

Invasive Plants in Rhode Island—2020

(includes weedy, native plants known to impair stormwater features)

The Rhode Island Invasive Species Council has been tasked with identifying plant species that impair the intended function of constructed, vegetated features such as stormwater swales, retention ponds, rain gardens, and constructed wetlands and thereby can negatively affect water quality. Plants that impair these features include invasive plants, weedy non-native but non-invasive plants, and weedy native plants.* Note: this list has no regulatory stature.

Invasive plants are species growing and reproducing outside their native range, in habitats not managed by humans, at the expense of native species or natural communities. Native plants by definition are not invasive though they may be weedy. Weedy plants, which can include either native or non-native species, grow vigorously and expansively in human-managed areas to the detriment of the intended purpose or value of that area.

For the purposes of this exercise we recognize two categories of "non-native." The first and most common is plants whose native range does not include North America at all. The second is plants whose native range includes parts of North America but not Rhode Island. Plants in the first category may be classified as invasive. However, plants in the second category, in these times of climate change, when the "natural" ranges of plants are changing, there can be legitimate debate about the invasive classification of those native to North America but not, heretofore, Rhode Island. Two examples in this second category are *Robinia pseudoacacia* (black locust) and *Aralia spinosa* (Hercules' club). For the purpose of managing stormwater features, this is a semantic question, and plants in both categories are listed but with a note for those native to North America but not Rhode Island.

Native plants have considerable habitat value for insects, birds, and other animals. They can, nonetheless, grow prolifically in managed landscape features such as stormwater swales, retention basins, rain gardens, and constructed wetlands. They may crowd or shade out other, selected plants and alter the appearance and impair the intended functions of these stormwater treatment systems, and sometimes they may need to be controlled. To avoid confusion, weedy species native to Rhode Island are included in a separate list at the end of the invasive list.

This non-regulatory list—of invasive plants and of weedy, native plants that affect stormwater features—has been developed by members of the Rhode Island Invasive Species Council in view of relevant scientific knowledge, local experience in Rhode Island, and best professional judgement. However, it should not be taken as the final word on the subject: knowledge of situations across the state is imperfect, circumstances are always changing due to climate change, development, and other factors, and those involved have different opinions based on different experiences. It is a good-faith effort to inform people involved in water quality management, landscape and roadside maintenance, and habitat restoration in the state.

This list has no regulatory power. It is not created with the intent to regulate invasive plants generally or address the suitability of any particular species to be regulated or excused from regulation in the future. This list was not created with a process that would be appropriate to its use in regulation without further work. The presence, ranking, or absence of a species in this list should not be taken as evidence that it is or is not invasive in Rhode Island or should or should not be the subject of regulatory action in some future scenario.

For the purpose of this list, invasive plants in this list are categorized as follows:

- (W) *Widespread***—plants known to occur in many places throughout Rhode Island. Detection and mapping of these is generally not useful because they can be expected to occur in any suitable site anywhere in the state.
- (L) *Present but Localized***—plants known to occur in at least one site in Rhode Island, or having limited distribution in one region of the state, but which are not generally distributed. Detection and mapping of these is a priority to prevent their further spread.
- (P) *Possible***—plants not known to occur in Rhode Island but known from nearby or known to be in commerce or spreading in North America and viable in conditions similar to those in Rhode Island. Detection of these is a priority to prevent their establishment here.

For convenience of users, the plants on this list have been further broken down by habit: trees, woody shrubs, herbaceous/grassy, vines, and aquatic.

Taxonomy and nomenclature follow *Flora Nova Angliae* (Haines 2011) as implemented on the Native Plant Trust's GoBotany website (<https://gobotany.nativeplanttrust.org>).

*For an illustrated field guide to weedy and invasive plants most likely to compromise the function of vegetated stormwater systems such as raingardens, bioretention and wetland buffers, see *In the Weeds: A Guide For Maintaining Vegetation in Stormwater Treatment Systems in Rhode Island*. It is available online for your mobile device or printable PDF at <https://tinyurl.com/ybhmvx69> or <https://web.uri.edu/nemo/lid-and-gi/gi-maintenance/in-the-weeds-a-guide-for-maintaining-vegetation-in-stormwater-treatment-systems-in-rhode-island/>

The mission of the Rhode Island Invasive Species Council is to protect native biodiversity in Rhode Island. The Council is an *ad hoc* group that gathers and conveys information on the presence, distribution, ecological and economic impacts, and management of invasive species; promotes uses of native species and non-invasive alternatives throughout Rhode Island; and works cooperatively with researchers, conservation organizations, government agencies, the green industries, and the general public to identify and manage invasive species pro-actively and effectively. The Rhode Island Invasive Species Council is chaired by the Rhode Island Natural History Survey. Visit www.riisc.org for more information

