

Don't plant a pest!

Give them an inch and they'll take an acre ...

California is a gardener's dream. Our mild climate allows us to have fantastic gardens, showcasing a wide variety of ornamental plants from all around the world. Unfortunately, some of these plants from other parts of the world have become serious invasive plants, threatening California's biodiversity and economy. That's because some of our garden plants don't stay in our garden, "jumping the fence" when seed, root or stem fragments spread to our natural areas. Once established in our natural areas, these plants grow so fast that they crowd out native vegetation, block streams causing flooding, and produce so much biomass that they become serious

fire hazards. They also increase landscaping maintenance costs and contribute to the loss of recreational opportunities in our natural areas.

The good news is that most garden plants behave perfectly well in their intended roles. By choosing suitable replacements for the few problem plants, we can save ourselves and our neighbors trouble and expense while helping to protect California's natural landscape from invasive plants, and reducing the risk of flood and fire damage to our homes!

Invasive plants are by nature a regional or local problem. A plant that "jumps" out of the garden in one

climate and habitat type may behave perfectly in another. The problem plants listed here have escaped from gardens throughout the Southern California area, and are invading natural areas. Because of their aggressive and rapid growth, some invasive non-native plants have also increased the flood and fire risk of our natural areas.



Invasive non-native English Ivy, *Hedera helix* (left) and recommended alternative Beach Strawberry, *Fragaria californica*

Using the *Don't Plant a Pest!* brochure

The brochure features the most common invasive non-native pest plants sold in nurseries and suggest safe alternative plants which are acceptable for vegetation management zones because they can be pruned to decrease the accumulation of deadwood.

When buying new plants, consider these alternatives, or ask your local nursery for other non-invasive, non-fire hazard plants. If one of these problem plants is already in your yard, we recommend you remove it and replace it with a suggested alternative. When landscaping adjacent to natural lands or preserves, we recommend that you use locally native California plants.

Think about why you might plant one of the problem plants. If it is for appearance, finding a replacement is often easy – some alternatives were selected especially for their similar appearance. If you need a plant to fill a functional role (e.g., groundcover that grows well in shade) the alternatives listed here thrive in the same environments as the problem plants. Care has been taken to suggest both California native plants, for those wishing to rediscover some of our unique native plant heritage, as well as non-invasive non-native alternatives. Many of the alternatives are readily available, though others may be easiest to find in specialty or native plant nurseries.

Sample alternatives to invasive non-native plants

For complete list visit [Cal-IPC online](http://www.cal-ipc.org). (N) indicates a native plant.

Invasive- Don't Plant/ Remove

Ground Cover

- Periwinkle (*Vinca major*)
- Iceplant (*Carpobrotus edulis*)
- Algerian or English ivy (*Hedera canariensis* or *Hedera helix*)

Ornamental Grasses

- Giant cane or reed (*Arundo donax*)
- Jubatagrass or pampasgrass (*Cortaderia jubata* or *selloana*)
- Green fountain grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*)

Shrubs

- Acacia or wattle (*Acacia cyclops*, *dealbata* and others)
- Bridal, Scotch and other brooms (*Retama monosperma*, *Cytisus scoparius* and others)

Trees and Palms

- Canary Island date palm (*Phoenix canariensis*)
- Myoporum (*Myoporum laetum*)
- Brazilian or Peruvian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius* or *molle*)

Recommended Alternatives

Ground Cover

- Beach strawberry (*Fragaria californica*) (N)
- Germander (*Teucrium chamaedrys*)
- Asian jasmine (*Trachelospermum asiaticum*)
- San Diego marsh elder (*Iva hayesiana*) (N)

Ornamental Grasses

- San Diego sedge (*Carex spissa*) (N)
- California fescue (*Festuca californica*) (N)
- Blue oat grass (*Helictotrichon sempervirens*)
- Lavender (*Lavandula* species)
- Deer grass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*) (N)

Shrubs

- Bush marigold (*Tagetes lemmonii*)
- Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) (N)
- Lemonade berry (*Rhus integrifolia*) (N)
- Sandankwa viburnum (*Viburnum suspensum*)
- Cleveland sage (*Salvia clevelandii*) (N)

Trees and Palms

- King palm (*Archontophoenix cunninghamiana*)
- Chilean wine palm (*Jubaea chilensis*)
- Australian willow (*Geijera parvifolia*)
- California sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) (N)
- Coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) (N)

This page is excerpted from the California Invasive Plant Council's (Cal-IPC) *Don't Plant a Pest!* brochure for Southern CA. View the entire brochure (or order) online at <http://www.cal-ipc.org/landscaping/dpp/planttypes.php?region=socal>

The brochure includes color photos and descriptions of many more invasive non-native plants and recommended alternatives.