

Help prevent the spread of invasive non-native plants



Horticultural Code of Practice

Advice and guidance on safe use, control and disposal of invasive non-native plants for everyone involved in horticulture and activities that involve the use of plants.



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government



defra
Department for Environment
Food and Rural Affairs

How can I help stop invasive non-native plants getting into the countryside?

Know what you are buying and growing – all users

Avoid using plants known to be invasive, consider alternatives and when using native plants, use those of local origin. Don't pass the problem on. Consider a non-native plant's invasive qualities when you exchange plants with friends, or grow plants from imported seeds.

If you are unsure whether a plant has invasive qualities, it is good practice to take a precautionary approach – follow the guidance contained in the Code of Practice* to help keep plants 'in the garden'.

Take advice on best control techniques – all users

Invasive plants can be difficult to control but timely action will reduce the scale of the task. With species like buddleia, that spread by seed, dead-heading immediately after flowering will reduce the problem. For plants with strong rhizome systems use root barrier fabrics to contain their spread.

Control invasive non-native plants safely – all users

Care should be taken when using herbicides and machinery particularly near water. Manufacturers instructions and recommendations on mixing and use of herbicides must always be followed. The range of herbicides available to the amateur gardener is limited, however, the guidance above on safe use still applies.

Dispose of plant waste responsibly – never fly-tip in the countryside – all users

Plant material should never be disposed of in the countryside. Fly-tipping is illegal. Much can be composted or taken to municipal recycling centres. Please note that Japanese Knotweed should never be composted or taken to municipal recycling centres.

Be aware of relevant legislation – all users

Legislation regarding non-native plants and their safe control and disposal should be followed at all times.

Know what you are supplying/selling; label plants clearly and accurately – suppliers/retailers

Invasive non-native plants are not good garden or pond plants. There are usually many alternative plants better suited to gardens or ponds. Where potentially invasive non-native plants are sold, ensure they are clearly and correctly named and labelled and give an indication of growth rates.

Identify the dangers to the wider environment if these plants were to escape from gardens. Information relating to the Sale of Goods Act and Trade Descriptions Act can be found on the Trading Standards central website.

Know what you are specifying – landscape architects, design engineers, garden designers, tutors, authors & publishers of gardening books

Do not specify invasive plants. Always use the correct Latin genus and species name in conjunction with the common name to avoid confusion. Old publications encouraging the use of invasives such as *Azolla filiculoides* should be withdrawn.

Beware of hitch-hiking pests on plants and in soil – importers/buyers

Plant Health Regulations relate to pathogens and pests and not to potentially invasive plants or seeds transported unintentionally. It is therefore good practice to quarantine imported plant material, especially from new sources.

***This leaflet summarises the full Horticultural Code of Practice which is held on the Defra website www.defra.gov.uk. Visit the website to find more detailed information, or telephone the Defra helpline on 08459 33 55 77.**

Help prevent the spread of invasive non-native plants



Invasive non-native plants are a serious threat to Britain's biodiversity. They are invading the countryside – our woodlands, wetlands and water bodies. They thrive on wasteland, railway embankments and in many other places. Please help protect Britain's countryside by following the Code below:

- Know what you are buying and growing
- Avoid invasive plants and try to use native plants of local origin
- Control invasive non-native plants safely. Take advice on the best techniques
- Dispose of plant waste responsibly. Never fly-tip in the countryside
- Be sure you know the law
- If you are importing or buying plants from abroad, beware of hitch-hiking pests on plants and in their soil
- If you work in the horticultural industry and are advising clients, customers or consumers, know exactly what you are specifying and avoid recommending invasive plants

For more information call the Defra helpline on

08459 33 55 77
or visit **www.defra.gov.uk**

**Spread the message,
not the plants!**



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The aim of the Horticultural Code of Practice is to highlight the problems that invasive non-native plants can cause and to advise all those involved in horticulture, from supply to end-use, what they can do to stop this problem.

The organisations that developed this Code strongly advise all those involved in horticulture in Britain to abide by the letter and spirit of the Code. Observance of the Code will make a major contribution to preventing the spread of invasive non-native species in the British countryside.

The following organisations all provide further information on their websites.

For information on invasive non-native plants:

www.environment-agency.gov.uk
www.capm.org.uk
www.appliedvegetationdynamics.co.uk
www.rhs.org.uk
www.kew.org.uk
www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/knotweed

For information on importation of plants, and legislation about invasive non-native plants:

www.defra.gov.uk
www.scotland.gov.uk
www.tso.gov.uk

For information on trading standards, what plants not to stock and labelling of plants:

www.tradingstandards.gov.uk
www.rhs.org.uk
www.plantlife.org.uk
www.the-hta.org.uk

For information on the disposal and safe control of invasive non-native species:

www.ornamentalfish.org.uk
www.rhs.org.uk
www.environment-agency.gov.uk
www.compost.org.uk
www.wrap.org.uk

For information on sourcing native plants:

www.floralocale.org.uk

For information on pesticide use:

www.pesticides.gov.uk

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