

# Swallow-wort Management Recommendations

Black swallow-wort is an invasive herbaceous perennial vine that has been detected in some areas of Michigan. Swallow-wort forms dense monocultures in sun or shade, outcompetes essential native vegetation, and lowers biodiversity. By managing swallow-wort on your property you're helping prevent further spread of this invasive throughout northern Michigan.

## Swallow-worts ALWAYS:

1. Have clear, watery sap
2. Have opposite leaves
3. Twine around each other or a support or trail along the ground—they do not stand upright without support when fully grown.

## Identification



Leaves: grow opposite each other. Dark green, waxy, & shiny, smooth margin.



Flowers: small, dark purple or black flowers with 5 petals.



Seedpods: smooth & green developing to light brown when they open in the fall.

## Management

### Physical or Mechanical Control

Hand Pulling	Pulling swallow-wort is not an effective way to remove populations.
Digging	Can be effective for small populations. Make sure to remove the entire root crown with this control method
Cutting	Cutting will not eradicate the plant but can help prevent seed spread. is most effective when there are small, immature pods on the plants. Avoid cutting during the flowering period, before pod formation will allow plants to recover and still produce a viable seed crop.
Mowing	Mowing will not eradicate the plant, but can be utilized to prevent seed formation if timed correctly. If swallow-wort stands are cut too early, the plants can recover and still produce viable seed. It is suggested to mow when immature seed pods are just starting to develop and do not yet contain viable seeds (McKague and Cappuccino 2005). Mowing of swallow-wort after seed development is not recommended as it could aid in seed dispersal.

### Chemical Control

Glyphosate	Glyphosate (e.g., Roundup Pro®) provides effective control of swallow-wort. It should be applied as a foliar spray twice during the season; first in June, during flowering and again in August. Swallow-wort has a waxy cuticle that normally repels liquid, so glyphosate should be used with a vegetable oil based multi-purpose adjuvant (e.g. SprayTech® Oil) on upland sites or a wetland-approved non-ionic surfactant (e.g., Cygnet Plus®) in wetlands.
	Note: Glyphosate is non-selective and care should be taken to avoid off target spray harming desirable plants. DO NOT apply during a drought. Always read and follow the instructions on the product label.

### Other

Pod Pulling	Pull the seed pods when they form in July/August to prevent further spread. Seed pods will open in late summer/early fall and seeds will be dispersed via the wind. Dispose of seeds in a black garbage bag. DO NOT COMPOST OR DUMP
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