

Bad Plants Planted by Good People

When you go to the nursery, you might have the best intentions of redesigning your landscape to attract wildlife. However, not all plants sold in nurseries and at stores are good for wildlife and the environment. When selecting plants for backyard wildlife habitat, native species are generally the best choices. Unfortunately, native species are not always readily available at most commercial nurseries. So, your best plan of action is to go to the store armed with knowledge to avoid purchasing problem plants. To begin, let's define what is considered to be native, non-native and invasive.

- Native:** species which naturally occur in a region (like Maryland)
- Non-Native:** species which do not naturally occur in a region
- Invasive:** non-native species that cause environmental, economic or health-related problems

Invasive species are problematic, and their introductions into natural systems can be intentional or unintentional. Invasive species can be animals, plants, fungi and even microbes. Billions of dollars are spent each year in the United States to control invasive species. It has been estimated that \$45 million per year is spent on control of the invasive Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) on federal lands. That's a lot of cash!

One way you can help with the battle against invasive plants is to not plant them in your yard. The following list contains species currently sold at nurseries that should be avoided. If you see these plants being sold at the store, then the Maryland Native Plant Society has put together cards to give to the vendors to let them know you are concerned about them selling invasive plants. You can find the link here: http://www.mdflora.org/publications/shopping_cards.html



Abandoned house being engulfed by Japanese knotweed in Savage, MD (left);
Japanese barberry (top right) and periwinkle (top bottom) are common invasives

Commonly Planted Invasive Plants

Habit	Common Name	Scientific Name
Aquatic	Eurasian watermilfoil	<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i>
Aquatic	Flowering rush	<i>Butomus umbellatus</i>
Aquatic	Parrot feather	<i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i>
Aquatic	Water chestnut	<i>Trapa natans</i>
Aquatic	Water hyacinth	<i>Eichhornia crassipes</i>
Forbs	Carpet bugleweed, Bugleweed, Ajuga	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>
Forbs	Japanese knotweed	<i>Polygonum cuspidatum</i>
Forbs	Japanese pachysandra, Pachysandra	<i>Pachysandra terminalis</i>
Forbs	Loosestrife, Creeping Jenny, Moneywort	<i>Lysimachia nummularia</i>
Forbs	Orange daylily	<i>Hemerocallis fulva</i>
Forbs	Perilla, Beefsteak plant	<i>Perilla frutescens</i>
Forbs	Yellow flag iris	<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>
Grass	Cogongrass	<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>
Grass	Common reed	<i>Phragmites australis</i>
Grass	Japanese silver grass	<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i>
Grass	Johnson grass	<i>Sorghum halepense</i>
Grass	Pampas grass	<i>Cortaderia selloana</i>
Shrub	Butterfly bush	<i>Buddleia davidii</i>
Shrub	Chinese privet	<i>Ligustrum sinense</i>
Shrub	Heavenly bamboo	<i>Nandina domestica</i>
Shrub	Japanese barberry	<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>
Shrub	Japanese holly	<i>Ilex crenata</i>
Shrub	Japanese spiraea	<i>Spiraea japonica</i>
Shrub	Leatherleaf mahonia	<i>Mahonia bealei</i>
Shrub	Scotch broom	<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>
Shrub	Wineberry	<i>Rubus phoenicolasius</i>
Shrub	Winged euonymus	<i>Euonymus alatus</i>
Tree	Amur corktree, Phellodendron	<i>Phellodendron amurense</i>
Tree	Bradford pear	<i>Pyrus calleryana</i>
Tree	Chinese tallow	<i>Triadica sebifera</i>
Tree	Goldenrain tree	<i>Koelreuteria paniculata</i>
Tree	Norway maple	<i>Acer platanoides</i>
Tree	Sawtooth oak	<i>Quercus acutissima</i>
Vine	Chinese wisteria	<i>Wisteria sinensis</i>
Vine	Chinese yam	<i>Dioscorea oppositifolia</i>
Vine	English ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Vine	Japanese wisteria	<i>Wisteria floribunda</i>
Vine	Periwinkle	<i>Vinca minor</i>
Vine	Vinca vine	<i>Vinca major</i>
Vine	Winter creeper	<i>Euonymus fortunei</i>