

# Unwanted Invaders

Spring 2007

Volume 1, Issue 1

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Spotted knapweed. Arrow pointing to the "spots" on the flowerhead bracts. (Source: obnoxious.org)

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## EXTRA, EXTRA! The Invasive Species Council of Manitoba is Here!

The Invasive Species Council of Manitoba (ISCM) stemmed from a call to action from government, industry, non-government and organizations to address invasive species in Manitoba. An initial meeting was held in June 2006 where a working group involving the City of Winnipeg, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Manitoba Conservation, Canadian Wildlife Services, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, Manitoba Weed Supervisors

Association, Manitoba Purple Loosestrife Project and the Leafy Spurge Stakeholder Group was formed to develop a framework for the proposed new council.

A large working group met on December 8, 2006 to discuss the name of the council and a path forward. Initially the council's mandate focused solely on invasive plants however it was decided to broaden the scope to include "species" to allow for more flexibility in the future. Consequently the Invasive Species Council of Manitoba was born!

During this meeting the group also discussed next steps which included 1) framing objectives, a vision and a mission, 2) finalize a revised list of the objectives, and 3) begin a communication strategy.

Since then the working group composed of Chair, Cheryl Heming, Garth Ball, Ron Moss, Jane Thornton, John Johnston, Lisette Ross, Pat Rakowski and Wayne Digby have worked to secure funding through

Continued on page 4. (See ISCM full speed ahead...)

## New Invasive Weed Found Near Canada Border: South of Tolstoi, Manitoba

Spotted knapweed is knocking at Manitoba's door. The invasive plant is already established in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and most western and northern States. A patch of spotted knapweed is located just south of the Canadian border in Kittson County, Minnesota.

Similar in appearance to

diffuse knapweed, spotted knapweed is also a highly competitive invasive species. It can release growth-suppressing chemicals in the soil to inhibit the growth of native species in turn reducing forage production for livestock and wildlife.

Spotted knapweed can be identified by the black-tipped fringe on its

flowerhead bracts which give the flower a "spotted" appearance.

Thank you to Gene Fortney of the Nature Conservancy for reporting this threat to the ISCM.

If you think you have located spotted knapweed in Manitoba, please contact the ISCM at (204) 232-6021 or [cparks@winnipeg.ca](mailto:cparks@winnipeg.ca).

# Prairie Region Invasive Noxious Weed Database and Mapping Display

Weed supervisors, rural municipalities, non-governmental organizations, conservation groups and organizations have a brand new website to help with the prevention, early detection and management of noxious plant species across the Prairie region. In 2006, the Rural Development Institute (RDI), received approval under the Invasive Alien Species Partnership Program (IASPP) through Environment Canada for the development of an online invasive noxious weed survey and mapping system database for the Prairie Provinces.

The website is in response to the need for an online, comprehensive, standardized and ongoing inventory of all noxious weeds in the prairie region. The mapping display feature of the website is available to the public and is aimed at early detection, rapid response, monitoring and

management of invasive weeds in the prairie region. Through the website, users are able to ask for a user account which enables them to add or modify data. This data is then converted into downloadable maps, which can be used to track infestations, monitor spread and identify pathways.

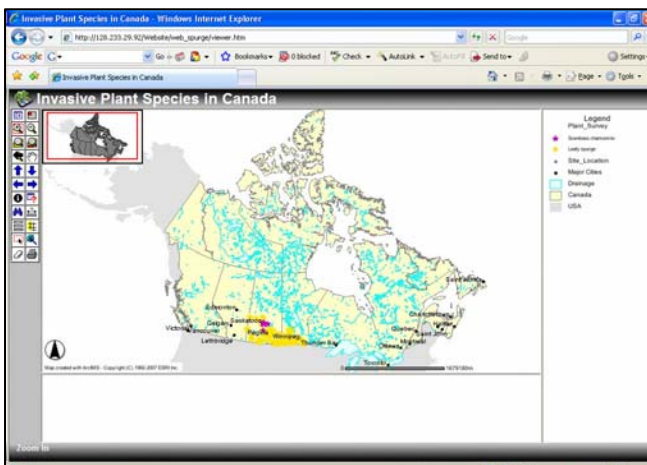
Karen Rempel, Research Affiliate with the RDI at Brandon University, is coordinating the Prairie Region Invasive Species Database and Mapping Project with assistance from a pan-Western working group of representatives from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The Canada Rural Economy Research Lab (C-RERL) located at the College of Agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan helped create the website. C-RERL has also agreed to assist with maintenance and technical assistance.

