



Invasive Plants in Pennsylvania

The species listed below are serious threats to our native ecosystems. Many have been designated as "Noxious Weeds" by the PA Department of Agriculture.

Flowers

<i>Scientific Name</i>	Common Name	Notes
<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>	<u>Goutweed</u>	Commonly planted in the past and escaped; spreads aggressively by roots
<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	<u>Garlic mustard</u>	Invasive in many states; spreading aggressively in woodlands by seed
<i>Carduus nutans</i>	Musk thistle	PA noxious Weed
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	<u>Canada thistle</u>	PA noxious Weed
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Bull thistle	PA noxious Weed
<i>Datura stramonium</i>	Jimsonweed	Sometimes cultivated; spreads by seed, PA Noxious Weed
<i>Galega officinalis</i>	Goatsrue	PA and Federal Noxious Weed
<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>	<u>Giant hogweed</u>	PA and Federal Noxious Weed, sap can cause burning blisters
<i>Hesperis matronalis</i>	<u>Dame's rocket</u>	Planted in gardens; escaped and naturalized along roads; spreads by seed
<i>Lythrum salicaria, L. virgatum</i>	<u>Purple loosestife</u>	Garden escape which has become invasive in many states; PA noxious Weed
<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i>	<u>Eurasian water-milfoil</u>	Invasive in many states; aquatic
<i>Ornithogallum nutans, umbellatum</i>	<u>Star-of-Bethlehem</u>	Common garden plant which has widely escaped
<i>Pastinaca sativa</i>	<u>Wild parsnip</u>	Found commonly along roadsides; widespread and abundant; spread by seed
<i>Perilla frutescens</i>	<u>Beefsteak plant</u>	Garden escape; widespread mostly along roadsides; spread by seed
<i>Polygonum (Falopia) cuspidatum</i>	<u>Japanese knotweed</u>	Invasive in many states; difficult to control; spreads by roots and seeds
<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>	<u>Lesser celandine</u>	Spreads by roots and shoots; can be very aggressive in wetlands
<i>Trapa natans</i>	<u>Water chestnut</u>	Wetland plant; should not be introduced as it will escape, spread, and naturalize

Grasses

<i>Scientific Name</i>	Common Name	Notes
<i>Bromus tectorum</i>	<u>Cheatgrass</u>	Annual grass; invasive throughout the west; spreads by seed
<i>Microstegium vimineum</i>	<u>Japanese stilt grass</u>	Annual grass; invasive in many states; spreading through woodlands by seed
* <i>Miscanthus sinensis</i>	Maiden grass	Commonly planted ornamental grass which can escape and spread by seed
<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	<u>Reed canary grass</u>	Aggressive wetland grass; native and introduced strains; widespread and abundant
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	<u>Common reed</u>	Native and introduced strains; wetland grass which can form huge colonies
<i>Sorghum bicolor ssp. drummondii</i>	Shattercane	PA noxious Weed
<i>Sorghum halepense</i>	Johnson grass	PA noxious Weed; spreads by roots and seeds



Shrubs

Scientific Name	Common Name	Notes
* <i>Berberis thunbergii</i>	<u>Japanese barberry</u>	Escaped from cultivation and invasive in many states; spread by birds
<i>Berberis vulgaris</i>	<u>European barberry</u>	Escaped from cultivation; spread by birds
<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>	<u>Russian olive</u>	Escaped from plantings and invasive in many states; spread by birds
<i>Elaeagnus umbellata</i>	<u>Autumn olive</u>	Escaped from plantings and invasive in many states; rapidly spread by birds
* <i>Euonymus alatus</i>	<u>Winged Euonymus</u>	Escaped from plantings; invasive in moist forests
<i>Ligustrum obtusifolium</i>	<u>Border privet</u>	Escaped from cultivation; seeds spread by birds
<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>	<u>Common privet</u>	Planted very commonly in the past and escaped; invasive in many states
<i>Lonicera maackii</i>	<u>Amur honeysuckle</u>	Escaped from plantings; seeds spread by birds
<i>Lonicera morrowii</i>	<u>Morrow's honeysuckle</u>	Escaped from plantings and invasive in many states; seeds spread by birds
<i>Lonicera morrowii x tatarica</i>	<u>Bell's honeysuckle</u>	Escaped from cultivation
<i>Lonicera standishii</i>	<u>Standish honeysuckle</u>	Escaped from plantings; seeds spread by birds
<i>Lonicera tartarica</i>	<u>Tartarian honeysuckle</u>	Escaped from plantings; seeds spread by birds
<i>Rhamnus catharticus</i>	<u>Common buckthorn</u>	Becoming a problem in PA
<i>Rhamnus frangula</i>	<u>Glossy buckthorn</u>	Becoming a problem in PA
<i>Rubus phoenicolasius</i>	<u>Wineberry</u>	Common bramble; not cultivated; spread by seed
<i>Rosa multiflora</i>	<u>Multiflora rose</u>	Invasive in many states; seeds spread by birds; PA noxious Weed
* <i>Spiraea japonica</i>	<u>Japanese spiraea</u>	Frequently planted; escaped in some areas
* <i>Viburnum opulus var. opulus</i>	<u>Guedder rose</u>	Resembles native <i>Viburnum trilobum</i> which it replaces; both are cultivated and planted

Trees

Scientific Name	Common Name	Notes
* <i>Acer platanoides</i>	<u>Norway maple</u>	Commonly planted and escaped; invasive in many states; wind spreads prolific seeds
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	<u>Sycamore maple</u>	Escaped from cultivation; wind spreads prolific seeds
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	<u>Tree-of-heaven</u>	Invasive in many states; wind spreads prolific seeds
<i>Paulownia tomentosa</i>	<u>Princess tree</u>	Prolific seeds fall to start new seedlings
* <i>Pyrus calleryana</i>	<u>Callery pear</u>	Commonly planted street tree; becoming a problem as an escape
<i>Ulmus pumila</i>	<u>Siberian elm</u>	Escaped from cultivation

Vines

Scientific Name	Common Name	Notes
<i>Akebia quinata</i>	<u>Fiveleaf akebia</u>	Escaped from cultivation
<i>Ampelopsis brevipedunculata</i>	<u>Porcelain-berry</u>	Escaped from cultivation
<i>Celastrus orbiculatus</i>	<u>Oriental bittersweet</u>	Escaped from cultivation and invasive in many states; spreading rapidly (by birds)
<i>Lonicera japonica</i>	<u>Japanese honeysuckle</u>	Invasive in many states
<i>Polygonum perfoliatum</i>	<u>Mile-a-minute vine</u>	Range expanding; PA Noxious Weed
<i>Pueraria lobata</i>	<u>Kudzu</u>	Invasive in many states; PA Noxious Weed

* An asterisk (*) denotes that a species has cultivars that are not known to be invasive. Cultivars are cultivated varieties of plant species bred for predictable attributes like shorter height, showier flowers, or colored foliage. An example is Norway Maple 'Crimson King' grown for its reddish leaves; this cultivar is not known to be invasive. If you choose to plant a cultivar of an invasive species, ask a PA certified horticulturist (PCH), your Penn State extension agent, or a professional horticulturist about the cultivar's potential to be invasive.

This list of invasive species is not meant to be definitive, but rather a guideline to some of the most troublesome species that degrade native plant communities in Pennsylvania. These species were chosen from a more extensive list compiled from adjacent state or regional lists of invasive plant species. Input was sought from experienced individuals familiar with Pennsylvania's flora from a field perspective. For a more extensive list of invasive species, please contact DCNR, Bureau of Forestry, P.O. Box 8552, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8552