



## What are Invasive Plants

Whether you are a homeowner with a love of gardening or a naturalist who loves the native forests of our county, beware our habitat is under attack by invasive plants. **What are invasive plants?** These are plants that have been introduced into our area, have adapted very well to the local growing conditions, have no natural disease or insect enemies to deal with and can out compete native species. In general these are plants that can take over your garden, local waterways, river ditch banks or forest areas.

**How did these plants get into our gardens and state?** Many of these plants are sold through catalogs or in nurseries to unsuspecting customers. Often the description that comes with these plants in catalogs gives you a good idea that this must be a tough plant. The descriptions say can grow anywhere, covers ground quickly, or birds love the seeds. If you see a description like those above, don't order those plants. That type of plant with time will surely get out of hand. Many of these invasive plants can be grown in one part of the country with no problem but put that plant in another region and it can go wild. This leads many homeowners to share positive comments and plant material with friends in other areas only to have the second homeowner overrun by the new plant.

What are some of the more common garden plants that are now becoming a problem in Oregon forests, parks, waterways and neighborhoods?

Trees- Norway maple, tree of heaven, English hawthorn, sweet cherry, thunder cloud cherry, European mountain ash, eastern red cedar and black locust.

Shrubs- butterfly bush, Daphne laureola, cotoneaster, broom's, English holly, privet, English laurel, firethorn and multiflora rose.

Herbaceous perennials- foxglove, water hyacinth, English ivy, birdsfoot trefoil, purple loosestrife, lemon balm, forget-me-not, fountain grass, Japanese knotweed, creeping buttercup, blackberry, periwinkle, lysimachia, tall white top, silver lace vine, Virginia creeper, Euonymus fortunei and Kudzu.

**What are the best ways to control these invaders?** If you already have an invasion underway you should spray the plants with the proper type of herbicide and then dig the plants out. If the plants are in an area where you cannot spray you will need to dig them out and be persistent. These plants may come back for a few years so keep after them. If you don't have any of these plants in your yard or on your property then the best thing to do is avoid bringing them in. You may need to stay alert to the possible introduction of invasive plants to your property by birds. It is also recommended that you pass the word to other gardeners in the area not to use any of the above listed invasive plants on their properties.

Because we all love new and interesting plants it is important when you try one that you monitor its growth habits carefully during the first few years in your garden. If it seems to be adapting too well to your site and taking over please eliminate it from your garden.

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