The current website address is [www.crerl.usask.ca/prips](http://www.crerl.usask.ca/prips) Development and refinement of the website is on-going. The website is now available for use by single users or by associations wishing to add data. Organizations such as the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Industrial Vegetation Management Association – SK/MB, Saskatchewan Watershed Authority, Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group and the Alberta Invasive Plants Council are all eager to contribute data to this new database and use the new mapping features. To learn more about the website contact Candace Parks at the ISCM or Karen Rempel at the Rural Development Institute, Brandon University [rempekl@brandonu.ca](mailto:rempekl@brandonu.ca)

By Karen Rempel, Research Affiliate, Rural Development Institute



New website for noxious weeds. The current website address is: [www.crerl.usask.ca/prips](http://www.crerl.usask.ca/prips)



Map display at [www.crerl.usask.ca/prips](http://www.crerl.usask.ca/prips)

## Species of Concern:

Salt cedar (*Tamarix* spp.) located along the banks of Lake Sakakawea in the north western corner of North Dakota only 48 kilometres from the Souris River Watershed.

Source: John Johnston  
Weed Supervisor

## Emerging Threats

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Emerald ash borer beetle  
(Source:  
[www.forestryimages.org](http://www.forestryimages.org),  
Photo by: David Cappaert)

## Quick Facts:

### Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis* Fairmaire)

- ❖ Native to northern China
- ❖ Transported to North America in wood products
- ❖ Preys on *all* species of ash (*Fraxinus* spp.) including green (*F. pennsylvanica*), machurian (*F. mandshurica*) and black (*F. nigra*)
- ❖ Transport of firewood remains as the largest threat to additional invasions
- ❖ To date the beetle has destroyed over 20 million ash trees in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana alone (Source: [www.emeraldashborer.info](http://www.emeraldashborer.info))

## Impact of EAB in the Prairies Conference

On March 22, 2007, “The Impact of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) on the Prairies” Conference was held at the Greenwood Inn in Winnipeg. Approximately 150 people including nursery growers, arborists, urban foresters, landscape architects and other professionals connected to the landscape industry were in attendance. The conference was fueled by the deep concern for the possibility of an EAB infestation on the prairies. Ash has replaced elm as the tree of choice for urban planting since the establishment of Dutch elm disease here in the 1970s, so an EAB outbreak here could be devastating to our existing urban forests. A strategic planning session for interested participants was held the following morning to discuss prevention of and response to EAB in the Prairie Provinces.

This conference made for a very full day of informative presentations by a series of speakers. Dr. Deb McCullough from Michigan State University spoke about ongoing research being conducted regarding the biology, impact, and host preference / range of the Emerald Ash Borer. Later, she described in detail the various EAB detection and survey techniques that are currently

in use and in development. Signs and symptoms of EAB include ash tree crown dieback, suckering at the base, “D-shaped” exit holes on the trunk and “S-shaped” tunnels under bark. Dr. John Ball from South Dakota State University made a presentation on assessing the hazard of the Emerald Ash Borer in the prairie environment. One major point he got across was that the Emerald Ash Borer will be able to survive our northern prairie climate. He also spoke about his experience with developing an EAB plan for South Dakota. Major points he made regarding the prevention of an outbreak included the need to control movement of firewood and nursery stock as EAB is most often transported to new locations as a hitchhiker on these products.

A number of local authorities made informative presentations as well. Philip Ronald from Jefferies Nurseries in Portage La Prairie discussed tree cultivar, species and genera options that are suitable for prairie planting to encourage diversity in urban forests as opposed to ash monocultures. This tied in nicely with Winnipeg City Forester Dave Domke’s presentation on the current and

proposed tree diversity standards in urban centres throughout the Prairie Provinces. Jon Leferink of Manitoba Conservation explained the provincial policies on invasive pests in the Prairie Provinces with emphasis on Manitoba.

