

Protecting McKellar Township from Invasive Species

An Invasive Species is a fast-growing and quickly reproducing species brought by humans and animals to a new area which lacks natural predators. Phragmites, for example will decrease biodiversity by crowding out other species and it has such dense growth that animals and amphibians cannot use it as habitat. Milfoil can clog a lake so that boating becomes impossible.

Eurasian water – milfoil is a fast-growing perennial, it forms dense underwater mats that shade out other aquatic plants. When large stands begin to die off in the fall, the decaying plants can reduce oxygen levels in the water, potentially affecting the fish communities.



What can we do? Prevention and early detection can let us avoid massive outputs of labour and resources to undo damage caused by invasive species.

We can learn how to recognize invasive species. At the website, “Invaders | Ontario’s Invading Species Awareness Program” there are illustrations of invasive terrestrial plants, aquatic plants, invertebrates, fish and forest pests.



We can report sightings of invasive species at www.eddmaps.org/ontario. The EDDMapS Ontario app brings the power of EDDMapS to your smartphone. Now you can submit invasive species observations directly with your smartphone from the field. These reports are uploaded to EDDMapS and e-mailed directly to verifiers for review.

We can prevent the spread of invasive species ourselves by washing boats and other aquatic vehicles and equipment between lakes, buying local bait and not dumping bait buckets into the lakes or other waterways. In Ontario, it is illegal to dump the contents of a bait bucket (water, soil, or other material) or live or dead bait (including fish eggs, gametes, or fish parts) either directly into the water or within 30 metres of it. This includes dumping onto the ice. Anglers should retain a receipt to show they bought their live bait within their Bait Management Zone. This will prevent the spread of invasive aquatic plants, fish and invertebrates from one area to another.



Help stop the spread of Phragmites to McKellar Township



- Very successful invasive grass/plant (reed from Europe) that spreads easily and out-competes native plants
- Although typically thought of as marshy, this plant thrives in even harsh conditions and has no natural controls
- A nutrient bully, it disperses a chemical from its roots that harms other plants
- Frequently grows densely and develops into LARGE Mono-Dominant Stands where it is an impossible habitat for the survival of many native species – virtual dead zones
- Can grow in excess of 15 feet high, blocking views and access ways to waterfronts, and creating municipal visual hazards
- Seeds are easily distributed by wind (10 km. radius), flowing water, and through human interaction usually from moving heavy equipment
- Spread is rapid and facilitated by road construction where you often see stands of Phragmites in culverts and ditches
- In Ontario, it is illegal to import, deposit, release, breed/grow, buy, sell, lease or trade invasive Phragmites (*Phragmites australis* subsp. *Australis*)
- **Difficult, but not impossible to stop. The more we leave it, the more difficult and expensive the clean-up of the invasive Phragmites will become.**

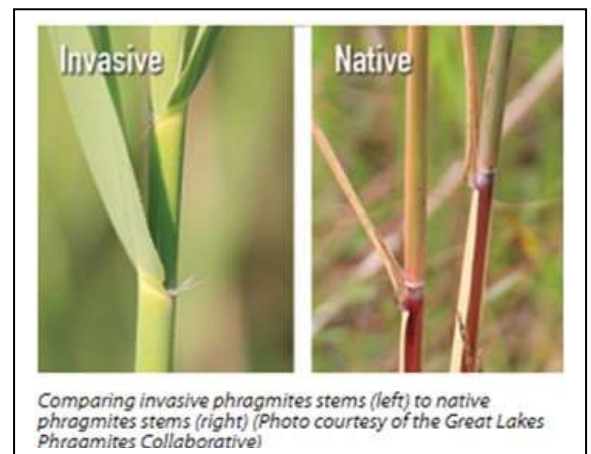


Invasive Phragmites:

- Grows in stands that can be extremely dense with as many as 200 stems per square meter
- Is so dense that it crowds out other species
- Can reach heights of up to 6 meters (18 feet)
- Is very common in roadside ditches
- Has tan or beige stems, blue-green leaves and large, dense seedheads.

Native phragmites:

- Grows in stands that are usually not as dense as the invasive plant; unlikely to be found in roadside ditches
- Its well-established stands are frequently mixed with other plant species
- Usually has more reddish-brown stems, yellow-green leaves and smaller, sparser seedheads



If you see a stand of Invasive Phragmites,

You can report an invasive species by calling the **Invading Species Hotline** at **1-800-563-7711**
Lake Stewardship and Environmental Committee of McKellar Township