



Volume 5  
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# Unwanted Invaders

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**Invasive Species Council of Manitoba**  
c/o 5006 Roblin Blvd. Winnipeg, MB R3R 0G7  
Ph: (204) 232-6021 Fax: (204) 986-7236  
Email: [info@invasivespeciesmanitoba.com](mailto:info@invasivespeciesmanitoba.com)

## INVASIVE PLANTS IN THE PEMBINA VALLEY

By Amanda Dumont;  
Assistant Project  
Coordinator, ISCM

The towns of Morden and Somerset and A Rocha Environmental Stewardship hosted invasive species workshops that focused on plants that are a concern in their respected areas.

The event in Morden took place July 19 and was hosted by Richard Wakentin of Stanley Soil

Management Association. Richard gave a brief discussion on three species of concern in his area; diffuse knapweed, common tansy and leafy spurge.

It's unclear how diffuse knapweed came into the area but all attempts to eradicate the plant is done with pulling and when necessary chemical applications.

In the hopes of deterring

mice from entering homes, common tansy was planted in the 1800's around the houses of homesteaders in the area. It has since spread and currently there is no control for this unwanted plant.

The use of flea beetles on leafy spurge and the progress that has been seen in sites that are being monitored was discussed.

(Continued on page 4)

## 2012 Prairie Invasive Species Calendar

Available mid  
September



Gypsy Moth Larva

Email ISCM for a  
copy:

[info@invasivespeciesmanitoba.com](mailto:info@invasivespeciesmanitoba.com)

## 19<sup>th</sup> Annual North American Weed Management Association (NAWMA) Conference



By Cheryl Heming, ISCM Executive Director

The 19th annual North American Weed Management Association is less than a week away and conference committee members; Cheryl Heming, Robin Hamilton, Wanda McFayden, John Johnston, and Michelle Ammeter are hard at work putting on the final touches for this year program content.

This years conference runs from September 20-22 and special features include an evening reception and Beef Barbeque Banquet offsite. There are three field tour options offered on the 21st; Manitoba Interlake, southeast Manitoba and City of Winnipeg

Free Workshop: Train-the-Trainer– Invasive Species Early Detection Rapid Response Systems Workshop by Randy G Westbrooks, of Southeastern Community College, Whitevill, North Carolina. To sign up email ISCM [info@invasivespeciesmanitoba.ca](mailto:info@invasivespeciesmanitoba.ca)

Registration & tradeshow packages are available for download from the NAWMA ([www.nawma.org](http://www.nawma.org)) and ISCM ([www.invasivespeciesmanitoba.com](http://www.invasivespeciesmanitoba.com)) websites.

See you next week in Winnipeg

# Trying to Purge the Spurge

By Amanda Dumont Assistant Project Coordinator, ISCM

A heroic attempt to save Crestview Park from a serious leafy spurge infestation took place July 13, and 14 by the City of Winnipeg, Naturalist Service Branch, Premier Personnel, a non profit agency that assists in finding employment for individuals with development or other learning disabilities and the Invasive Species Council of Manitoba.

Designed as a positive work experience for the four individuals involved it quickly became clear that after four years of pulling, the spread of leafy spurge has become too vast and pulling it futile. Attention was turned towards the abundance of Canada thistle that is also growing out of control in the no mow zones.

Leafy spurge can regenerate from the smallest root fragment, and roots can grow up to 8m down into the ground and a single plant can produce 140 seeds.

An action plan will be designed for next summer to try and prevent further spread of leafy spurge.

For more information on Premier Personnel visit: [www.premierpersonnel.ca](http://www.premierpersonnel.ca)

For information about the City of Winnipeg Naturalist Service Branch visit : [www.winnipeg.ca/publicworks/naturalist/ns/](http://www.winnipeg.ca/publicworks/naturalist/ns/)



Members of Premier Personnel Green team and Kevin from ISCM standing in front of bags of weeds pulled July 13. Photos taken by Amanda Dumont



Leafy Spurge Hawk moth caterpillar

Photo taken by Amanda Dumont

## Killing Kudzu with Helium

Erosion Control Editor Blog, August 2, 2011 and CBC News September 23, 2009

Kudzu vine a plant native to Asia, was introduced to the US in the 1876 for the world fair and later planted for erosion control because of its effectiveness at anchoring the soil. Its taproots draw minerals from deep in the ground to the topsoil, increases nitrogen content of the soil, animals can graze on it, and it has some potential medical uses as well. These benefits are overshadowed by its fast-growing and resilient nature

Kudzu vine looks like a 2m tall bean stalk growing 30 cm a day and blankets everything in its path, from hydro poles to houses. It also kills trees and other plants by girdling then as they climb, breaking them from the weight or blanketing the host plant preventing photosynthesis which results in death. Not only does it decimates local flora but it's extremely difficult to kill. It is especially widespread in the southeastern US

and is know as "the vine that ate the south".

