

INVASIVE EXOTIC PEST PLANTS AND NATIVE PLANT ALTERNATIVES

What are invasive exotic pest plants?

- An **exotic** plant is a plant that has been introduced to an area from outside its native range, either purposefully or accidentally.
- A **naturalized exotic** plant is one that can sustain itself outside of cultivation, outside its native range. It is still exotic; it has not "become" native. Also called "adaptive."
- An **invasive exotic** plant is a naturalized exotic plant that is expanding its range into natural areas and disrupting naturally occurring native plant communities.

Why are exotic pest plants a problem?

- outcompete native species for food, sunlight, territory
- often don't support local wildlife (food and shelter)
- can create "monocultures" and therefore reduce biodiversity, directly accounting for the decline in 42% of threatened and endangered native species
- high cost to control or fight invasive plants - **\$35 BILLION each year nation-wide**
- controls like pesticides put extra burden on beneficial plants and animals and may have unintended consequences
- exotic plant takeovers destroy aesthetics

What can we do to help?

REMOVE AND REPLACE!

Common Exotic Pest Plants Growing in this Area:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| ➤ Tree of Heaven | ➤ Japanese Honeysuckle |
| ➤ Mimosa | ➤ Wintercreeper |
| ➤ Autumn Olive | ➤ Japanese Knotweed |
| ➤ Privet | ➤ Burning Bush |
| ➤ Bush Honeysuckle | ➤ Nandina |
| ➤ Japanese Spirea | ➤ Miscanthus |
| ➤ Mahonia (Oregon Grape) | ➤ Callery (Bradford) Pear |
| ➤ English Ivy | |

Examples of Native Plants that Replace Exotic Plants (that replaced the native plants to start with!):

*Instead of invasive exotic **shrubs with fall color** like Burning Bush, Nandina, or Barberry*

Plant this: Fothergilla (Fothergilla major), Virginia Sweetspire (Itea virginica), Red or Black Chokeberry (Aronia/Photinia), Eastern Ninebark (Physocarpus opulifolius), Aromatic Sumac (Rhus aromatic), native Viburnums (i.e., Arrowwood, Mapleleaf, Blackhaw, Possumhaw, Cranberry), or Blueberry (Vaccinium corymbosum)

*Instead of exotic invasive **evergreen shrubs** like Privet, Japanese Holly or Barberry (or non-invasive exotics like Boxwood, Leyland Cypress or non-native Azaleas)*

Plant this: Arborvitae (Tsuga occidentalis), Inkberry Holly (Ilex nigra), American Holly (Ilex opaca), Catawba or Rosebay Rhododendron (R. catawbiense, maximum), Southern Waxmyrtle (Myrica cerifera), or Coastal Doghobble (Leucothoe axillaris)

*Instead of exotic invasive **flowering shrubs** like Rose of Sharon, Butterfly Bush or Japanese Spirea*

Plant this: Summersweet (Clethra alnifolia), Bottlebrush Buckeye (Aesculus parviflora), Virginia Sweetspire, Steeplebush (Spiraea tomentosa), Elderberry, Carolina Allspice (Calycanthus floridus)

*Instead of exotic invasive **groundcovers** like English Ivy, Periwinkle, Japanese Honeysuckle, and Wintercreeper*

Plant this: Allegheny Spurge (Pachysandra procumbens), Wild Ginger (Asarum canadense), Native Ferns, Pussytoes (Antennaria plantaginifolia), Stonecrop (Sedum ternatum), Creeping Phlox (Phlox subulata, stolonifera)

*Instead of exotic invasive **ornamental grasses** like Chinese Silvergrass, Zebra Grass, Japanese Bloodgrass or even Pampas Grass*

Plant this: River Oats (Chasmanthium latifolium), Bottlebrush Grass (Elymus hystrix), Little Bluestem (Schizachyrium scoparium), Pink Muhly Grass (Muhlenbergia capillaris), Purple Lovegrass (Eragrostis spectabilis), Switchgrass (Panicum virgatum), Sideoats Grama (Bouteloua curtipendula), Prairie Dropseed (Sporobolus heterolepis)

SUGGESTED READING

Tennessee's Native Plant Alternatives to Non-Native Invasives, Tennessee Invasive Plant Council, <http://www.tnipc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/invasive-alternatives-printable.pdf>

Invasive Plant Management and Control, <https://www.invasive.org/control/>