

How You Can Help Prevent The Spread of Swallow-wort

Learn to identify Black & Pale Swallow-wort.

- Visit www.sleloinvasives.org to learn more about swallow-wort.

When Outdoors.

- Stay out of infested areas during seed dispersal to prevent seeds from spreading to unaffected areas. Likewise, clean boots, ATV's and other equipment when exiting infested areas.

Control:

- Eliminate small patches as soon as they are found before they become more difficult and costly to control.
- Small patches can be dug out by hand. To prevent re-growth, the entire root crown must be removed. Place the entire plant and roots into a black plastic bag and leave in the sun for two weeks. Bags can then be disposed of with regular trash (Figure 1).
- Annual mowing can also be effective but must be done prior to seed release.
- Repeated herbicide application over several years is the most successful control for extensive populations, but timing is critical. Herbicides should be applied when plants are actively growing after flowering has begun.

FOR MORE INFORMATION or
to REPORT A SIGHTING
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Or Visit Us Online At
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St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management

What You Should Know About **Swallow-wort** (*Cynanchum spp.*)

An Invasive Species



SLELO PRISM

*“Teaming up to stop the spread of
invasive species”*

WHAT IS AN INVASIVE SPECIES?

The term "invasive species" is used to describe non-native organisms that aggressively compete with, and displace, locally adapted native species. Invasive species can have a profound negative impact on biodiversity, agriculture, recreation, human health and our economy.

IDENTIFICATION & BIOLOGY

There are two species of swallow-wort plants in the SLELO region, Pale Swallow-wort (*Cynanchum rossicum*) and Black Swallow-wort (*Cynanchum nigrum*). Also known as "dog strangling vine" these plants are herbaceous perennial vines that can grow to over six feet in length. Small pink to maroon flowers are present in late May through July (Figure 2). Seed pods are elongated, smooth, slender and pointed. Each plant is capable of producing up to 2,000 seeds per square yard. Swallow-wort is self-pollinating meaning that a single seed can start a whole new infestation. Once established, patches expand rapidly within a few years.



Figure 2: Star shaped flowers

Swallow-wort

(*Cynanchum Spp.*)



Figure 3

Native Range: Europe (Italy, France, Portugal and Spain)

Mission of the SLELO PRISM

The mission of the St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (SLELO PRISM) is to protect the natural and cultural integrity of aquatic and terrestrial areas from invasive species. SLELO PRISM includes: St. Lawrence, Jefferson, Oswego, Oneida, and Lewis counties.



Figure 4: Seeds & seed pods.

Impacts

Ecological:

Swallow-wort spreads very quickly to form extremely dense stands that dominate and exclude more beneficial native plants. Swallow-wort thrives in a wide range of soil, moisture and light conditions. By dominating under story, Swallow-wort can hinder forest regeneration. In grassland areas, swallow-wort changes habitat and reduces the quality of areas used by grassland birds. Swallow-wort can also cause severe damage to rare and unique habitats such as globally rare Alvar found only in the Great Lakes region including the eastern Lake Ontario region. Swallow-wort also contains toxins and is not eaten by deer or other grazing animals. Monarch butterflies will lay eggs on the plants, but the larvae do not survive. Swallow-wort can also interfere with agricultural crops.



Figure 1: Swallow-wort plants and root crowns in a bag.

Learn More at:
www.sleloinvasives.org