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## Introduction



The ornamental horticulture industry has been identified as a key pathway for the introduction and spread of invasive plants. Growers, garden centres, plant specifiers and landscape professionals provide BC's enthusiastic amateur and expert gardeners with an extensive assortment of ornamentals. A few have become invasive.

The negative impact of invasive plants has led the BC horticulture industry to work cooperatively with invasive plant specialists to increase the awareness among sellers and buyers through the PlantWise program.

## Impacts of Invasive Plants

Invasive plants are non-native plant species that have the potential to pose undesirable or detrimental impacts on people, animals, or ecosystems. Only a small number of the thousands of non-native plants introduced to BC have become invasive.

### Typical characteristics of invasive plants:

- reproduce quickly by producing lots of seeds, and/or underground horizontal stems
- arrive in BC without the insects and diseases that kept them in check in their place of origin
- tolerate a wide range of growing conditions
- establish and spread without soil disturbance
- deep rooted; difficult to remove
- grow and spread quickly, taking over sites; some plants have chemicals that prevent other vegetation growth
- not grazed by wildlife or livestock

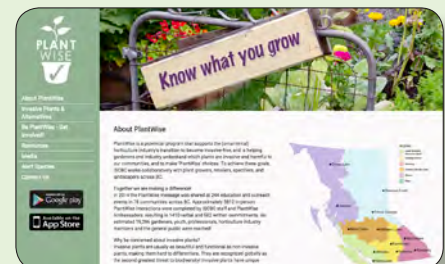


Yellow flag iris is an 'unwanted' aquatic invasive plant found in BC.  
Photo: I.J. Muiden

## How to Be PlantWise:

- Know what you grow and avoid invasive ornamentals
- Help reduce damage caused by invasive plants
- Practice responsible treatment and disposal methods
- Network with others actively interested in managing invasive plants in BC
- Find out what you can do to make a difference in your community

VISIT: [beplantwise.ca](http://beplantwise.ca)





Healthy garden.  
Photo: J. Leekie

## PlantWise Program

PlantWise is a prevention-based, province-wide program designed to encourage both the horticulture industry and gardeners to choose only safe, non-invasive plants.

The PlantWise Program contains three target groups working in cooperation: Industry, Ambassadors, and Gardeners. For more information go to: [beplantwise.ca](http://beplantwise.ca)

The three programs consist of:

### PlantWise Industry Partnership Program:

- Includes garden centres, growers, suppliers, landscape architects & specifiers
- Fosters cooperation between horticulture professionals and invasive plant specialists
- Consistent with existing legislation and regulations
- Voluntary, self-regulated and free
- Signed industry standard Code of Conduct
- Phase out of 26 invasive ornamental species
- Promotion of non-invasive alternatives
- Identification of plants with common and Latin names
- Staff training and customer education

### PlantWise Ambassador Program:

- Members of stewardship groups and industry
- Training provided through webinars and resources
- Spread the PlantWise message at a local level
- Encourage responsible behaviour to not sell, buy, grow, gift, trade, transport, plant or share invasive plants

### PlantWise Gardening Community:

- Gardening enthusiasts and general public
- Replace invasive ornamentals in your garden with non-invasive or native species
- Treat and dispose of invasive plants responsibly; do not compost invasive plants or plant parts
- Ask your retailer for non-invasive plants only
- Commit to being PlantWise at:  
[beplantwise.ca/be-plantwise-get-involved](http://beplantwise.ca/be-plantwise-get-involved)



PlantWise outreach, Whistler, BC.  
Photo: B. Johnson, SSISC

## Grow Me Instead

Grow Me Instead is a valuable and popular resource of the PlantWise Program that illustrates 26 of horticulture's most 'unwanted' invasive plants frequently found in gardens across BC and the focus of the PlantWise program. Some of these 'unwanted' invasive plants are still sold at garden centers and other outlets, and used by landscapers and landscape architects in their designs. There are alternative plants featured for each invasive plant listed.



**The Grow Me Instead booklet, brochure and wallet card are available from [www.beplantwise.ca](http://www.beplantwise.ca). You can also download the FREE PlantWise mobile app for iPhone/Android.**





PlantWise outreach display at garden centre. Photo: ISCBC

## Gardeners are encouraged to:

- Replace invasive plants in your garden with non-invasive exotics or local native species
- Learn more about invasive plants in your area
- Be suspicious of 'fast spreaders', 'vigorous self-seeders', or 'deep-rooted' exotic plants
- Use species-specific control methods such as hand-pulling, herbicide or mechanical options. See ISCBC's invasive species TIPS factsheets at: [bcinvasives.ca/resources/tips](http://bcinvasives.ca/resources/tips)
- Dispose of invasive plant responsibly: 1) don't dump invasive plants/plant parts in public parks or natural areas; 2) don't compost invasive plants/plant parts. Check with your Municipality or Regional District for local invasive plant disposal methods.



