

Invasive Plant Removal



English Ivy (*Hedera helix*)

General considerations

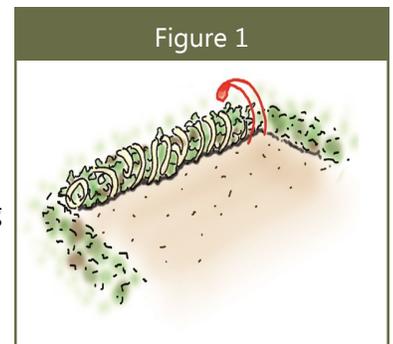
- English Ivy is a spreading, shade tolerant invasive vine that can out-compete native plants on the forest floor. It also damages trees by shading out their foliage, encouraging fungal disease by retaining moisture against the trunk, and making them more vulnerable to blowing down in high winds due to additional weight and surface area.
- Ivy flowers and sets seeds mainly on vines growing vertically up tree trunks, fences and other structures. These seeds are spread into new areas by birds. Ivy can also grow from a stem or root fragment.
- If the removal of ivy from the ground is not possible, prioritize ivy removal from trunks and in rings around trees.
- See the Thurston County Noxious Weed Fact Sheet (attached) for more information.

Tools and Materials

- Hand Pruners
- Loppers
- Handsaw
- Digging Fork
- Shovel
- Tarps
- Rope if working on slope

Removal Method—Ground (see Figure 1)

- Remove ivy in strips five to eight feet wide. Clip the edges and roll the ivy into cylindrical wads, pulling roots and runners from the ground as you go.
- Pull or cut the wad free and place onto a tarp to contain the wads and make them easier to move.
- Take care to remove any missed runner stems and roots by pulling and walking the length of the stems as you pull. The stems can be strong, but are easily removed if “walked” as described above. English ivy stems can regenerate from a piece six inches in length if left behind.
- Follow up in future years will be needed (See Maintenance/Monitoring next page)



Credit: Green Seattle Partnership Forest Steward Field Guide

Invasive Plant Removal—English Ivy

Removal Method—Trees (see Figure 2)

- Use hand pruners, loppers or a handsaw to cut ivy stems at least four feet up the trunk.
- Remove ivy from the ground three feet from the base of the tree using the method above. This will leave an ivy-free protective margin around the tree.
- Do not attempt to pull ivy down from the tree canopy, as this can be hazardous and may damage the tree. The ivy in the tree canopy will die and decompose once it is cut off from its roots.

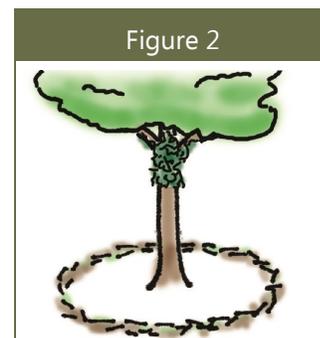


Figure 2
Credit: Green Seattle Partnership Forest
Steward Field Guide

Special Considerations for Slopes

- Work from the top of the slope to the bottom.
- If necessary, use ropes to haul tarped bundles of vines to the top of the slope.
- Minimize soil disturbance on slopes.
- Avoid performing ivy removal work during the wet season (October – March) to minimize erosion.
- Erosion may result from clearing large areas of slope of vegetation. Contact the OlyWild program for assistance in choosing and installing erosion control measures.

Disposal

- Ivy must be disposed of in the landfill if taken off-site. Small amounts can be placed in the garbage. Do not dispose in yard waste bins.
- To compost on site, pile vines on tarps or platforms of branches and logs to keep them from rooting into the ground. Leave to decompose, monitoring periodically to check for rooting vines. Ivy will decompose faster if covered with a tarp.
- To reduce the spread of seeds, OlyWild recommends disposing of seed-bearing plants in the landfill and targeting tree ivy for removal as it is more likely to produce berries and seeds.

Maintenance/Monitoring

- Monitor the area for re-sprouting roots and seedlings for several years. Remove with shovel or digging fork and dispose as above.

Need more information? Contact Michelle at mstevie@ci.olympia.wa.us

References:

Walama Restoration Project. "English Ivy: The Hazards and Removal Strategies". No Date. Accessed 9/2016.