In 2009 a small patch was found on a bluff overlooking Lake Erie in Leamington Ontario but it's believed that this patch of 120X50 m can be controlled before it spreads to a new area.

There have been many attempts at killing kudzu, but most are expensive, labor-intensive, or ineffective over the long term, but there is hope yet.

Jacob Schindler, a 17-year-old from Georgia, is expanding on what originally began as a sixth-grade science project, is successfully using helium to kill kudzu. He has invented and patented a drill that delivers helium into the root system and is currently working with Auburn University to test the method over large areas.



Photo: S. Brinker

Photo: <http://www.invadingspecies.com>

## Endangered Tall Grass Prairie in Danger

Amanda Dumont

Assistant Project Coordinator, ISCM

Friends of the Birds Hill Park and the ISCM have worked together and organized a noxious weed pull the evening of August 17. The unwanted plant being removed was spotted knapweed which was growing in the tall grass prairie of Birds Hill Provincial Park. If left unchecked this plant can crowd out the native vegetation and wind up taking over this fragile ecosystem. With the help of 10 pairs of volunteer hands the site was cleared of the knapweed plant in less than 2 hours.

Spotted knapweed can disperse their seeds either by wind or the plant can detach from the roots and tumble about in the wind release seeds where ever it goes. It takes two years for the plant to become full mature. The first year they grow as a rosette and in the second year they bolt, produce flowers then seeds. The flowers are pinkish-

purple with bracts at the base of the flower that have black tips. Seeds can remain viable for 5-10 years which is why continued monitoring and hand pulling will be needed until the seed bank is exhausted.

At the Manitoba Tall Grass Prairie Preserve Nature Conservancy staff are trying to get a control on St. John's wort which is growing and spreading throughout the prairie. ISCM staff came to help to remove the seed heads of the plants to prevent further spread. St. John's wort also spreads by underground roots, so pulling it would be of little use.

Tall grass prairie is a delicate and highly endangered ecosystem with only less than one half of a percent remaining. This is why no chemical control can be used, making manual control with the aid of volunteers the only way to rid these areas of unwanted invasive plant species.



Spotted knapweed flower;  
Photo: <http://www.mtweed.org>



Group photo of knapweed pullers  
Photo taken by Cary Hamel, Friends of Birds Hill Park



St John's wort flowers and seeds; Photo:  
<http://www.wildflowersofireland.net>

## Mapping with ISCM

The Invasive Species Council of Manitoba has been working hard on creating a mapping database of invasives species in Manitoba across the Prairies with other partners:

Updated occurrence maps on invasives will be available on the ISCM website this fall

The Prairie Regional Invasive Plant Species mapping website was transferred to ISCM in 2010 and with the support of the Agricultural Sustainability Initiative and later the Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council, improvements have been made to the site. A new look was created and over 10 user friendly upgrades installed. Over 15 new species were also added to the site and 7500 points of data were added from ISCM stakeholders and staff.

Take a look and see what invasive plants occur in your area: [www.crerl.usask.ca/prips/](http://www.crerl.usask.ca/prips/)

(Continued from page 1)

In total there are over 200 beetle release and the *Aphthona lacertosa* flea beetle has been the most successful in terms of controlling leafy spurge. Richard emphasized that the beetles will never fully eradicate leafy spurge but at least they create some sort of control for this economically and environmentally destructive plant.

The event concluded with a walking tour of a cow pasture where all three plants are found.

weed supervisor for the Argyle, Lorne and Somerset weed district gave a tour of the areas infested with nodding thistle, field scabious and scentless chamomile.

Nodding thistle has become a serious problem in the area, especially in over grazed pastures. Field scabious on the other hand, is restricted to a small patch in a ditch and

there is high hopes for eradication of this plant.

Scentless chamomile, ox-eye daisy and common tansy are found along an old railway line and it's believed that this is the source to their introduction into the area.

