

Ontario Burdened with Invasive Species

Tips and Tricks for Managing Invasive Species in The Land Between

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Photo courtesy of the US Fish & Wildlife service

Dozens of invasive species have infiltrated our lakes, rivers, and forests, putting our native species and the environment at risk. An invasive species is a plant, animal or micro-organism that is not native to a specific location and has the tendency to spread damage or disease to the natural environment (Invasive Species Centre, 2018). Recent surveys by the Invasive Species Centre in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., reports that Ontario spends an average municipal cost of \$381,000 a year for invasive species removal and management. In all of Canada, Ontario has had more non-native species established within its borders than any other province or territory (OMNRF, 2012).

So, what can you do as a waterfront property owner, cottager or visitor to The Land Between? The government of Ontario has set out action plans to help decrease the risk of spreading invasive species across the province. There are five different action plans laid out pertaining to: anglers, boaters, cottagers, gardeners, and hikers. Increased awareness

among the general populations helps to stop the spread of invasive species. Here are a few tips that you can employ to combat invasive species:

Fishing & Boating

- When fishing use local bait to avoid introducing a species that isn't normally found in the area
- Use local bait as close as possible to where you plan on fishing
- Do not move prohibited invasive species
- Clean your boat and gear before leaving the water; zebra and mussels are happy to hang onto your hull, while aquatic plants like Eurasian water-milfoil hide on your motor, anchor and trailer
- Avoid boating in an infested area

Cottagers & Campers

- Use local firewood! Never bring in firewood from another location because you may be transporting invasive species that could damage the ecosystem you're introducing them to. Canadian Forest Service (CFS) scientists estimate that costs for treatment, removal and replacement of trees affected by the emerald ash borer in Canadian municipalities may reach \$2 billion over a 30-year period
- Before heading home from the cottage, be sure to clean all of your gear, such as watercraft, trailers, bicycles and boot bottoms from any plant material or seed-spreading mud
- Inspect your property and shoreline for any sign of invasion and find out what species may be threatening your area by visiting <http://eddmmaps.org/ontario/>

Gardeners & Hikers

- Choose native or non-invasive species to make sure your flowerbed is environmentally friendly
- Avoid relocating plants from your home to your cottage garden to prevent the unintentional spread of invasive species
- Any invasive plants that you uproot, put into a black garbage bag and leave in the sun for a few days to avoid the chance of it sprouting new roots
- When hiking, stay on the paths and designated trails in natural areas to avoid picking up seeds from the forest and spreading them elsewhere
- Groom your pet- make sure your pets don't bring back an invader from the forest

Lastly, get into the practice of identifying and reporting invasive species! Follow the links below for more information on how to identify and report invasive species:

To report an invasive species sighting:

Call the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters' Invading Species Hotline at 1-800-563-7711 to report an invasive species sighting. You can also report invasive species with your smartphone by downloading the EDDMaps app.

To find out more visit:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/invasive-species-ontario>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/invasive-species-canada-1.4958263>

<https://www.invasivespeciescentre.ca>

<https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/forests/fire-insects-disturbances/top-insects/13377>

<http://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/resources/grow-me-instead/>

https://foca.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/FOCA_InvasiveSpecies_REV_FINAL.pdf