

invasive plants of the Southeast



Top 20 Invasive Species

1. Chinese Privet, *Ligustrum sinense*
2. Nepalese Browntop, *Microstegium vimineum*
3. Autumn Olive, *Elaeagnus umbellata*
4. Chinese Wisteria, *Wisteria sinensis* & Japanese Wisteria, *W. floribunda*
5. Mimosa, *Albizia julibrissin*
6. Japanese Honeysuckle, *Lonicera japonica*
7. Amur Honeysuckle, *Lonicera maackii*
8. Multiflora Rose, *Rosa multiflora*
9. Hydrilla, *Hydrilla verticillata*
10. Kudzu, *Pueraria montana*
11. Golden Bamboo, *Phyllostachys aurea*
12. Oriental Bittersweet, *Celastrus orbiculatus*
13. English Ivy, *Hedera helix*
14. Tree-of-Heaven, *Ailanthus altissima*
15. Chinese Tallow, *Sapium sebiferum*
16. Chinese Princess Tree, *Paulownia tomentosa*
17. Japanese Knotweed, *Polygonum cuspidatum*
18. Silvergrass, *Miscanthus sinensis*
19. Thorny Olive, *Elaeagnus pungens*
20. Nandina, *Nandina domestica*

definitions

native

A native species is one that occurs in a particular region, ecosystem or habitat without direct or indirect human action.

non-native

(*alien, exotic, foreign, introduced, non-indigenous*) A species that occurs artificially in locations beyond its known historical natural range. A species should be considered non-native if it is from a different region, even if from the same country or state.



Card Nourse & Hugh Nourse



Wisteria, *Wisteria sinensis*

invasive species

A species that, through rapid growth or other characteristics, is capable of altering natural ecosystems to the detriment of native species.

“Invasiveness” is characterized by strong vegetative growth, abundant seed production, high germination rate, long-lived seeds and rapid maturation to sexually reproductive stage.

weed

A subjective word used to describe any plant considered to be “out of place”. In other words, weeds can include native and non-native plants, growing wherever someone wishes they weren’t. Invasive species are often referred to as weeds of natural areas.

you can help

Avoid disturbing natural areas, including clearing of native vegetation.

Know your plants. Find out if plants you grow have invasive tendencies.

Do not use invasive species in landscaping, restoration, or for erosion control; use plants known not to be invasive in your area.

Control invasive plants on your land by removing or managing them to prevent spread. Management may include pruning away flowers, mowing or herbicide use to prevent vegetative spread.

Discuss concerns about invasive plants with plant retailers. Ask them to refrain from selling these species and instead offer native or non-invasive alternatives.

Volunteer to assist in invasive plant removal projects, such as “privet pulls”. Notify land managers of invasive plant occurrences.

Work with local government officials to encourage use of native plants in their landscapes. Provide lists of attractive, non-invasive, hardy, pest-resistant plants that are beneficial to wildlife.

Resources

www.uga.edu/gpca/
www.nps.gov/plants/alien
www.se-eppc.org
<http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/>
www.invasive.org
www.gaeppc.org

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invasive plants

of the Southeast



The State Botanical Garden of Georgia
and
The Georgia Plant Conservation Alliance

Invasive organisms

pose one of the biggest threats to our natural environment

Invasives displace native species, destroy habitat and food for wildlife, alter hydrology and nutrient flow, and compete for pollinators and seed dispersers that native plants depend on.

Free from the vast and complex array of natural controls present in their native lands, including herbivores, parasites, and diseases, exotic plants may experience rapid and unrestricted growth in new environments. When this happens, native plants can get crowded out, even to the point of extinction.

Invasives cost billions of dollars annually in damage and control measures in the United States. The cost to our natural heritage is immeasurable.

Not all exotics are invasive. Many introduced plants are easily controlled and are beneficial ornamentals. Many of our important food sources, such as corn and wheat, are exotic plant species.

Above: Silvergrass. Below: Invasions of English ivy, Japanese honeysuckle, Kudzu, Nepalese browntop

Asian Invasion

Because the climate of the southeastern United States is similar to portions of China and Japan, we are particularly vulnerable to destructive invasive species from those regions. The floristic similarity between East Asia and the southeastern United States is well known, with many shared genera and plant families.

These Asian species, without natural pests, herbivores and competition, can spread unchecked at alarming rates, disrupting native plant communities.

Leading Causes of Plant Extinction

Habitat destruction

Invasive species and diseases they carry

Over-collecting and over-harvesting



Recommended Species Native to the Southeastern U.S.

