

Summer 2020

Non-Native News

A newsletter of the Aquatic Invasive Species program of Douglas County



Douglas County Hires Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator

Jill Jacoby was hired in mid-June as the Douglas County Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator. Funding for this position comes from the Department of Natural Resources and generous cash and in-kind donations from organizations and resource management agencies.

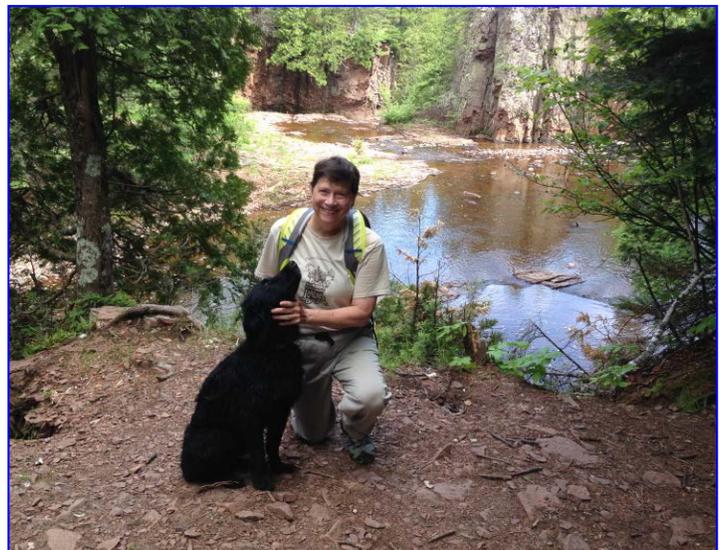
Jill has been making presentations to Lake Association groups about non-native invasive species, met with bait shop owners to provide literature on preventing the spread of non-native species, and has been updating the [County's Aquatic Invasive Species web page](#). Jill has been a life-long environmental educator working with the public as well as students from kindergarten

through college. She currently teaches environmental science courses as an adjunct professor at Fairleigh Dickenson University.

Outside of work, Jill's passions include growing shiitake mushrooms, projects that merge art and ecological restoration, killing buckthorn, and throwing a ball into a lake so her dog friend Macy can play.

Jill can be reached at:
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jill.jacoby@douglascountywi.org

Jill Jacoby, with her water loving dog Macy



The Threat of Yellow Iris in Douglas County

How does such a beautiful plant like Yellow Iris escape from gardens and invade Douglas County lakes and wetlands? What can be done about the non-native and very invasive Yellow Iris?



Yellow Iris flower
Photo credit: NYIS.info

Background

Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) originated from Eurasia and is not native to Wisconsin; although it does thrive here. The plant was imported to the United States for use in water gardens and its beautiful yellow flower. It was also used for erosion control in waste water treatment ponds. That is all it took for this plant to escape and become established in nearly every state in the country. In Douglas County it can be found in areas including upland sites, the edges of streams and lakes, in wetland areas, and along the Allouez Bay in Superior. This aquatic invasive plant is easiest to identify when in flower. When not in flower it can be confused with native plants such as cattail, blue flag iris and sweet flag.

Yellow Iris is a perennial plant which means it germinates from seeds in the spring, flowers in its third year of growth and comes back every year. The plant flowers from May through July and seeds are formed from August through October. Each plant can produce several hundred seeds which float, and are then spread by water. Yellow Iris also spreads through rhizome growth (horizontal underground stems) which can break off into pieces and float in water until they reach a suitable place to begin growing.



Yellow Iris seed pod and seeds
Photo Credit: NYIS.info



Yellow Iris rhizome
Photo Credit: snabi.org

Concerns

Because of their rhizomes, Yellow Iris can form dense stands and crowd out native plants which fish and wildlife depend on for food and habitat. The roots of large stands

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Yellow Iris – continued from page 2

form a dense mat which prevents native plant seeds from germinating. All parts of this plant are poisonous and can reduce the amount of food for wildlife. Large clusters of yellow iris can trap sediments and restrict water flow in streams.

Douglas County

The following Douglas County lakes and rivers have been verified to contain populations of Yellow Iris:

- Brule River
- Dowling Lake
- Lake Minnesuing
- Pokegama Bay
- St Louis River/Bay
- Upper Saint Croix Lake

If you see Yellow Iris in Douglas County please take a picture of it, provide directions to the location (or GPS location) and contact the Wisconsin DNR at the phone number below.

What to do if Yellow Iris is on your property

If you have small amounts of the plant growing in soft soils, it can be pulled or dug out. It is important to get all of the rhizomes out completely when digging or new plants will grow. The plants should be bagged and disposed of in a landfill. Yellow Iris can cause skin irritation so gloves, pants, and long sleeves should be worn when removing the plant.

Removing the seed heads will help reduce the spread of Yellow Iris, but will not address the existing plants or spreading from rhizomes. Be sure to bag and dispose of the seeds in a landfill.

Glyphosate herbicides approved for aquatic use can be used; however aquatic herbicide treatments must be performed by a certified pesticide applicator. For more information about herbicide use, permits, and applicator training please contact:

Wisconsin DNR: 715-635-4227

Aquatic Invasive Species Resources

[Aquatic Plants and Nuisance Control](#)

[Preventing Aquatic Species](#)

[Reporting Invasive Species](#)

A Word about Fishing with Bait!

Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia

Otherwise known as VHS, this virus is a fish disease and invasive species that was first identified in Lake Michigan in 2007 and in Lake Superior in 2010. The virus may also be present in the Wisconsin River and tributaries.

The virus does not affect humans, but healthy fish can become affected just by absorbing water carrying the virus. VHS can affect many of the fish that Wisconsin anglers enjoy, such as musky, walleye, bluegill and trout. Symptoms include hemorrhaging (bleeding), bulging eyes, unusual behavior, bloated abdomens, and rapid onset of death.

To keep fish healthy and prevent this deadly fish disease from spreading, Wisconsin law requires that you:

- Drain all water from trailers, water craft, containers, and fishing gear when leaving a lake.
- Do not transport any aquatic plants, live fish or live fish eggs away from state waters. Minnows may be transported away live and used again **only if** they are used on the same water **or** on any other waters if no lake or river water, or other fish was added to their container.
- Do not use dead fish, fish eggs, or fish parts as bait (for exceptions see: [VHS bait preservation](#))
- You may not possess or use bait minnows obtained outside of Wisconsin.
- Live crayfish may not be used as bait in Wisconsin.
- Minnow harvesting is closed on VHS affected waters including Lake Superior and all connecting waters upstream to the first barrier impassible to fish.

For more information about VHS and related Wisconsin laws go to:

[VHS Fish Virus](#)

Did you know?

That one non-native purple loosestrife plant can create millions of seeds?

That Eurasian Water Milfoil can create a new plant if a small piece of stem breaks off.

That in 2019 Douglas County's Clean Boats Clean Water Program inspected 6,712 boats and inspectors made contact with 13,279 people?

The Chinese Mystery Snail is called "mystery" because females give birth to fully developed young that, suddenly and "mysteriously" appear.

We're on the Web!

See us at:

[Douglas County Invasive Species web page](#)