The last event held July 24 was hosted by A Rocha Environmental Stewardship at Pembina Valley Provincial Park where tansy removal took place. The removal was assisted by a Stephenfield Conservation staff member and her Green Team assistant. In total, 8 garbage bags were filled with unwanted plant material



Field Scabious  
Photo taken by  
Amanda Dumont,  
ISCM

## Britain: Giant hogweed gone wild along Thames

Adapted from London Free Press, July 8, 2011

Giant hogweed, an invasive species that can cause serious burns, even blindness, has gone hog wild along a 10-kilometre stretch of the Thames River northeast of London with thousands of plants lining the riverside.

With a single plant producing as many as 120,000 seeds, there is deepening concern river flooding will sweep the dangerous weed downstream into St. Marys and eventually into London.

The hogweed plants have taken root on the river banks from about one concession south of Mitchell down to one or two concessions north of St. Marys, said Brandon Williamson, a land management technician with the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority.

Originally imported from Asia as an ornamental garden plant decades ago and sold at some Ontario garden centres up to a year ago, giant hogweed can grow more than five metres tall and looks much like Queen Anne's-Lace.

Its seeds can remain viable in the soil for up to 15 years.

The danger is in the hogweed's clear sap that contains photosensitizing

compounds.

Exposure to the sap can cause painful, burning blisters on skin when it is exposed to sunlight. It can also result in severe scarring that can persist for years.

Some of the giant hogweed is on private land, while other patches are on land owned by the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority.

Williamson said he has received dozens of calls from landowners the past two years concerned they had giant hogweed. He has asked them to send in photos and in most cases, the plant has turned out to be giant hogweed look-alikes angelica or cow parsnip.

This spring he received a call from a Motherwell resident about giant hogweed. It was the real thing.

The Conservation Authority is now working on a plan to counter-attack the massive infestation before it moves downstream to St. Marys and London.

Procedures have to be worked out on how to remove plants, best times, and how to communicate with the public, Williamson said.

Francine MacDonald, an invasive species biologist with the Ontario

Natural Resources Ministry based in Peterborough, said giant hogweed was added to Ontario's noxious weed list.

That means property owners are responsible for eliminating the weed in areas where it could affect agricultural lands, she said.

By designating it as a noxious weed, the province halted the sale of seeds.

"You can legally plant it, but because it is on the noxious weed list you can no longer sell it," MacDonald said.

MacDonald's advice is for people is not to plant giant hogweed and for individuals to stay away from the plants.



Photo: <http://www.tdc.ca/gianthogweed.htm>

## Upcoming Invasive Species Events

### September 2011

- Sept 10-14 ISA Prairie Chapter Conference & Tree Climbing Championship, Hotel Fort Garry, Winnipeg, MB. [www.isaprairie.com](http://www.isaprairie.com)
- Sept 19-21 2011 North American Weed Management Annual Conference, Canad Inns Fort Garry, Winnipeg, MB. See 'Current News' at [www.invasivespeciesmanitoba.com](http://www.invasivespeciesmanitoba.com) or visit [www.nawma.org](http://www.nawma.org).
- Sept 30 Manitoba GIS User Group (MCGC) Conference, Canad Inns Fort Garry, Winnipeg, MB. See MCGC website at <http://www.mgug.ca/newsletters> to register

### October 2011

- Oct 1<sup>st</sup> Roland Pumpkin Fair,

### November 2011

- Nov 4 and 5 Manitoba Beef Producers Annual General Meeting and livestock expo, Keystone Center, Brandon
- Nov 30 or Dec 7 ISCM EDRR Workshop and Annual Meeting Holiday Inn West, Winnipeg MB for more info call 232-2012

### January 2012

- TBA Invasive Plant Council of British Columbia Plant Forum

### August 2012

- August 6-10 2012 North American Prairie Conference, University of Manitoba Campus, Winnipeg, MB. [www.napc2012.org](http://www.napc2012.org)

### September 2012

- TBA 20th Annual NAWMA Conference , Kansas City, Kansas

### **Online Invasive Species Management Training Program Southeastern Community College, Whiteville North Carolina, Fall 2011**

The program series which is now completed, includes:

- Introduction to Invasive Species
- Management Strategies
- Overview of IVS Programs
- Invasive Plant Survey Methods
- Invasive Plant Control Methods

The courses are being offered as an Alternative Second Year Focus for resident students in Rebecca's Environmental Science Technology Program at SCC, as a 'stand alone' Certificate of Invasive Species Management for distance learning students, or individually as Continuing Education Credits for students who just want to take a course or two.

With a full complement of online training materials now in place, the program is ready to accept a larger group of students – students who are interested in mastering the basic principles of invasive species management, and in interacting with invasive species management professionals from across the world.

