

ENVIRONMENTALLY HARMFUL WETLAND PLANTS OF CONCERN IN NORTHERN WI

Prepared by Vilas County Land & Water Conservation Department, spring 2014



Yellow iris (*Iris pseudacorus*)

Also known as yellow flag iris, Yellow iris and Water flag

When to look: Short flowering season, late spring to early summer

Where to look: Wetlands, along streambanks and shorelines and in water up to 10-12 inches deep

Key features: Herbaceous flowering perennial attaining a height of 3 to 6 feet in dense stands of robust plants. Erect sword shaped leaves up to 3 feet long and 1.5 inches wide are easily confused with cattails when plant is not blooming. Leaves are folded and clasp the stem at the base in a fan-like fashion. Flowers are especially showy, bright yellow and 3 to 4 inches across, with a darker yellow zone and brown or violet veining on each fall. Flowers give way to large, glossy green, triangular shaped seed pods. Grows best in very wet conditions where it tolerates submersion, low pH, and anoxic soils. Spreads quickly by both rhizome and water-dispersed seed. While primarily an aquatic plant, the rhizomes can survive prolonged dry conditions. Can create dense, monotypic stands, outcompeting native plants. All parts of plant are poisonous, especially the rhizomes, resulting in lowered wildlife food sources in areas where it dominates.

Sources for additional information:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/fact/YellowFlagIris.html>

<http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/node/205>

http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/invasive_plants/weeds/yellow-iris.pdf

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/animalsAndPlants/noxious-weeds/weed-identification/yellow-iris.aspx>