

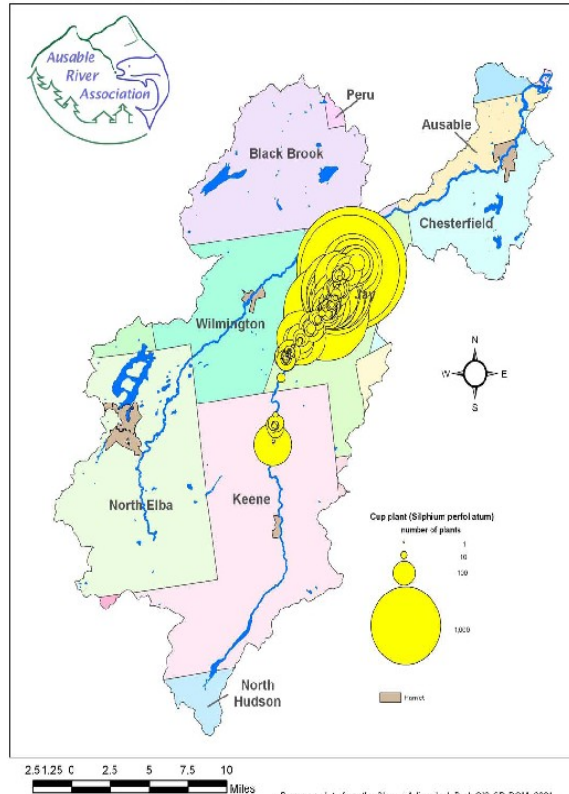
Cup Plant
(*Silphium perfoliatum*)



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www.ausableriver.org

Map showing invasion of Cup Plant as it spreads down the East Branch Ausable.

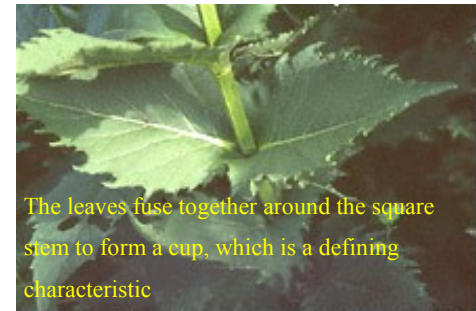


--Base map data from the Shores Adirondack Park GIS CD-ROM 2001.
--Ausable River Watershed boundary from NYS APA 2007
--Invasive plant identification and counts by the Ausable River Association.
--Map by CTS and EBA, 2007. Platteburgh State Univ. of NY

Cup Plant
(*Silphium perfoliatum*)



The yellow, showy flowers



The leaves fuse together around the square stem to form a cup, which is a defining characteristic



Essex County Master Gardener program

962-4810



Ausable River Association

Working to protect and enhance the cultural and natural resources of the Ausable River Watershed.

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Cup Plant (*Silphium perfoliatum*)

In recent years you may have noticed a pretty, tall flower growing along the banks of the East and Main Branches of the Ausable River. The plant is Cup Plant (*Silphium perfoliatum* L.) and is native to the Midwest, but is quickly becoming an invasive species here. This fact sheet has been created to introduce this new threat to people concerned about the ecological health of the Ausable River Watershed.

Cup plant is a perennial with showy, yellow daisy-like flowers. It grows to be 3 to 8 feet tall and the clumps spread out to be between 1 and 3 feet across. The leaves are opposite and simple, broadly triangular to ovate. The plant's other notable characteristic is a thick square stem with large leaves that fuse together around the stem to form a "cup".

When the plant encounters moist, rich soils along streams and in floodplains, it becomes invasive. However, in its native habitat, the tall-grass prairies of the Midwest, Cup Plant happily coexists with the other native natives.

Not long ago, probably about 20 years ago, at least one plant escaped from a garden somewhere between Keene and Keene Valley.

It spread downstream via seeds that likely traveled in flood waters. Since being planted it has spread downstream from Keene to the mouth of the Ausable.

It is its aggressive characteristic that makes Cup Plant an invasive. Like Purple loosestrife, Japanese Knotweed, or common reed, Cup Plant pushes out native vegetation, creating a monoculture (an area of only one type of plant), which can negatively effect native soils and wildlife. Since the Cup Plant is not palatable to grazing or browsing animals, left unchecked, it will choke out the native plants that the native wildlife depends upon for survival. What makes this characteristic even more alarming is the fact that this is the first occurrence of this plant escaping into the Adirondack Park. Therefore, it is imperative to enact control measures to keep the plant from spreading into more pristine areas of the Park.

There are steps Gardeners can take to help control the spread of Cup Plant. First, do not plant or transplant Cup Plant into your garden. Good native alternatives with bright yellow flowers include:

- Ox-Eye Sunflower (*Heliopsis helianthoides*)
- Cutleaf Coneflower (*Rudbeckia laciniata*)
- Woodland Sunflower (*Helianthus divaricatus*)

If you already have Cup Plant in your garden or yard, you can remove it by applying 20% Rodeo herbicide which is glyphosate approved for wetland applications. If you prefer not to use a herbicide you can cut the flowers off before they go to seed or mow the entire plant before it goes to seed. To learn more about how to best remove Cup Plant from your property, please contact the Ausable River Association or Master Gardeners. We would be glad to offer assistance.



A native alternative to Cup Plant: Ox-Eye Sunflower

(*Heliopsis helianthoides*)