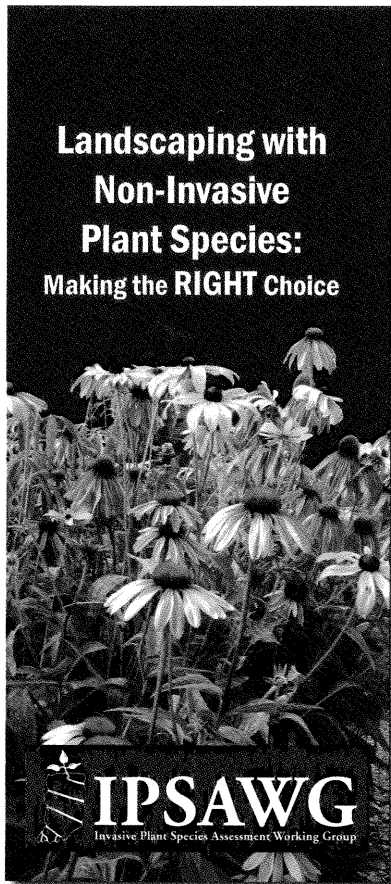


Invasive Horticultural Plants in Indiana — *Some Answers*

Ellen Jacquart, *The Nature Conservancy*



A customer comes into a retail nursery and wants the perfect small tree for an empty spot in her backyard. After discussing soil type and how well drained the site is, how much sun versus shade, how big she wants the shrub to get, if she wants showy flowers — all the important questions — you suggest mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*) and she says “But I’ve heard that’s invasive — should I really plant it?” *

Those in the green industry are hearing that question more and more often, and sometimes it’s difficult to find an accurate answer. What’s invasive in one area of the country may not be invasive somewhere else. If you search “invasive plants” on the Internet you’ll get hundreds of thousands of hits, and you’ll see many lists from around the country of what is considered invasive in that area, and no two lists are the same.

So how can you know which horticultural species are invasive in Indiana?

Good news — a group of organizations including the Indiana Nursery and Landscape Association, the Indiana Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society (INPAWS), state and federal agencies, and many other groups have been hard at work on that question, and they have an answer for you.

These groups came together to form the Invasive Plant Species Awareness Working Group (IPSAWG) and spent six years sorting through horticultural species in Indiana, putting them through an assessment that measured their invasiveness. Perhaps the most important part of that assessment was the documentation of invasion in Indiana for each species. Survey reports of specific invasions were collected for each species, including maps and a description of impacts.

The IPSAWG list is based not on second-hand information or speculation, but on specific reports of actual invasions and impacts in Indiana. In addition, green industry representatives were involved in the assessment of every species. For more information on the assessment process and the results, go to invasivespecies.in.gov and scroll down to the IPSAWG information.

How is this list being used?

A brochure, *Making the Right Choice*, was created that provides the IPSAWG list and recommendations, as well as non-invasive alternatives. That brochure is available by emailing ejacquart@tnc.org. Recently, INPAWS has adopted these recommendations to produce a list of nurseries, retailers, and landscape designers in Indiana who follow the IPSAWG recommendations and who also carry native plants or use them in designs. This list is on their website at <http://www.inpaws.org/IndianaPlants.htm>, and is provided to anyone who asks for sources of plant materials.

There are, of course, still species IPSAWG has not assessed, and some of the recommendations already made may need review over time as we learn more about plant invasions in Indiana, and if we see changes in our climate. But for now, the IPSAWG list is the best answer we have on what horticultural species are invasive in Indiana.



Asian bush Honeysuckle is one of the shrubs on the IPSAWG “Do not buy, sell, or plant” list.

* For the record, mimosa is not known to be invasive in Indiana. While it is considered invasive in a number of southern states, it reaches its northern range edge in Indiana and rarely moves out of cultivation, and is not hardy enough to pose a significant threat to natural areas. At least not in our current climate.

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IPSAWG Recommendations:

DO NOT BUY, SELL OR PLANT

TREES

Norway maple..... *Acer platanoides*

SHRUBS

Japanese barberry..... *Berberis thunbergii*

Autumn olive..... *Elaeagnus umbellata*

Russian olive..... *Elaeagnus angustifolia*

Glossy buckthorn..... *Frangula alnus*

Privet..... *Ligustrum obtusifolium*, *L. vulgare*, *L. amurense*, *L. sinense*, *L. ovalifolium*

Asian bush honeysuckle..... *Lonicera maackii*, *L. tatarica*, *L. morrowii*, *L. x bella*

Common buckthorn..... *Rhamnus cathartica*

FLOWERS

Crown vetch..... *Coronilla varia*

Dame's rocket..... *Hesperis matronalis*

Japanese knotweed..... *Polygonum cuspidatum*

Multiflora rose..... *Rosa multiflora*

Purple loosestrife*..... *Lythrum salicaria*

GRASSES

Reed canary grass..... *Phalaris arundinacea var. picta*

Phragmites..... *Phragmites australis*

VINES

Oriental bittersweet..... *Celastrus orbiculatus*

Japanese hops..... *Humulus japonicus*

Japanese honeysuckle..... *Lonicera japonica*

Kudzu*..... *Pueraria montana*

PLANT WITH CAUTION

Sawtooth oak**..... *Quercus acutissima*

Siberian elm**..... *Ulmus pumila*

Burning bush***..... *Euonymus alatus*

Chinese maiden grass**..... *Miscanthus sinensis*

Wintercreeper****..... *Euonymus fortunei*

English ivy****..... *Hedera helix*

Periwinkle****..... *Vinca minor*

* illegal in Indiana

** do not plant near open natural areas like prairies, savannas, or glades

*** do not plant parent species or cultivars with large amounts of fruit

**** plant only next to concrete or lawns, and do not allow to climb

About IPSAWG

To identify which gardening plants are invasive in Indiana, a partnership called the Invasive Plant Species Assessment Working Group (IPSAWG) was formed in 2001. The many agencies and organizations listed below worked together to assess dozens of species used in landscaping to determine which were invasive or potentially invasive, and to develop recommendations for the use of each of the species.

IPSAWG Partners:

- Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative
- Hoosier National Forest
- Indiana Academy of Science
- Indiana Beekeeper's Association
- Indiana Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects
- Indiana Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey Program
- Indiana Department of Environmental Management
- Indiana Department of Natural Resources
- Indiana Department of Transportation
- Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
- Indiana Forage Council

- Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society
- Indiana Nursery and Landscape Association
- Indiana Seed Trade Association
- Indiana State Beekeepers Association
- Indiana Wildlife Federation
- Purdue Cooperative Extension Service
- Seed Administrator, Office of the Indiana State Chemist
- The Nature Conservancy
- The Wildlife Society, Indiana Chapter
- U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service