Momentum from the conference is continuing with the formation of a steering committee that is currently fine-tuning the EAB Strategic Plan for the Prairies. The major points of this plan arose from the morning planning session that was held on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. The first draft has been compiled by the City of Winnipeg Urban Forestry Branch and has been forwarded to a sub-committee for further review. To date, EAB has not been introduced to any of the Prairie Provinces however planning is essential to any effort in preventing, detecting and controlling potentially devastating exotic pests such as Emerald Ash Borer. Thanks to the combined expertise of many professionals who care deeply about the health of our urban forests, that plan is well on its way.

By Karen Asmundson, Forestry Technician, City of Winnipeg

## Species of Concern – Himalayan balsam

According to James Lang, Weed Inspector for the City of Winnipeg (District 3), Himalayan balsam or impatiens are becoming of increasing concern in Winnipeg.

Planted as an ornamental herb, Himalayan balsam is starting to pop up around the city. The plant is considered an aggressive invasive species by the BC's Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.

The plant can grow 0.6 to

2 m in height, has a thick, much branched, hollow stem with predominantly pink flowers that resemble a Policeman's helmet.

When seed pods are disturbed, they can fling seeds a distance of 20 feet which help spread the plant farther and faster when growing near rivers and streams. Each plant is capable of producing 800 seeds and once established, plants can successfully suffocate nearby native vegetation.



Himalayan balsam (Source: [www.oswild.org](http://www.oswild.org))



Plant in spring  
(Source: [shim.bc.ca](http://shim.bc.ca)  
Photo by: Paul A. Graham)



Himalayan balsam  
(Source:  
[www.oswild.org](http://www.oswild.org))

## ISCM full speed ahead...

Eco-Canada to hire and house a full-time ISCM Coordinator. In the next six months, the new Coordinator, Candace Parks will work to secure additional funding and to build council capacity.

The ISCM is now moving full speed ahead. On May 10, 2007 ISCM Executive had its first official teleconference call where the six revised objectives were formally adopted. In addition, Jane Thornton from Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives has hired a new Database Technician through a grant from Covering New Ground to assist the ISCM (see page 5 for more details).

Feeding off this momentum, an annual ISCM Executive meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 8, 2007 in Portage la Prairie from 10 am until 2 pm. During this meeting a communication strategy and an updated path forward will be discussed.

## Invasive Species Council of Manitoba (ISCM) Objectives:

- ❖ **Focus on prevention** and coordination of a system of early detection and rapid response to suppress, and investigate possible control or eradication measures of invasive species in Manitoba;
- ❖ **Improve cooperation between stakeholders** including individuals, land owners, resource managers, communities, agencies, industry, stewardship groups and government;
- ❖ **Establish a provincial digital inventory** of existing invasive species throughout the province, as well as those species that pose a significant risk to Manitoba;
- ❖ **Identify and promote coordinated monitoring and research** in Manitoba that supports strategic planning of programs;
- ❖ **Promote public awareness and understanding** in stakeholder groups and public to encourage and support shared stewardship; and
- ❖ **Operate in the spirit of partnership and collaboration** to facilitate communication and information flow internally and externally among provincial counterparts and the international community. Efforts will be aimed at reducing overlap and duplicity of programs, while still fostering cooperation of effort.

# Covering New Ground Funds Prairie Region Invasive Plant Inventory Database Project

In 2007 Covering New Ground has provided \$11,000 for the collection of data to be entered into Prairie Region Invasive Plant Inventory Database. The position will entail gathering information from various sources on locations of new invasive species infestations. This information will be entered into the newly formed AB, SK and MB GIS database. This database will document species, location, size of infestation and any treatments to date. This database has mapping capabilities so that at a glance users will be able to see a species infestation in their area such as an RM for example. It is hoped that this information will lead to better weed

management planning and a quick response identification and eradication program. Emma Balitski started on May 23 and will be finishing in the fall of 2007. She can be reached at (204) 571-8521 or balitskie@brandonu.ca. If you know of any new invasive species infestations give Emma a call, and expect that she will be calling you to glean as much information from you as she can.



