

INVASIVE PLANTS



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BARBERRY TAKING OVER FOREST FLOOR

Did you know that some of our common landscaping plants are becoming invasive?

Plants such as non-native (exotic) bush honeysuckle, buckthorn, burning bush, and barberry are “invading” our fields, wetlands, and forests.

Test your “Invasive Plant IQ” by answering the following questions:

Q. Are all exotic plants invasive?

No, only a few exotic plants have been classified as invasive or becoming invasive.

Q. Why are invasive plants a problem?

Invasive plants out-compete our native plant species and can rapidly change an area from a biologically diverse community of plants and animals to one dominated by a single plant species. This drastic change eliminates not only our native plants but also the animals that rely on those plants.

INVASIVE PLANT WEBSITES

To learn why native plants are important, and which native species can be substituted for invasives in your yard, visit:

<http://www.bringingnaturehome.net/native-gardening/gardening-for-life>

<http://beplantwise.org/tools/alternatives.php>

An excellent invasive plant identification guide:

<http://extension.unh.edu/forestry/Docs/invasive.pdf>

Websites with invasive plant information:

Vermont Invasive Exotic Plant Committee:

<http://www.vtinvasiveplants.org/invaders.php>

New England Wild Flower Society:

www.newfs.org/protect/invasive-plants/invasive-plant-publications.html

Vermont Master Gardener Program University of Vermont Extension:

<http://www.uvm.edu/mastergardener/invasives/invasives.htm>

The Nature Conservancy:

www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/Vermont/volunteer/art21105.html

Plant Conservation Alliance’s Alien Plant Working Group:

<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact.htm>

CONSERVATION NOTES

INVASIVE PLANTS



PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE



BARBERRY



YELLOW FLAG IRIS



ORIENTAL BITTERSWEET



BURNING BUSH

ESSEX
CONSERVATION
COMMITTEE

BE ON THE LOOKOUT!

These weedy invasive plants have arrived in town:

- Glossy Buckthorn
- Common Buckthorn
- Wild Chervil
- Garlic Mustard
- Black Swallow-wort

They are all extremely vigorous and can out-compete our native plants and are capable of taking over large areas of land—think Purple Loosestrife—in just a couple of years.

Our best defense to protect our native plants, and the animals that rely on them for survival is to identify these plants early, remove them before they become established, and check sites annually.

Control methods are described for isolated occurrences. For control of heavy infestations and for more general information, visit the web sites listed on back.

Black Swallow-wort (*Cynanchum nigrum*)



Growth: Wind-dispersed twining vine of paired, dark green, smooth, glossy, egg-shaped leaves that forms clusters of fragrant purple flowers in late spring to summer. Vines grow to 6' long and produce seedpods that resemble those of milkweeds.

Habitat: Sun to shade along riverbanks, roadsides, fields, and hardwood forests.

Threats: With its dense mass of knobby roots and sprawling habit, the plants both crowd out and over-run other plant species. Monarch butterfly caterpillars are attracted to swallow-wort pods as they are to milkweeds, but are poisoned by feeding on swallow-wort.

Control: Extensive digging is necessary to remove the tough, dense knobby roots of even a small infestation of swallow-wort. Anything larger defies digging or other mechanical methods. Cut off pods of vines that haven't been removed to safeguard monarch butterflies and to deter wind-borne spread of seed.

Swallow-wort photos: Jennifer Forman Orth, PCA-APWG

Chervil photos: Czarapata, Elisabeth J, Invasive Plants of the Upper Midwest

Wild Chervil (*Anthriscus sylvestris*)



Growth: Looks like Queen Anne's Lace but flowers much earlier (mid-May to mid-June). Plant has deep taproot; branching flower stalk and white flowers on dome-shaped heads that set seed by July. Plant grows to height of 3' - 6' and dies back each year with frost.

Habitat: Prefers moist, rich soils, sun or some shade, but can grow on various sites spreading from roadside into pasture, meadow, field, and forest edge.

Threats: Spreads **EXTREMELY RAPIDLY** by seed and vegetative off-shoots, shades out other species, degrades pasture, ruins hay, can host virus that infects carrots, celery, and parsnips.

Control: It is important to be pro-active in removing even one plant. Dig up or pull entire taproot early in season when soil is loose and moist. Mow or cut plant at or below ground level BEFORE seeds are produced, mowing after plants have set seed encourages spread.

Caution: In the presence of sunlight, plant juices become strong skin irritant. Keep juices from touching skin.

Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)



Growth: A biennial plant whose first year rosettes grow close to ground (left photo). Second year plants grow to 3 feet and flower in early spring (right photo) setting seeds in May and June. Roots are easy to pull up. Seed remains viable for three to five years.

Habitat: Prefers moist shaded areas, also roadsides, edges of woods and streams, along trails, and forest openings.

Threats: A single plant produces thousands of seeds. Its shade tolerance allows it to be present and dominate forest understory. It negatively impacts spring wildflowers and mycorrhizal fungi, important for our northern hardwoods.

Control: Hand removal of all garlic mustard plants is desired so that the plants do not produce seed that will sprout in subsequent years. This is best done when soil is moist and before seeds set. Monitoring of site must continue for five years so that newly sprouted seedlings can be hand-pulled before new seed crop is produced.

