

Stinking iris

Iris foetidissima



Identification

- Found in clumps up to 80 cm tall
- Flowers are dull yellow or sometimes purple-veined and are seen in November and December
- Produces distinctive bunches of 5 mm scarlet seeds
- Leathery leaves which smell foul when crushed



Stinking iris berries. Photo: Plant Protection Society.



Stinking iris berries. Photo: C. Howell (DOC).

Where is it found?

Stinking iris is found in a range of sites from bare ground to forest margins.

Why is it a problem?

It can survive a wide range of conditions, particularly low light, and will form dense clumps which crowd out other vegetation.

Similar species

Yellow flag (*Iris pseudacorus*) is the only other iris that is commonly found in the wild. Yellow flag iris grows up to one metre tall, is odourless and usually has bright yellow flowers.

Control

Small clumps can be dug out, but ensure all the red-brown underground rhizomes are removed. Stinking iris is often difficult to kill using herbicides; various methods using glyphosate have been tried including spraying, cutting and stump treating, and injecting herbicide into the base of the stems. Use all herbicides in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and ensure no herbicide comes into contact with plants, the soil and waterways.



Stinking iris flowering. Photo: C. Howell (DOC).