Invasive Plants in Rhode Island 2020 — by scientific name [non-regulatory]

Trees

<i>Acer ginnala</i>	Amur maple	L
<i>Acer platanoides</i>	Norway maple	W
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore maple	L
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree of heaven	W
<i>Aralia elata</i>	Japanese angelica tree	L
<i>Aralia spinosa</i>	Hercules' club (non-native in RI)	L
<i>Morus alba</i>	White mulberry	L
<i>Paulownia tomentosa</i>	Princess tree	L
<i>Phellodendron amurense</i>	Amur cork tree	L
<i>Populus alba</i>	White poplar	L
<i>Pyrus calleryana</i>	Callery pear	L
<i>Quercus robur</i>	English oak	L
<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	Black locust	
	(non-native in RI; weedy but not invasive)	

Shrubs

<i>Amorpha fruticosa</i>	False indigo	L
<i>Berberis vulgaris</i>	Common barberry	L
<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>	Japanese barberry	W
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	Heather	L
<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>	Russian olive	W
<i>Elaeagnus umbellata</i>	Autumn olive	L
<i>Euonymus alatus</i>	Winged euonymus	W
<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	European spindle-tree	L
<i>Frangula alnus</i>	Glossy buckthorn	W
<i>Ligustrum</i> sp.	Privet spp.	W
<i>Lonicera morrowii</i>	Morrow's honeysuckle	W
<i>Lonicera maackii, tatarica</i>	Other shrub h'suckles	L
<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>	Common buckthorn	W
<i>Rhodotypos scandens</i>	Jet bead	L
<i>Rubus phoenicolasius</i>	Wineberry	L
<i>Rosa multiflora</i>	Multiflora rose	W
<i>Rosa rugosa</i>	Japanese beach rose	W
<i>Salix cinerea</i>	Gray willow	W
<i>Viburnum dilatatum</i>	Linden viburnum	L

Herbaceous/Grasses

<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>	Bishop's weed	L
<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	Garlic mustard	W
<i>Allium vineale</i>	Wild garlic	
	(non-native, weedy but not invasive)	
<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>	Mugwort	
	(non-native, weedy but not invasive)	
<i>Bromus tectorum</i>	Cheatgrass	
	(non-native, weedy but not invasive)	
<i>Carex kobomugi</i>	Asiatic sand sedge	L
<i>Centaurea</i> sp. (incl. <i>jacea</i> & <i>stoebe</i>)	Knapweed spp.	L
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Creeping thistle	L
<i>Datura stramonium</i>	Jimsonweed	
	(non-native, weedy but not invasive)	
<i>Euphorbia cyparissias</i>	Cypress spurge	L
<i>Fallopia sachalinensis</i>	Giant knotweed	L
<i>Fallopia japonica</i>	Japanese knotweed	W
<i>Glaucium flavum</i>	Yellow horn-poppy	L
<i>Glyceria maxima</i>	Tall manna grass	P
<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>	Giant hogweed	L
<i>Hesperis matronalis</i>	Dame's rocket	L
<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>	Ornamental jewelweed	P

Herbaceous/Grasses cont.

<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>	Tall pepperweed	L
<i>Lysimachia nummularia</i>	Moneywort	L
<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	Purple loosestrife	L
<i>Microstegium vimineum</i>	Japanese stiltgrass	L
<i>Miscanthus sacchariflorus</i>	Amur silvergrass	P
<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i>	Chinese silvergrass	L
<i>Myosotis scorpiodes</i>	Forget-me-not	L
	(also listed under <i>Aquatic</i>)	
<i>Persicaria longiseta</i>	Oriental lady's-thumb	
	(non-native, weedy but not invasive)	
<i>Persicaria maculosa</i>	Lady's-thumb smartweed	
	(non-native, weedy but not invasive)	
<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	Reed canary grass	L
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Common reed	W
<i>Phylostachys</i> sp.	Bamboo sp.	L
<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>	Lesser celandine	L

Vines

<i>Akebia quinata</i>	Chocolate-vine	L
<i>Ampelopsis brevipedunculata</i>	Porcelain-berry	L
<i>Campsis radicans</i>	Trumpet-creeper (non-native in RI)	L
<i>Celastrus orbiculatus</i>	Oriental bittersweet	W
<i>Clematis terniflora</i>	Autumn clematis	L
<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	Field bindweed	
	(non-native, weedy but not invasive)	
<i>Cynanchum louiseae</i>	Black swallow-wort	W
<i>Cynanchum rossicum</i>	Pale swallow-wort	L
<i>Euonymus fortunei</i>	Creeping euonymus	L
<i>Hedera helix</i>	English ivy	L
<i>Lonicera japonica</i>	Japanese honeysuckle	W
<i>Persicaria perfoliata</i>	Mile-a-minute vine	L
<i>Pueraria montana</i>	Kudzu	L
<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>	Bittersweet nightshade	
	(non-native, weedy but not invasive)	
<i>Vinca major</i>	Greater periwinkle	P
<i>Vinca minor</i>	Lesser periwinkle	L
<i>Wisteria floribunda</i>	Japanese wisteria	L
<i>Wisteria sinensis</i>	Chinese wisteria	L

