



Invasive Plants in Pennsylvania

Orange Daylily

Hemerocallis fulva



Britt Slattery, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
www.forestryimages.org

Background:

Orange daylily is a very popular ornamental, prized by gardeners for its hardiness and versatility. It was introduced into the United States in the late 19th century. Many different cultivars, numbering in the thousands, offer a variety of sizes, forms and colors.

Range:

Native to Asia, orange daylily now occurs in every state in the eastern U.S. and in scattered locations in the West.

Description:

Orange daylily is a bulbous perennial. Its leaves are long, grass-like, and bright green in color, curving toward the ground. Flowers are large, showy and orange, usually with a light-colored stripe down each petal. At the end of each flowering stalk, flowers open one at a time, each for one day only.



Ohio State Weed Lab Archive
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Habitat:

Infestations often occur near plantings and at old home sites. Habitats commonly invaded include meadows, forests, floodplains, ditches and forest edges.

Biology and Spread:

Though daylilies can reproduce by seed in their native region, cultivated varieties are reportedly sterile. Orange daylily spreads vegetatively through the expansion of its thick, tuberous roots, which rapidly form dense clumps. Gardeners often inadvertently spread orange daylily to new locations when throwing away whole plants.

Ecological Threat:

Once established, orange daylily spreads to form dense patches that displace native plants. This is a serious problem in sensitive habitats with high diversity, such as river floodplains. Its thick tubers, which are buried under a dense mat of its own vegetation, make orange daylily a challenge to control.



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How to Control this Species:

Physical

When infestations are small, plants can be dug up using a shovel. Make sure to remove the entire root system. Tubers that are left behind often re-sprout.

Larger infestations can be treated by mowing at the lowest setting, followed by mulching or using black plastic sheets to smother the plants. Keep orange daylily covered for at least a year.

Chemical

Use a systemic herbicide, such as glyphosate, in order to kill the entire plant.

Treatments are best done in fall when plant resources are being sent to the roots and most non-target species are dormant.

References:

Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health:

<http://www.invasive.org/browse/subinfo.cfm?sub=3407>

Illinois Wildflowers: http://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/weeds/plants/or_daylily.htm

Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas: <http://www.invasive.org/eastern/midatlantic/>

For More Information:

DCNR Invasive Species Site:

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/conservationscience/invasivespecies/index.htm>

Look-A-Likes:

Yellow daylily (*Hemerocallis lilioasphodelus*) is a related invasive species. The leaves of orange daylily could be confused with native grasses and sedges, and its flowers superficially resemble those of our native wood lily.



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Native Alternatives:

A great variety of native lilies provide a much more interesting display, such as Canada lily (*Lilium canadense*), wood lily (*L. philadelphicum*) and Turk's cap lily (*L. superbum*). Hardy plants, such as orange coneflower (*Rudbeckia fulgida*), give more color to gardens than orange daylily.



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