PlantWise training. Photo: ISCBC

## Use Wildflower Seed Mixtures with Caution

Importing seeds individually and in mixes is one of the primary pathways of introduction of invasive plants to Canada and BC and, therefore, a critical pathway to target for prevention.



When buying seed mixtures (bird seed, wildflower mixes, ornamentals, re-vegetation mixes) for use in gardens, restoration projects, or when purchasing birdseed, **read the label** to make sure the seed mix clearly lists the ingredients. Be aware that in some cases not all of the species in the mix will be listed. Likewise, by creating your own seed mixes, you are ensuring the seed ingredients. Do not collect 'wildflower' seeds from roadsides, gravel pits, or other disturbed areas. They may be pretty, but they could also be aggressive invasive plants.

See ISCBC's Seed Mixture TIPS at: [bcinvasives.ca/resources/tips/seed-mixtures](http://bcinvasives.ca/resources/tips/seed-mixtures)

## Alert Species

Grow Me Instead lists a number of 'Alert Species' to avoid introducing or spreading. Examples of alert species include black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), evening primrose (*Oenothera biennis*), and wild clematis (*Clematis vitalba*). Alert species either occur in very small numbers or have not yet made it into BC. Check the ISCBC and PlantWise websites for those to be on the watch for.



ALERT SPECIES:  
Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*)  
Photo: R. Webb, bugwood.org



ALERT SPECIES:  
Evening Primrose (*Oenothera biennis*)  
Photo: J. Viola, bugwood.org





## Report Invasive Plants

Early detection is critical to stop the spread of invasive plants. You can help detect and locate new infestations. If you see a plant that looks 'out of place,' or have concerns, we encourage you to report it:

- Call ISCBC at **1-888-933-3722**
- Take a photo and email us at **info@bcinvasives.ca**
- Use Report-A-Weed, the Province's online tool to report a suspected new sighting. Available as app for iPhone or Android: **reportaweedbc.ca**

## References/Links

Alberta Invasive Species Council. Grow Me Instead Brochure: <https://www.abinvasives.ca/getting-involved/gardening>

BC Government Publication Services. 2002. Guide to Weeds in BC: <http://www.weedsbc.ca/resources.html>

BC Ministry of Agriculture Fast Stats. 2013: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/about-agriculture-and-seafood-in-bc/statistics/industry-and-sector-profiles>

BC Ministry of Agriculture Nursery Production Guide. 2015: [http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/ornamentals/nursery/nursery\\_guide/nursery\\_guide.html](http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/ornamentals/nursery/nursery_guide/nursery_guide.html)

BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO) Range Branch. 2014. Invasive Plant Program Strategic Plan 2014-2019: [https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hra/plants/publications/IIPP\\_StrategicPlan2014.pdf](https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hra/plants/publications/IIPP_StrategicPlan2014.pdf)

BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO) Range Branch. 2015. Early Detection Rapid Response Program for BC: <https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hra/plants/edrr.htm>

BC Weed Control Act requires all land occupiers to control noxious weeds growing or located on land and premises occupied by them: [http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws\\_new/document/ID/freeside/00\\_96487\\_01](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96487_01)

BC Weed Control Regulations list of noxious plants: [http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws\\_new/document/ID/freeside/10\\_66\\_85](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/10_66_85)

E-Flora BC. 2013. Illustrated Flora of British Columbia: An initiative of the Spatial Data Lab, Department of Geography UBC, and the UBC Herbarium. <http://ibis.geog.ubc.ca/biodiversity/eflora/>

Invasive Alien Plant Program (IAPP). 2015: <https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hra/plants/application.htm>

Invasive Species Council of BC (ISCBC). 2007. Report #4: Minimizing the Impacts of Invasive Plants in Horticulture: <http://bcinvasives.ca/resources/publications/>

Invasive Species Council of BC (ISCBC). Targeted Invasive Plant Solutions series: <http://bcinvasives.ca/resources/tips/>

Invasive Species Council of BC (ISCBC). 2012. Invasive Species Strategy for British Columbia: [http://bcinvasives.ca/documents/IS\\_Strategy\\_for\\_BC\\_Final\\_2012\\_06\\_07\\_print\\_sm.pdf](http://bcinvasives.ca/documents/IS_Strategy_for_BC_Final_2012_06_07_print_sm.pdf)

Nature Conservancy. 2015. GardenSmart Oregon: a guide to non-invasive plants: [http://www.nature.org/media/oregon/gardensmart\\_oregon\\_reduced.pdf](http://www.nature.org/media/oregon/gardensmart_oregon_reduced.pdf)

Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board. 2006, updated 2013. Garden Wise: Non-Invasive Plants for Your Garden: [http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/publications/western\\_garden\\_wise.pdf](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/publications/western_garden_wise.pdf)

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