

Invasive Species Highlight

Yellow Iris

Yellow iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) is a perennial plant that grows in wet areas and along shorelines. Native to Europe, Northern Africa, and temperate Asia, Yellow Iris has been found in the United States for almost 140 years. Yellow Iris is a regulated invasive species, meaning it is legal to buy, sell, transport and possess, but illegal to introduce into a free-living state, such as released into public waters.

Environmental Impact

Yellow iris can form dense mats that narrow waterways and compete with native shoreline vegetation. All parts of the plant are toxic to livestock and other animals, also causing skin irritation to humans. Yellow iris may also reduce habitat needed by waterfowl and fish while also reducing available forage for wildlife.



Identification

- Herbaceous plant that grows 1'-5' tall
- Leaves are sword-like, grow up to 3/4" wide, have a sharply thickened center, form in basal clusters without petioles, and are dark green to green/blue in color
- Flowers are deep yellow, grow in 2-3 on a stalk, are shorter than outer leaves, have 3 outer drooping sepals with brownish mottled markings surrounding the true flower and bloom May-July.
- Seeds are oblong capsules, each containing numerous smooth, flattened seeds.
- Root system is short, with stout rhizomes.



Look-alikes

Northern blue flag iris (native) - Blue/violet flower color

Sweet flag iris (native) - Yellow/green stiff flower resembling cattail



Clean all invasive species from boats, trailers, and other equipment.
Drain water from boats, ballast tanks, motors, and live wells before leaving.
Dry boats and equipment to ensure young mussels are not transported.

Visit our website for additional Invasive Species Highlights - winonaswcd.org

For any questions, call Abbi Hoffman - 507-523-2171 x113

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References and Resources

“*Iris pseudacorus* (Pale-yellow Iris)” *Minnesota Wildflowers*. <https://www.minnesotawildflowers.info/flower/pale-yellow-iris>

“Yellow Iris” Gupta et al. 2019 *University of Minnesota Extension*. <https://extension.umn.edu/identify-invasive-species/yellow-iris>

“Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*)” *Minnesota Department of Natural Resources*. <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/aquaticplants/yellowiris/index.html>

“Yellow Flag Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) Ecological Risk Screening Summary” 2019 *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*. <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Ecological-Risk-Screening-Summary-Yellow-Flag-Iris.pdf>