CALGARY RIVER VALLEYS

www.CalgaryRiverValleys.org

We are the voice of our rivers

Native vs Invasive Species

Native Plant Species

- Our native plants developed along with wildlife here over millennia, and are uniquely suited to our climate.
- Water loving plants' robust root systems help keep soil in place, slow and absorb high water events, and are a cost-effective way to prevent shoreline erosion.
- These plants help to absorb nutrients from the water and provide habitat for animals, fish, frogs, and insects.

Willows: long roots make them useful for bank stabilization. All willows are important to native pollinators each spring.

Sedges: spreading roots provide erosion control and provide an environment for the growth of micro-organisms that clean the water of pollutants.

Balsam Poplar: necessary for the health of the riparian system. These valuable trees make it possible for small birds to migrate successfully in spring and fall.

Wild Rose: an important food source for grouse, snowshoe hares, rodents, and mule deer. Bears, rabbits, and beavers eat the fruits (rose hips), branches, and

Invasive Plant Species

- Foreign (non-native) plant species are not kept in check by native insects, fungi or plant pathogens, so can take over the area.
- Reduce the overall biological diversity of ecosystems.
- Reduce the habitat for our native plants, which threatens species of insects, fish, animals and other plants.

Leafy Spurge: spreads by seeds and creeping root stalks. Its milky sap can cause blisters and dermatitis (skin rashes).

Tall Reed Canary Grass: able to block the sun and prevent baby poplar trees from regenerating / growing.

Spotted Knapweed: roots release chemicals into the soil that inhibit the growth of other plants around it.

Canada Thistle: Despite its name, it is not native to Canada, but is the most common invasive plant found around here.