What Are Invasive Species?

Invasive species are species that spread into a habitat they were absent from previously. Shipping and global trade have led to the introduction of such species into many locations, including the San Francisco Bay Area.

Why is Removal Complicated?

Once established, invasive species can develop complex relationships with other native species. Without proper care, removal of invasives can have greater negative effects on the ecosystem than benefits.

How You Can Help

Residents can help by properly identifying and removing these plants if located on your property, and by taking preventative measures to limit the spread of invasive species. This guide is meant to assist in identification and give an overview of control methods for three common invaders in the Bay Area.

Bay Area Residents:

With your cooperation, we can help stop the spread of invasive plants through local ecosystems. Knowing how to properly identify and remove these species is crucial for maintaining native biodiversity and preventing habitat loss.

For more information and guidelines, contact the **California Invasive Plant Council** at:

http://www.cal-ipc.org/

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Cal-IPC

San Francisco Bay Area

Help Us Protect the Bay from Invasive Plants!

A Resident's Guide to Removing Giant Reed, Eurasian Watermilfoil, and *Spartina* Cordgrass: Procedures and Warnings

Giant Reed

Identification:

- Grows in clumps 9 to 30 feet tall
- Flowers bloom at tips of stems
- Can resemble bamboo plants

Problems it Causes:

- Displaces native plants and animals
- Transpires large amounts of groundwater from aquifers

Removal Guidelines:

Plants can be pulled or chopped, but entire root must be removed for effective control. Stems and roots should be burned in a controlled fire to prevent the plant from rerooting. Planting native plants can help prevent regrowth of the giant reed.

Eurasian Watermilfoil

Identification:

- Grows in freshwater lakes and ponds
- Forms dense mats at surface
- Has feather-like leaves

Problems it Causes:

- Kills native plants and algae, which disrupts natural ecosystem
- Prevents boating and swimming
- Clogs irrigation intake pipes

Removal Guidelines:

Residents can help avoid new infections by removing any weed fragments from boats and avoiding water transfer between lakes and ponds. **PREVENTION IS KEY**: once established, milfoil is almost impossible to eradicate completely.

Spartina Cordgrass

Identification:

- Usually found in salt marshes
- Greyish foliage and narrow leaves

Problems it Causes:

- Can replace native species in tidal areas

Removal Guidelines:

Invasive species of *Spartina* can be removed by pulling. To be effective, all root fragments must be removed and plant material should be placed above the high tide mark to dry out.
CAUTION: Some endangered bird species nest in *Spartina*. Do not remove if birds or nests are found in the plants.