**For more information Contact Rebecca Westbrook: [rwestbrooks@sccnc.edu](mailto:rwestbrooks@sccnc.edu)**

## ISCM Executive Board\* 2011

### 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.*

**Cheryl Heming**  
ISCM Executive Director

**Jane Thornton, Vice-Chair**  
MAFRI

**Glen Campbell**  
Manitoba Cattle Producers Association

**John Johnston**  
Manitoba Weed Supervisors Association

**Ron Moss**  
Agri-Environment Services Branch

**Beverly Dunlop**  
Agri-Environment Services Branch

**Linda Christianson**  
Manitoba Conservation, Forestry

**Cameron Mevekon**  
Manitoba Conservation

Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group

**Doug Cattani, Chair**  
University of Manitoba

**Lisette Ross, Secretary-Treasurer**  
Ducks Unlimited Canada

**Wybo Vandershuit**  
Riding Mountain National Park

**Julie Sveinson Pelc**  
Nature Conservancy of Canada- Manitoba Region

**Wendy Ralley / Candace Parks**  
Manitoba Water Stewardship

**Bill Gardiner**  
MAFRI

**Laurie Wesson**  
Fisheries & Oceans Canada (Emeritus)

\*Other Executive members to be confirmed.

## The ISCM would like to thank our funding sources and partners, without whom we would not exist:

- Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, Agri-Environment Services Branch (formerly Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration)
- Agriculture Sustainability Initiative, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives
- Assiniboine Watershed Network
- City of Winnipeg
- Ducks Unlimited Canada
- Dow Agrosiences Canada
- Environment Canada, Science Horizons
- Fisheries Enhancement Fund
- Integrated Vegetation and Management Association Manitoba/ Saskatchewan
- Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group
- Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI)
- Manitoba Conservation
- Manitoba Purple Loosestrife Project
- Manitoba Urban Green Team, Province of Manitoba
- Manitoba Water Stewardship
- Manitoba Weed Supervisors Association
- Nature Conservancy of Canada, Manitoba Region
- Riding Mountain National Park
- Service Canada Summer Jobs, Government of Canada
- T & T Seeds
- University of Manitoba



For more information Contact:

**Invasive Species Council of Manitoba**

c/o 5006 Roblin Blvd. Winnipeg, Manitoba R3R 0G7

Ph: (204) 232-6021 Fax: (204) 986-7236

E-mail: [info@invasivespeciesmanitoba.com](mailto:info@invasivespeciesmanitoba.com)

# STOP THE SPREAD

# INVASIVE GIANT REED

*Phragmites australis subsp. australis*

PHRAGMITES OUTCOMPETES OTHER WETLAND PLANTS THAT ARE  
IMPORTANT FOOD SOURCES FOR WATERFOWL

## UNWANTED PLANTS

### Origin

There are 2 types of phragmites in North America - one is native and the other was accidentally introduced from Europe in the 1700's. Establishing itself on the Atlantic coast it has since spread across North America.

### Status

Phragmites is found throughout Canada and the United States and recently a number of stands were found in Winnipeg and the surrounding area.

### Impacts

Phragmites out competes the native plants by forming thick stands, causing a change in the nutrient and hydrological cycle, which in turn alters the habitat for wildlife.

### Where to Look

Semi-aquatic, the invasive giant reed can be found in disturbed wetlands at higher elevations but can also be found along roads and within ditches.

### LOOK FOR:

- ◇ LARGE PERENNIAL GRASS THAT GROWS UP TO 4.5 M TALL OR MORE IN DENSE PATCHES ALONG WATERWAYS
- ◇ STEM: NATIVE STEM ARE RED TO PURPLE IN THE FALL, INVASIVE IS PALE YELLOW TO GREEN
- ◇ FLOWERS: FLOWERS IN MID SEPTEMBER TO EARLY OCTOBER WHEN NATIVE PLANTS HAVE ALREADY DIED BACK



Native phragmites ligule



Invasive phragmites ligule



Native phragmites seed head on left,

invasive phragmites seed head on right

To report a sighting call:  
Stop Aquatic Invasive Species

[info@invasivespeciesmanitoba.com](mailto:info@invasivespeciesmanitoba.com)  
(204)232-6021



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Invasive Species Council of  
Manitoba  
c/o 5006 Roblin Boulevard

Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3R 0G7

ph: (204) 232-6021 fax: (204) 986-7236

Photo Credits: invasive phrag on rte 90 @ lindenswoods Dr and close up of phrag stand: C. Parks; Seed head: C. parks; Native and invavise Phragmites ligule: Dr. J. Gilbert