Aquatic

<i>Cabomba caroliniana</i>	Fanwort	L
<i>Egeria densa</i>	Brazilian water-weed	L
<i>Eichhornia crassipes</i>	Water hyacinth	L
<i>Glossostigma cleistanthum</i>	Mudmat	L
<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	Yellow iris	L
<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	Purple loosestrife	L
	(also listed under <i>Herbaceous</i>)	
<i>Myosotis scorpiodes</i>	Forget-me-not	L
<i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i>	Parrot-feather	L
<i>Myriophyllum heterophyllum</i>	Variable milfoil	W
<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i>	Eurasian milfoil	L
<i>Najas minor</i>	Brittle water-nymph	L
<i>Nasturtium officinale</i>	Watercress	L
	<i>Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum</i>	
<i>Nymphoides peltata</i>	Yellow floating-heart	L
<i>Potamogeton crispus</i>	Curly-leaved pond-weed	L
<i>Salvinia molesta</i>	Giant salvinia	P
<i>Trapa natans</i>	Water chestnut	L
<i>Utricularia inflata</i>	Inflated bladderwort	L

Invasive Plants in Rhode Island 2020 — by common name [non-regulatory]

Trees

Amur cork tree	<i>Phellodendron amurense</i>	L
Amur maple	<i>Acer ginnala</i>	L
Black locust	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	
	(non-native in RI, weedy but not invasive)	
Callery pear	<i>Pyrus calleryana</i>	L
English oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	L
Hercules' club	<i>Aralia spinosa</i> (non-native in RI)	L
Japanese angelica tree	<i>Aralia elata</i>	L
Norway maple	<i>Acer platanoides</i>	W
Princess tree	<i>Paulownia tomentosa</i>	L
Sycamore maple	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	L
Tree of heaven	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	W
White mulberry	<i>Morus alba</i>	L
White poplar	<i>Populus alba</i>	L

Shrubs

Autumn olive	<i>Elaeagnus umbellata</i>	W
Common barberry	<i>Berberis vulgaris</i>	L
Common buckthorn	<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>	W
European spindle-tree	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	L
False indigo	<i>Amorpha fruticosa</i>	L
Glossy buckthorn	<i>Frangula alnus</i>	W
Gray willow	<i>Salix cinerea</i>	W
Heather	<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	L
Japanese barberry	<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>	W
Japanese beach rose	<i>Rosa rugosa</i>	W
Jet bead	<i>Rhodotypos scandens</i>	L
Linden viburnum	<i>Viburnum dilatatum</i>	L
Morrow's honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera morrowii</i>	W
Multiflora rose	<i>Rosa multiflora</i>	W
Other shrub h'suckles	<i>Lonicera maackii, tatarica</i>	L
Privet spp.	<i>Ligustrum</i> sp.	W
Russian olive	<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>	L
Wineberry	<i>Rubus phoenicolasius</i>	L
Winged euonymus	<i>Euonymus alatus</i>	W

Herbaceous/Grasses

Amur silvergrass	<i>Miscanthus sacchariflorus</i>	P
Asiatic sand sedge	<i>Carex kobomugi</i>	L
Bamboo sp.	<i>Phylostachys</i> sp.	L
Bishop's weed	<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>	L
Cheatgrass	<i>Bromus tectorum</i>	
	(non-native, weedy but not invasive)	
Chinese silvergrass	<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i>	L
Common reed	<i>Phragmites australis</i>	W
Creeping thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	L
Cypress spurge	<i>Euphorbia cyparissias</i>	L
Dame's rocket	<i>Hesperis matronalis</i>	L
Forget-me-not	<i>Myosotis scorpiodes</i>	L
	(also listed under Aquatic)	
Garlic mustard	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	W
Giant hogweed	<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>	L
Giant knotweed	<i>Fallopia sachalinensis</i>	L
Japanese knotweed	<i>Fallopia japonica</i>	W
Japanese stiltgrass	<i>Microstegium vimineum</i>	L
Jimsonweed	<i>Datura stramonium</i>	
	(non-native, weedy but not invasive)	
Knapweed spp.	<i>Centaurea</i> sp. (incl. <i>jacea</i> & <i>stoebe</i>)	L

Herbaceous/Grasses cont.

