



INVASIVE INSIGHTS

New Brunswick Invasive Species Council

2023 AT A GLANCE

Hello and welcome to the first official NBISC newsletter!

First and foremost, I want to thank you for taking the time to read about our ever-growing activities and initiatives (and boy are they growing, but more on that later!), as well as express my gratitude for all the amazing partners and stakeholders we have worked with to get the NBISC to where it is today. When I came on as the sole employee back in 2019, we had one project: developing a CLEAN DRAIN DRY outreach campaign. But since then, we've grown exponentially and it is very much because of our partnerships and the support we have received for our work that we have been able to do so.

2023 in particular was a tremendous year of growth for us. We began rolling out our 5th outreach campaign (PLANT WISE/Grow Me Instead), took on a leadership role in the response to the first detection of Zebra Mussels in the province, hosted an incredibly successful 2nd NB Invasive Species Summit, and- most excitingly in my opinion- grew our staff from just two employees this time last year to our current **FIVE** amazing team members today.

I'm so excited to see what 2024 brings us (or more accurately, what we bring to 2024) because we have big plans on the horizon for invasive species management in New Brunswick!

-Kristin Elton, Program Director

MORE MUSSELS, MORE PROBLEMS

In September of 2023, adult Zebra Mussels were found in the Madawaska River attached to a hydro-electric dam in Edmundston, marking the first occurrence of this highly invasive freshwater mussel in the Maritimes. As a result, we have been working closely with partners throughout the Wolastoq (St. John River) watershed to implement a collaborative Action Plan to limit the further spread of these invasive and highly destructive mussels. This plan includes a wide range of activities including eDNA and visual monitoring throughout the river, the development of... (continued on next page)

(cont.) strategic boat wash stations, and installing educational signage at boat launches and public access areas. The Action Plan also encourages the continued sharing of educational information on Zebra Mussels and emphasizes the importance of following the CLEAN, DRY, DRY behavioural change program steps to prevent their movement.



COMMUNITY ACTION AGAINST INVASIVE SPECIES

As we reflect on the past year, our commitment to community engagement led us to new and diverse outreach opportunities that not only allowed us to expand the reach of our five Behavioral Change campaigns (CLEAN DRAIN DRY, BUY LOCAL BURN LOCAL, PLAY CLEAN GO, DON'T LET IT LOOSE, and PLANT WISE) but also strengthened the connections that we have with local communities and partner organizations. In 2023, we hosted 15 information booths at community events, participated in 7 in-person presentations and virtual webinars, and led two identification workshops and removals. These outreach efforts directly reached over 1100 people, including 385 youth.

In September, we hosted our first provincial invasive species BioBlitz, which was a great success despite the impacts of Hurricane Lee. The species observations made by event participants contributed to our goal of increasing invasive species data in New Brunswick. By the end of the week, the iNaturalist project had accumulated over 100 observations from southern NB, including Japanese Knotweed, Glossy Buckthorn, Woodland Angelica, and Garlic Mustard sightings. We will be hosting another invasive species BioBlitz in 2024, so stay tuned for more details!



A PHRAG-TASTIC INVASIVE PHRAGMITES REMOVAL

In collaboration with the Nature Conservancy of Canada, the Fundy Biosphere Region, and the Petitcodiac Watershed Alliance, we targeted two patches of Phragmites for removal along the Petitcodiac River in July, utilizing two methods – 1. Digging out the entire plant and 2. Cutting down the plant and covering the stalks with tarps. Moving forward, the patches will be monitored to assess the effectiveness of each method in tackling other Phragmites patches.



OUR DIVERSE SERVICES

As we embark on a new year, the NBISC is pleased to update you on some of our diverse services dedicated to combating the spread of invasive species. Through strategic partnerships, we made significant strides in behavioral change programs, education, and training crucial for managing invasive species. Our prevention-focused approach involves collaborative efforts with partners and the community, planning impactful outreach events that deliver our behavioral change programs, aimed at combating the spread of invasive species.

Education is paramount to our mission, and we take pride in conducting enlightening workshops and presentations for diverse public groups that instill awareness and foster responsibility in managing invasive species. Additionally, our services customizable invasive species training for businesses, industries, NGOs, and government entities, tailoring programs to address their specific needs. We also offer specialized plant ID training for lake associations and watershed groups through our Invasive Plant Patrol program, enhancing their ability to detect and manage potential threats to freshwater ecosystems. Committed to building a vigilant network, we provide comprehensive iMapInvasives and iNaturalist training for reporting invasive species observations, ensuring accessibility through live sessions, targeted trainings, and webinars.



THE 2ND NEW BRUNSWICK INVASIVE SPECIES SUMMIT

In November we hosted the 2nd New Brunswick Invasive Species Summit at the Centennial Rotary Lodge in Moncton, with a focus on empowering action. We had over 60 participants over the course of the 2-day event, with participants from government, non-profits, academia, industry and the public from Canada and the United States to discuss the latest on invasive species in New Brunswick.

Day one featured an overview of invasive species updates by our Program Director, Kristin Elton, followed by a dynamic "World Café" forum with 10 species experts and on-the-ground practitioners, which fostered lively discussions on current invasive species work. In the afternoon, we held a panel discussion with government and non-profit representatives focused on building New Brunswick's capacity for invasive species management.

On day two, Kristin Elton provided a presentation titled, "Better Data = Better Management: Show me the Data!" which emphasized the importance of sharing invasive species data to improve data availability in the province and provided information on data-sharing avenues such as iMapInvasives and iNaturalist. Following that session, participants ventured outdoors to practice using the iMapInvasives app on imitation patches of invasive species. In the afternoon, we traveled around the Greater Moncton Area to view Phragmites and Japanese Knotweed removal sites, as well as a stand of Ash trees infested by Emerald Ash Borer beetles. This expedition was hosted by Clarissa Hoffman, our Project Coordinator who is working closely with our partners to develop and refine the mitigation and management of these species.

The event was a huge success and we're excited to see how the knowledge gained and collaboration fostered at the event will propel invasive species work forward in New Brunswick.





In July, we released the first “Grow Me Instead” guide for New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in collaboration with the Nova Scotia Invasive Species Council and various dedicated partners. This guide is a reference tool for New Brunswick and Nova Scotia gardeners to learn about invasive horticultural plants and their recommended native alternatives. By following the practices and growing the alternatives listed in this guide, gardeners can achieve a vibrant garden that teems with life while helping to protect Species at Risk and preventing the spread of invasive plants. Visit the “Plant Wise” page (under “Programs”) on our website to access a digital version or to order a hard copy.

EMERALD ASH BORER TRAPS

This summer we continued our Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) monitoring as part of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency’s (CFIA) wider monitoring effort. With the help of several community partners, we were able to install 15 traps on Ash Trees throughout the province. The traps are baited to attract EAB, and their presence/absence gives us information on their spread throughout NB. Detections will also inform changes to CFIA’s EAB regulated areas. This year there were no detections at any of our sites.



HOW TO REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES

Reporting invasive species sightings is important in the fight against their spread as this data is used to inform management efforts.

To report an invasive species in New Brunswick, submit your observation to www.iNaturalist.ca, iMapInvasives, or contact the New Brunswick Invasive Species Council by emailing report@nbinvasives.ca. Please include the following information in your report: your name, location and date of the sighting, details and identifying features, and photos or videos.



MEET THE TEAM



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