Salt cedar (*Tamarix* sp.)  
(Source: ob-noxious.org)

By Jane Thornton  
Forage and Pasture Specialist,  
Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural  
Initiatives.

## Headlines



**Quagga mussels discovered in Nevada in Mead, Mohave and Havasu lakes. Disturbing news since the nearest colony of Quagga Mussels is in Lake Michigan.**

Source: Wendy Ralley, Manitoba Conservation

**Q: What is the difference between a zebra and a quagga mussel?**

**A:** Both are from the *Dreissena* genera and both species can cause substantial ecologic and economic damage. Currently, zebra and quagga mussels are not found in Manitoba.

To prevent invasion of these mussels, clean all equipment that may have been in infested water before being transporting into Manitoba.



Purple loosestrife  
(Source:  
[nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/img/lysa1.htm](http://nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/img/lysa1.htm))

## New Coordinator Hired for the Manitoba Purple Loosestrife Project

The Manitoba Purple Loosestrife Project is up and running this year with a new coordinator, Haley Catton.

The project focuses on controlling, monitoring, and educating the public regarding this damaging invasive plant, or "beautiful killer". Control will be achieved using leaf-feeding *Galerucella* beetles, which will be mass-reared at Bird's Hill Park and released in various areas

across southern Manitoba. Monitoring and public outreach programs are also planned for later in the summer.

Visit [www.ducks.ca/purple](http://www.ducks.ca/purple) or [www.invasivespeciesmanitoba.com](http://www.invasivespeciesmanitoba.com) for more information.

If you have questions, comments, and purple loosestrife infestation location tips email Haley at (204) 981-5387 or [info@manitobainvasivespecies.com](mailto:info@manitobainvasivespecies.com)

**Invasive Species Council of Manitoba (ISCM)**

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**ISCM Executive Meeting**

Friday, June 8, 2007

Provincial Government Boardroom B-15

Portage la Prairie  
10 am - 2 pm



**Pictures of Invasive Species**

If you have any pictures you would like to contribute to the ISCM for use for communication and promotional purposes, please forward them to Candace. If the pictures are used, the ISCM will provide full photo credit to the photographer.

I know it is still far away, but these pictures will also be helpful for developing a 2008 invasive species calendar. So start snapping and keep in mind that the ISCM will need landscape shots as well close-ups of the invasive species for the calendar. Send your pictures via email to cparks@winnipeg.ca.

Want to be included on the ISCM email mailing list? Keep up-to-date about what the ISCM and its partners are doing by receiving an "Unwanted Invaders" newsletter.

If interested email Candace at cparks@winnipeg with SUBSCRIBE TO UNWANTED INVADERS in the subject line.

**Upcoming Events**

**Manitoba Weed Supervisor's Association Summer Tour**

July 26, 2007  
Portage la Prairie, MB.

For more information contact your local weed supervisor.

**Industrial Vegetation Management Association Conference and Tour**

September 11-12, 2007  
Brandon, MB.

For more information: www.ivmansask.com

**15<sup>th</sup> Annual North American Weed Management Association Conference**

September 24-27, 2007  
Las Vegas, Nevada

For more information: www.nawma.org

**Manitoba's Unwanted Invaders Calendar Available**

Sponsored by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the Province of Manitoba, the City of Winnipeg and the Manitoba Weed Association is a 2007 Invasive Plants Calendar

that hopes to raise awareness of invasive weeds in Manitoba's. Each month features an invasive plant and includes distinguishing characteristics for

identification, and reasons for concern.

To get a copy, please contact Candace at cparks@winnipeg.ca or at (204) 232-6021.

**Have Anything to Contribute for an Upcoming Newsletter?**

Do you have anything you would like to contribute or share in an upcoming "Unwanted Invaders" newsletter? Is there an upcoming event or

conference? Information and/or suggestions are greatly appreciated.

Please contact Candace

at cparks@winnipeg.ca or (204) 232-6021

Until next time! Enjoy the warm weather and have a great spring!