Common Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*)



Growth: A shrub or small tree up to 22 feet tall with a trunk up to 10 inches wide. The bark is gray to brown and rough textured when mature. Yellow-green, 4-petaled flowers emerge in the spring, near the leaf stalks, followed by ¼ inch black fruit in the fall. Jagged, toothed leaves are broadly oval, have 3-4 pairs of upcurved veins, and stay green late into fall, after most other deciduous leaves have fallen.

Habitat: It is tolerant of many soil types, well drained sand, clay, poorly drained calcareous, neutral or alkaline, wet or dry. It prefers lightly shaded conditions; oak woods, openings in woodlands, and woods' edges but, because it is so adaptive, it will grow almost anywhere.

Threats: forms dense thickets, crowding and shading out native plants, often completely replacing them.

Control: Uprooting of ½-inch-diameter seedlings by hand or up to 1½-inch-diameter using a weed wrench* is effective, but care should be taken to avoid excessive disturbance to the soil, which can give buckthorn seeds stored in the soil a chance to grow.

Glossy Buckthorn (*Rhamnus frangula*)



Growth: Normally an upright, slender shrub or tree, it re-grows with increased vigor into a thicket of multiple stems if cut or mown. The glossy, medium-green leaves are round to oval, with no teeth and straight veins parallel to one another. The larger stems are brownish gray scattered with small light-colored flecks. Small white flowers produced in the spring form dark reddish fruit that turns black.

Habitat: Thrives **EVERYWHERE**, from deeply shaded forests to open sites, and from wetlands to drier uplands.

Threats: Crowds out regenerating forest tree species, reduces the number of species, changes the physical structure of a habitat, disrupts the food web, and delays the long-term process of forest development.

Control: Hand-pulling of smaller stems is effective. The use of a mechanical leveraging device known as a weed wrench* allows larger plants to be pulled up.

INVASIVE PLANTS

WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Several invasive plant species have been quarantined by the State of Vermont. Many others are still sold at local and mail-order nurseries. Once planted, they spread across the landscape. It is best to not purchase them. Instead, encourage your local nursery to carry native plants.
- Incorporate non-invasive or native species in your landscape or garden and replace invasive plants that may already be there. Learn to recognize invasive plants and pull escaping seedlings/saplings you discover in our wild areas.
- Periodically inspect your property for invasive plants. Birds, wind, and heavy equipment can carry invasive seeds onto your land. If discovered as single plant or small infestation, they are they easier to eradicate.
- Learn proper methods for removal, treatment, and disposal of invasive plants and remove them from your property.
- Check the websites on back for useful information on identifying and removing invasive plants.

INVASIVE TREES	
Amur Maple	Acer ginnala
Autumn Olive	Elaeagnus umbellata
Black Locust	Robinia pseudoacacia
Common Buckthorn	Rhamnus cathartica
Glossy Buckthorn	Rhamnus frangula
Japanese Tree Lilac	Syringa reticulata
Norway Maple	Acer platanoides
Princess Tree	Paulownia tomentosa
Russian Olive	Elaeagnus angustifolia
Scotch (Scots) Pine	Pinus sylvestris
Tree of Heaven	Ailanthus altissima
White Poplar	Populus alba
INVASIVE SHRUBS	
Burning Bush	Euonymus alata
Common Barberry	Berberis vulgaris
Japanese Barberry	Berberis thunbergii
Korean Barberry	Berberis koreana
Border Privet	Ligustrum obtusifolium
European Black Alder	Alnus glutinosa
False Indigo	Amorpha fruticosa
Dwarf Honeysuckle	Lonicera xylosteum
Amur Honeysuckle	L.maackii
Morrow Honeysuckle	L.morrowii
Tartarian Honeysuckle	L.tatarica
Bell Honeysuckle	L.x bella
Japanese Honeysuckle	L.japonica
Multiflora Rose	Rosa multiflora

INVASIVE PERENNIALS	
Purple Loosestrife	Lythrum salicaria
Garden Loosestrife	Lysimachia vulgaris
Yellow Iris	Iris pseudacorus
Dame's Rocket	Hesperis matronalis
True Forget-me-not	Myosotis scorpioides
Spotted Knapweed	Centaurea maculosa, Centaurea biebersteinii
Cypress Spurge	Euphorbia cyparissias
Wild Chervil	Anthriscus sylvestris
Garlic Mustard	Alliaria petiolata
Common Reed	Phragmites australis
Japanese Knotweed	Fallopia japonica Polygonum cuspidatum
Giant Knotweed	Polygonum sachalinense
INVASIVE VINES	
Japanese Honeysuckle	Lonicera japonica
Japanese Wisteria	Wisteria floribunda
Mile-a-minute vine	Polygonum perfoliatum
Oriental Bittersweet	Celastrus orbiculatus
Porcelainberry	Ampelopsis brevipedunculata
Pale Swallow-wort	Vincetoxicum hirundinaria
Black Swallow-wort	Vincetoxicum nigrum
INVASIVE GROUND COVERS	
English Ivy	Hedera helix
Goutweed	Aegopodium podagraria