Lady's-thumb smartweed	<i>Persicaria maculosa</i>	
	(non-native, weedy but not invasive)	
Lesser celandine	<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>	L
Moneywort	<i>Lysimachia nummularia</i>	L
Mugwort	<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>	
	(non-native, weedy but not invasive)	
Oriental lady's-thumb	<i>Persicaria longisetia</i>	
	(non-native, weedy but not invasive)	
Ornamental jewelweed	<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>	P
Purple loosestrife	<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	L
Reed canary grass	<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	L
Tall manna grass	<i>Glyceria maxima</i>	P
Tall pepperweed	<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>	L
Wild garlic	<i>Allium vineale</i>	
	(non-native, weedy but not invasive)	
Yellow horn-poppo	<i>Glaucium flavum</i>	L

Vines

Autumn clematis	<i>Clematis terniflora</i>	L
Bittersweet nightshade	<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>	
	(non-native, weedy but not invasive)	
Black swallow-wort	<i>Cynanchum louiseae</i>	W
Chinese wisteria	<i>Wisteria sinensis</i>	L
Chocolate-vine	<i>Akebia quinata</i>	L
Creeping euonymus	<i>Euonymus fortunei</i>	L
English ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	L
Field bindweed	<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	
	(non-native, weedy but not invasive)	
Greater periwinkle	<i>Vinca major</i>	P
Japanese honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera japonica</i>	W
Japanese wisteria	<i>Wisteria floribunda</i>	L
Kudzu	<i>Pueraria montana</i>	L
Lesser periwinkle	<i>Vinca minor</i>	L
Mile-a-minute vine	<i>Persicaria perfoliata</i>	L
Oriental bittersweet	<i>Celastrus orbiculatus</i>	W
Pale swallow-wort	<i>Cynanchum rossicum</i>	L
Porcelain-berry	<i>Ampelopsis brevipedunculata</i>	L
Trumpet-creeper	<i>Campsis radicans</i> (non-native in RI)	L

Aquatic

Brazilian water-weed	<i>Egeria densa</i>	L
Brittle water-nymph	<i>Najas minor</i>	L
Curly-leaved pond-weed	<i>Potamogeton crispus</i>	L
Eurasian milfoil	<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i>	L
Fanwort	<i>Cabomba caroliniana</i>	L
Forget-me-not	<i>Myosotis scorpiodes</i>	L
Giant salvinia	<i>Salvinia molesta</i>	P
Inflated bladderwort	<i>Utricularia inflata</i>	L
Mudmat	<i>Glossostigma cleistanthum</i>	L
Water hyacinth	<i>Eichhornia crassipes</i>	L
Yellow iris	<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	L
Parrot-feather	<i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i>	L
Purple loosestrife	<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	L
	(also listed under Herbaceous)	
Variable milfoil	<i>Myriophyllum heterophyllum</i>	W
Water chestnut	<i>Trapa natans</i>	L
Watercress	<i>Nasturtium officinale</i>	L
	<i>Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum</i>	
Yellow floating-heart	<i>Nymphoides peltata</i>	L

Weedy Native Plants with Potential to Impair Managed Landscapes in Rhode Island

IMPORTANT:

Plants on THIS list are NATIVE to Rhode Island and are by definition not invasive. All of them have considerable habitat value for native insects, birds, and other animals. Nonetheless, they can grow prolifically in managed landscape features such as stormwater swales, retention basins, and rain gardens, impairing their intended functions, and sometimes they may need to be controlled.*

Trees

Staghorn sumac *Rhus typhina*

Shrubs

Black elderberry *Sambucus nigra*

Herbaceous/Grasses

Horseweed *Erigeron canadensis*
Pokeweed *Phytolacca americana*

Vines

Virginia creeper *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*
Glaucus-leaved catbrier *Smilax glauca*
Roundleaf greenbrier *Smilax rotundifolia*
Poison ivy *Toxicodendron radicans*
Fox grape *Vitis labrusca*

Aquatic

Cattail *Typha angustifolia & T. latifolia*
(narrow-leaved and broad-leaved)

*For an illustrated field guide to weedy and invasive plants most likely to compromise the function of vegetated stormwater systems such as raingardens, bioretention and wetland buffers, see *In the Weeds: A Guide For Maintaining Vegetation in Stormwater Treatment Systems in Rhode Island*. It is available online for your mobile device or printable PDF at <https://tinyurl.com/ybhmvx69> or <https://web.uri.edu/nemo/lid-and-gi/gi-maintenance/in-the-weeds-a-guide-for-maintaining-vegetation-in-stormwater-treatment-systems-in-rhode-island/>