

Yellow flag iris

Iridaceae

*Iris
pseudacorus*

- Origin:** Europe and North Africa. Escaped ornamental
- Description:** 3 to 6 foot tall, semi-aquatic plant. Needs about 3 years of growth before mature enough to flower
- Color:** Green leaves and yellow flowers
- Roots:** Fleshy roots up to a foot long with branching ½ to 1 ½ inch wide rhizomes that form dense patches up to 20 feet wide
- Leaves:** Erect and overlapping at the base in a fan-like arrangement. 1 ¼ inches wide and sword-shaped. Dark green with a bluish tint and a raised midrib (thickened) in the middle. Usually 10 leaves per individual
- Flowers:** 2 to 4 inch wide yellow to whitish flowers with 3 upward curved petals and 3 downward curved sepals with brown to purple streaks. Plants generally form flowers after three years. Flowering is summer through fall
- Seeds:** In large, 3 inch long, three-sided pods. 120 D-shaped buoyant seeds per pod can float long distances
- Viability:** Seeds can survive and float for more than a year. Rhizomes and pieces can persist for over 10 years in the soil and even survive for more than 3 months if dried
- Toxicity:** All parts of the plant are toxic to livestock and other animals. Its sap can cause skin irritation or blistering
- Lookalikes:** Cattail (*Typha* spp) - leaves



Yellow flag iris has escaped cultivation and now infests ditches, streams, and ponds. The plants are very tolerant of soils with a wide range of pH values and somewhat tolerant of salty areas. In some areas it has formed large monocultures and changed the adjacent ecosystems.

Thick growths of yellow flag can clog irrigation systems and streams and, by trapping sediment in the roots, can narrow waterways.

Because of the extensive root system, any of the control methods may need to be used multiple times over a few years for total eradication.

On the backside of this sheet are management recommendations.

If you have any questions, please contact the Weld County Public Works Dept., Weed Division at (970) 400-3770 or visit <https://www.weldweeds.org>

Recommended range and pasture management methods:

Cultural

Prevention is the best means of control. Early detection and addressing new infestations as soon as possible will save time and money.

If infestations are in pastures, combine control methods and encourage establishment of selected, aggressive grasses. Contact your local CSU Extension office or Natural Resources Conservation Service office (NRCS) for seed mix recommendations.

Proper grazing management will stimulate grass growth and keep pastures healthy. Healthy pastures are more resistant to invasion.

Burning is not recommended for control because of this plant's strong tendency to resprout from rhizomes.

Mechanical

Small infestations can be dug out by hand, but it is important to remove the entire rootstalk of the plant to avoid regrowth from root fragments. Always wear gloves when handling the plants because of their toxicity.

Mowing or removing flowers and seed pods will help reduce spread. Repeated mowing or cutting may keep yellow-flag iris contained and can potentially kill it by depleting the energy in the rhizomes after several years of intensive mowing. Do not compost the plants since the rhizomes can remain viable for up to 3 months even without water.

Biological

None available at this time

Herbicides

For large infestations apply an herbicide labeled for wetland use. Spot-treat plants and do not broadcast spray in order to protect other native plants, animals, and water quality.

Herbicides should only be applied at the rates and for the site conditions and/or land usage specified on the label.

<u>Herbicide</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Application Timing</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Rodeo (glyphosate) Non-selective	Up to 5% by volume	Late spring to early summer will be most effective. Summer during flowering stage. Fall applications have been made with some success.	Add an aquatic labeled non-ionic surfactant @ 0.32 oz/gal water or 1 qt/100 gal water. <i>Will kill all vegetation it touches.</i>

ALWAYS READ, UNDERSTAND, AND FOLLOW HERBICIDE LABEL DIRECTIONS

The herbicide label is the LAW

