

New Invader Alert!

Heads up to all pond owners in Big Sky - keep an eye out for yellowflag iris! For the first time ever, we identified this invasive plant among cattails in a private pond in the Beaver Creek area. Only two species of iris are known to occur in Montana outside of horticultural plantings:

Native Species

The **native** Rocky Mountain iris (*Iris missouriensis*) has blue to purple flowers, grows 8 to 24 inches tall, and roots and young shoots are toxic.



Invasive Species

The **non-native** Yellowflag iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) has bright yellow blooms, grows 3 to 5 feet tall, roots and shoots are toxic, and rhizomes contain black sap.



Impacts: Yellowflag iris forms dense monotypic colonies in riparian areas, crowding-out native species. This can alter riparian function and reduce habitat for wildlife, birds, fish and pollinators. Yellowflag iris is considered poisonous due to large amounts of glycosides in the leaves and rhizomes.

Habitat: Yellowflag iris is typically found in shallow waters, but can occur in depths of 2 to 3 feet. Adaptable to full sun or partial shade, it occurs in forested or open wetlands, and riparian and floodplain communities.

Spread: Once established, it reproduces by seed and vegetatively through rhizomes. Unfortunately, when it goes to seed, the seeds almost all produce new plants, as they are 99% viable. Flooding may transport rhizomes or seeds downstream where they subsequently establish new colonies. Wave action along lake shores may also break-up rhizome clumps and result in establishment of new colonies along the shore.

Management Priorities: Yellowflag iris was first reported in Montana in Lake County in 1966, and has been found in Flathead, Missoula, Ravalli, Granite, Sanders and Gallatin Counties. Prevention and early detection are critical for yellowflag iris management. Isolated populations should be contained or eradicated if possible.



If you see this plant, take action now!

***Eradication is possible
if detected early.***

**Contact us for more information
and assistance.**

Gallatin-Big Sky Weed Committee

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www.bigskyweeds.org



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The Gallatin-Big Sky Weed Committee is a 501c3 non-profit organization working to conserve native plants, wildlife habitat, and water resources through noxious weed education and management.