

What Can I Do?

There are a number of ways you can help to avoid these plants spreading into the wild:



Choose different species - in many cases, you can avoid these plants altogether. Using a different, non-invasive species is particularly important if you live close to a semi-natural area, such as a woodland or a burn, where the plant could spread and cause damage.



Consider how it grows - even if the species you think you might use isn't listed as invasive, it's worth being cautious with plants that are described as 'vigorous', 'good ground cover', or 'spreading', as they can often be difficult to manage in the garden and are more likely to spread elsewhere.



Manage existing plants carefully - ensure that they don't spread out of your garden, particularly if they are planted near the garden edge and be particularly careful near watercourses.



Keep to the garden - don't be tempted to plant garden plants into natural areas outside your garden, particularly ornamental bulbs like daffodils or non-native bluebells.



Dispose of waste carefully - the most common way for these plants to spread into the wild is through thoughtless disposal of garden waste, especially seed heads and corms. If you remove or tidy plants, it's really important to dispose of the waste safely. Check your local Council's website to find out how you can dispose of green waste in your area.



Don't take in hitch hikers - be careful if you give or share plants, cuttings or soil with other people, as sometimes invasive species can be 'hitching a ride' as well. Check pots and bags for other plants and pests that you may not want in your garden.

Further Information on potentially invasive garden plants can be found here:

www.nennis.org
www.rhs.org.uk
www.plantlife.org.uk



Garden Watch North East

*What you plant in the garden
could get out of hand*

*This is a simple guide to avoiding
plants spreading beyond your garden and
damaging our native wildlife.*

What Are Non-Native Plants?

Non-native plants are species that have been introduced by people into an area in which they do not naturally occur. Some are called "invasive" as they can spread, causing damage to the environment, the economy and our health.

Many of these species are found in our gardens. Species like Rhododendron, Montbretia, non-native bluebells and some daffodils are often used as ornamental garden plants. When these plants are in a well managed garden they generally cause few problems. But if they are moved, or are allowed to spread, deliberately or accidentally, to wild areas, they are no longer managed, pruned or kept under control.

Gardeners have a responsibility to prevent the spread of these plants into the wild, particularly as it is against the law to cause a plant to grow in the wild outwith its natural range.



Problem Species in the North East

There are some very well-known invasive species such as Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed and Himalayan balsam. There is a lot of advice available on-line on how to remove these species.

Other garden plants which can become invasive are less well-known, but can still cause problems in wild areas. Here in North East Scotland, some of the most problematic species are noted here.



Why Are these Species A Problem?

The first few patches of these plants may look nice when they begin to spread into wild areas. However without management, they can quickly take over and become dominant, smothering the natural vegetation, and reducing biodiversity.

Species: Montbretia (*Crocsmia x crocosmiiflora*)

Plant instead: Pieris, red hot pokers or flag iris



Species: Cotoneaster

Plant instead: Pyracantha, Japanese quince or roses



If you notice a new potentially invasive plant starting to spread in your garden, you can report it at...

www.plantalert.org



Species: Dames Violet (*Hesperis matronalis*)

Plant instead: Valerian or honesty



Species: Non-native bluebell

(*Hyacinthoides hispanica*)

Plant instead: Native bluebell

