

## New smartphone app takes aim at Alberta's most noxious weeds

A new iPhone application developed by the City of Edmonton is taking the guesswork out of weed identification.

Alberta Weed Spotter is an easy-to-use application designed to help Albertans identify and report weeds to provincial authorities. The application includes all 75 species currently regulated under Alberta's Weed Control Act. The goal of the app is to help improve strategic weed management decisions and allow for quicker responses to new weed infestations across the province.



"Invasive species spread quickly in urban centres," says project lead Daniel Laubhann, Environmental Technician with the City's Neighbourhood, Parks and Community Recreation branch. "Edmonton is the fifth-largest city in Canada and capital of Alberta, so we have a high responsibility to address this issue. Public awareness is vital to minimize the number of new invasive species and to reduce the spread of existing weeds."

The application contains images of weeds separated into categories such as flowering, grass-like, and tree or shrub. This will allow Albertans to easily identify weeds they come across and accurately report them to weed managers across the province.

For weed complaints, citizens should continue to contact the local authority in their area responsible for municipal weed enforcement, such as with 311 within Edmonton. A mobile application to file weed complaints is planned to be implemented in the future.

Also in development is an Android-compatible version of the app, as well as plans for the information to be available to residents via open data.

Alberta Weed Spotter was programmed as Elinam R. Hini's Master's degree project at Athabasca University under the supervision of Dr. Sabine Graf, Associate Professor from the School of Computing and Information Systems. The development of the application was jointly funded by the City of Edmonton's Office of Biodiversity, Forestry Beautification and Environmental Management section and the Government of Alberta.

The application is available for [free download on iTunes](#).

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