942-6156, or www.conservationvolunteers.ca
- Aug 28 ISCM EDRR Committee Meeting, Portage la Prairie, MB.

September 2009

ISCM New Website Unveiling!

- Sept 9-10 IVMA Vegetation Tour and Seminar, Winnipeg, MB.
Contact Errol Taggart at 204-269-1531, or see www.ivmamansask.com/tours.htm
- Sept 18/ Oct 9 ISCM Executive Committee Meeting, Portage la Prairie, MB.
- Sept 21-24 North American Weed Management Association (NAWMA) 17th Annual Conference & Trade Show
"Response to the Riparian Invasion", Kearney, Nebraska.
Information at www.nawma.org
**see details on Page 2*

November 2009

- Nov 3-5 Foraging Workshop - Teaching cattle to eat weeds.
Contact Jane Thornton at 204-729-1384
- Nov 19-20 ISCM Workshop and Annual General Meeting, Portage la Prairie, MB.

February 2010

- Feb 25-27 9th Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference, Winnipeg, MB.
Information at 204-253-8623, or www.pcsc.ca



*Flowering
Rush in
King's Park,
Winnipeg,
MB.*

*Photo by:
Ashleigh Hall,
ISCM.*

Who we are...

The Invasive Species Council of Manitoba (ISCM) is a non-profit organization providing a centralized and coordinated province-wide leadership body adopting a collaborative approach to invasive species in Manitoba.

Vision...

Maintain a healthy, bio-diverse landscape through the prevention, early detection, and education and awareness of invasive alien species management practices in order to eradicate or limit further spread.

ISCM Executive Board* 2009

Cheryl Heming
ISCM Coordinator

Garth Ball
Manitoba Conservation

Doug Cattani
MAFRI

Bill Gardiner
MAFRI

Glen Campbell
Manitoba Cattle Producers Association

Ryan Gibson
Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group

John Johnston
Manitoba Weed Supervisors Association

Julie Pelc
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Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration

Wendy Railey
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Karen Rempel
Rural Development Institute

Lisette Ross
Ducks Unlimited Canada

Jane Thornton
MAFRI

Wybo Vandershuit
Riding Mountain National Park

Linda Christianson
Manitoba Conservation

*Other Executive members to be confirmed.

The ISCM would like to thank our funding sources and partners, for we would not exist without the support of:

- Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada
Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration
- Agriculture Sustainability Initiative through Manitoba
Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives
- Assiniboine Watershed Network, City of Winnipeg,
Ducks Unlimited Canada, Manitoba Agriculture, Food &
Rural Initiatives, and Manitoba Water Stewardship (in-
kind support)
- Dow AgroSciences Canada
- ECO Canada
- Evergreen
Unilever Aquatic Stewardship Grant Program
- Industrial Vegetation and Management Association
Manitoba/ Saskatchewan
- Invasive Alien Species Partnership Program
A Government of Canada initiative
- Industrial Vegetation Management Association—
Manitoba/Saskatchewan (IVMA—Man/Sask)
- Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group
- Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives
(MAFRI), Agriculture Sustainability Initiative
- Manitoba Purple Loosestrife Project
- Manitoba Urban Green Team, Province of Manitoba
- Manitoba Weed Supervisors Association
- Rural Development Institute, Brandon University
Service Canada Summer Jobs, Government of Canada
- Sustainable Development Innovations Fund, Manitoba
Conservation
- Young Canada Works Summer Job Program through
Heritage Canada Foundation



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STOP THE INVASION



RED BARTSIA

Odontites serotina

ONCE THE SEEDS INFEST A CROP OR PASTURE RED BARTSIA PLANTS BECOME EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO REMOVE.

UNWANTED PLANTS

Origin

It first appeared in the Interlake region of Manitoba in the 1950s. It was introduced from German crates which were shipped to the Canadian Armed Forces Base at Gimli.

Status

Until recently the main region of infestation included areas around Gimli, Meleb and Fraserwood. New areas that have been infested are Souris, Carman and parts of Stonewall, Winnipeg, and Selkirk.

Impacts

Plants produce 1400 seeds a year, which are equipped with coarse hairs that stick to clothing, fur, and vehicles enabling them to travel long distances. Red barista out-competes native vegetation. Poses a serious economic concern for pastures and hayland.

Where to Look

It is a weed found primarily in pastures, hayfields, and roadsides.



LOOK FOR:

- ♦ **STEMS:** ARE ERECT, AND BRANCHING TO REACH HEIGHTS OF 15-30CM.
- ♦ **LEAVES:** NARROW BEAR CLASPING LEAVES, IN PAIRS, ABOUT 3 CM IN LENGTH. STEM AND LEAVES ARE HAIRY.
- ♦ **FLOWERS:** REDDISH-PURPLE IN COLOR DEVELOP IN SPIKE-LIKE CLUSTERS ON THE TOP HALF OF THE STEM. RED BARTSIA FLOWERS IN LATE SUMMER.

PREVENT THE SPREAD IN MANITOBA

Prevention is the best protection. Early sightings can be sprayed with herbicide and in fields not suitable for chemicals, cultivation and planting competitive crops is an effective control method.

Report a Sighting!

E-mail: info@invasivespeciesmanitoba.com

Phone: (204) 232-6021

Canada

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Photo Credits: Banner Photo: Fred Paulson, Interlake Weed District; Close up of flowers: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/d/db/Red_bartisa_800.jpg; View of many plants: John