



Yachats Weed of the Month – February 2020

Yellow Flag Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*)

Of the many plants in the iris family, *Iris pseudacorus* is undoubtedly one of the more spectacular and vigorous. For these reasons it is a popular garden plant and is unfortunately still readily available for purchase from online retailers. In the wild, the bright yellow blooms of yellow flag iris can be seen on streamsides, rivers and other damp spots in spring and early summer.

Impact: Yellow flag iris plants spread like wildfire in wetland environments and can easily grow into impenetrable clumps that measuring as much as 20 feet across. The plants propagate through long rhizomes and by seed. Native plants such as sedges, rushes and cattails cannot compete. By blocking water flow, the irises adversely affect bird nesting sites and fish habitat. In our area, yellow flag iris has established itself at Beaver Creek, the Yachats River, and damp areas alongside Highway 101.

Identification: While there are other yellow iris species, any iris with large, bright yellow flowers found growing in a damp area should be considered guilty until proven otherwise.

Management: Control and eradication of yellow flag iris is no simple matter. Be prepared to spend several years if necessary. Where the plants are growing in damp soil it should be reasonably easy to dig them out using shovel and, if necessary, a pickaxe or mattock to deal with the long taproots. Be sure to bag all plant parts as even a small piece of a rhizome can produce new growths. Populations that are growing in water are much more difficult to deal with. Large infestations may need to be treated with herbicides that have been approved for aquatic environments.



Contact information: Call Wally at 541 606 0055 if you have any questions. For more weed info, go to www.yachatstrails.org.

Yachats "Weed of the Month" is an informational service of the Yachats Trails Committee and YIPS! - the Yachats Invasive Plants Subcommittee.