Groundcovers

Wild Ginger, *Asarum canadense*
Goldenstar, *Chrysogonum virginianum*
Alleghany Spurge, *Pachysandra procumbens*
Blue Phlox, *Phlox divaricata*
Christmas Fern, *Polystichum acrostichoides*
Foamflower, *Tiarella cordifolia*
Moss Verbena, *Verbena tenuisecta*

Vines

Crossvine, *Bignonia capreolata*
Climbing Hydrangea, *Decumaria barbara*
Trumpet Creeper, *Campsis radicans*
Yellow Jessamine, *Gelsemium sempervirens*
Fall-blooming Jessamine, *Gelsemium rankinii*
Trumpet Honeysuckle, *Lonicera sempervirens*
Virginia Creeper, *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*
Dwarf Smilax, *Smilax pumila*

Shrubs

Bottlebrush Buckeye, *Aesculus parviflora*
Devil's Walkingstick, *Aralia spinosa*
American Beautyberry, *Callicarpa americana*
Sweetshrub, *Calycanthus floridus*
Button Bush, *Cephalanthus occidentalis*
Buckwheat Tree, *Cliftonia monophylla*
Titi, *Cyrilla racemiflora*
Strawberry Bush, *Euonymus americanus*
Dwarf Fothergilla, *Fothergilla gardenii*
Oakleaf Hydrangea, *Hydrangea quercifolia*
Inkberry, *Ilex glabra*
Star Anise, *Illicium parviflorum*
Virginia Sweetspire, *Itea virginica*
Mountain Laurel, *Kalmia latifolia*
Coast Leucothoe, *Leucothoe axillaris*
Drooping Leucothoe, *Leucothoe fontanesiana*
Fetterbush, *Lyonia lucida*
Wax Myrtle, *Myrica cerifera*
Fevertree, *Pinckneya bracteata*
Alabama Azalea, *Rhododendron alabamense*
Flame Azalea, *Rhododendron calendulaceum*
Pink Azalea, *Rhododendron periclymenoides*
Shining Sumac, *Rhus copallina*
Mountain Stewartia, *Stewartia ovata*
Storax, *Styrax americana*
Arrowwood Viburnum, *Viburnum dentatum*
Blackhaw Viburnum, *Viburnum prunifolium*
Rusty Viburnum, *Viburnum rufidulum*
Spanish Bayonet, *Yucca aloifolia*

Small Trees

Southern Sugar Maple, *Acer barbatum*
Downy Serviceberry, *Amelanchier arborea*
Ironwood, *Carpinus caroliniana*
Eastern Redbud, *Cercis canadensis*
Fringetree, *Chionanthus virginicus*
Flowering Dogwood, *Cornus florida*
Loblolly Bay, *Gordonia lasianthus*
Carolina Silverbell, *Halesia carolina*
Common Witchhazel, *Hamamelis virginiana*
Possumhaw, *Ilex decidua*
American Holly, *Ilex opaca*
Sweet Bay Magnolia, *Magnolia virginiana*
Big-leaf Magnolia, *Magnolia macrophylla*
Narrow-leaf Crabapple, *Malus angustifolia*
Ogeechee Lime, *Nyssa ogeche*
Devilwood, *Osmanthus americanus*
American Hophornbeam, *Ostrya virginiana*
Sourwood, *Oxydendrum arboreum*
Red Bay, *Persea borbonia*
Virginia Pine, *Pinus virginiana*
Sassafras, *Sassafras albidum*

Large Trees

Red Maple, *Acer rubrum*
Sugar Maple, *Acer saccharum*
River Birch, *Betula nigra*
Sugarberry, *Celtis laevigata*
American Beech, *Fagus grandifolia*
Sweetgum, *Liquidambar styraciflua*
Tulip Poplar, *Liriodendron tulipifera*
Black Gum, *Nyssa sylvatica*
White Pine, *Pinus strobus*
Loblolly Pine, *Pinus taeda*
Sycamore, *Platanus occidentalis*
White Oak, *Quercus alba*
Scarlet Oak, *Quercus coccinea*
Southern Red Oak, *Quercus falcata*
Laurel Oak, *Quercus hemisphaerica*
Willow Oak, *Quercus phellos*
Chestnut Oak, *Quercus prinus*
Northern Red Oak, *Quercus rubra*
Live Oak, *Quercus virginiana*
Pond Cypress, *Taxodium ascendens*
Bald Cypress, *Taxodium distichum*
Eastern Hemlock, *Tsuga canadensis*
Carolina Hemlock, *Tsuga caroliniana*

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