



INVASIVE SPECIES FACT SHEET



Dog-strangling Vine

a.k.a. Pale Swallowwort
Cynanchum rossicum

THIS PLANT IS HIGHLY INVASIVE

DESCRIPTION AND ORIGIN

Dog-strangling Vine (DSV) will thrive in shade, sun, and all soil conditions, spread rapidly, reduce or eliminate other plants, and is extremely difficult to control. If you see this plant in your garden, **remove it immediately**.



Root ball

DSV belongs to the Milkweed family. It is a perennial, twining vine, up to 2 metres in height, with small pink to dark red, 5-lobed flowers, pairs of leaves, and slender seed pods. Each pod produces numerous wind-borne seeds resembling those of Common Milkweed.

DSV is native to the Ukraine and Russia. Here it has no known pests or diseases to control its spread. It may affect Monarch butterflies by displacing

their host plant, Common Milkweed. Larvae hatched on swallowwort will not survive.

The sap of this plant can cause an allergic reaction in some people. Wear gloves when handling it and wash exposed skin with soap afterward.

CONTROL

Cutting, mowing, and mulching provide limited control but resprouting occurs rapidly.

Pulling apparently stimulates the root crown to resprout. Removing the entire root crown area (where the stem joins the roots) and destroying it is effective but difficult when an infestation is widespread. Even small pieces of root crown left in the soil can regrow.

The effects of glyphosate (an herbicide) are variable; repeated applications are necessary over several seasons. It works best on either small, isolated invasions where re-seeding is unlikely, or on large sites where no other plants grow as glyphosate kills all vegetation.

A combination of removing flower heads before they set seed, mowing, digging up the root crown, and mulching will control small infestations.

Biocontrol offers the best hope for managing widespread invasions. One insect (a moth) has been released but will likely take years to establish. A suite of insect species offers the best solution.



Flowers (left) and seed pods (right)