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Invasive plants are tough and can keep growing from even the smallest parts of the plant. Dumping garden clippings in natural areas is a sure way to spread these unwanted plants, and it's against the law.

**WASTE**

They creep into natural areas from other properties, growing over, under and even through anything in their path - including fences. English ivy can spread up to 4.5 metres (14 feet) in a single year.

**GROWTH**

Their seeds are spread to natural areas by the wind or animals (like birds), and some invasive plants are very good at spreading their own seeds. For example, Policeman's helmet can fling its seeds up to 7 metres (23 feet)!

**SEEDS**

Most invasive plants were introduced because they look nice and grow easily, making them popular garden plants. In their natural habitats, all plants have predators, competitors, and other controlling factors (like climate) that keep them manageable. However, when they're introduced to a new place with no natural controls, they can escape gardens and grow unchecked in natural areas. This can happen in a few different ways:

How do invasive plants get here and how do they spread to natural areas?



*Invasive Policeman's Helmet*

- **Increased cost to the City of Surrey** (tax dollars) to restore parks affected by invasive plants.
- **Reduced crop yield** by an estimated \$50 million annually in BC.
- **Reduced recreational value** as invasive plants reduce natural beauty and decrease the variety of plants and animals.
- **Increased exotic pests and plant diseases** (like black garden slugs).
- **Changed landscapes.** Every native plant serves an important purpose in nature, and as invasive plants take over, natural areas may not function properly. Invasive plants may reduce shade and shelter, weaken soil stability, and alter the movements of wind and water.
- **Lower habitat value for local wildlife,** as the native plants they depend on for food and shelter are displaced by invasive plants.

Invasive plants can have lasting economic, social, and environmental consequences, such as:

Why are invasive plants a problem?

**What are invasive plants?**

Invasive plants are plants that have been introduced from another part of the world and cause substantial negative impacts to people and wildlife. They grow quickly and aggressively, often taking over natural areas that have slower growing native plants – even trees in some cases. Not all exotic plants are considered invasive, but most invasive plants are exotic.



*Invasive Giant Hogweed*

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For more information call 604-501-5050, visit our website, or the Invasive Species Council of Metro Vancouver website at [www.iscmv.ca](http://www.iscmv.ca).



# Invasive plants



Learn about common invasive plants in Surrey and help stop their spread into Surrey's natural areas.





# SURREY'S WORST INVASIVE PLANTS

## ENGLISH IVY (*Hedera helix*)

English ivy is a creeping vine with shiny, waxy evergreen leaves. It grows as a dense mat and climbs up trees and buildings. Ivy can kill trees as the heavy vines make trees more likely to fall over in wind storms, and the dense coverage robs the trees of sunlight and nutrients.

### IN YOUR GARDEN:

Native alternative:  
Salal (*Gaultheria shallon*)

Exotic alternative:  
Climbing Hydrangea



## POLICEMAN'S HELMET (*Impatiens glandulifera*)

Policeman's helmet is a tall invasive annual with hooded (or helmet-shaped) flowers that can grow up to 2.5 metres (8 feet) tall. The Latin name, *Impatiens*, refers to the explosive way this plant releases its seeds. The seeds can shoot up to 7 metres (23 feet) away when the pods are disturbed by breezes or passing animals.

### IN YOUR GARDEN:

Native alternative:  
Red-osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*)

Exotic alternative: Delphinium



## MORNING GLORY (*Convolvulaceae family*)

Morning glory is a climbing, creeping perennial groundcover with arrowhead-shaped leaves. It will wrap around anything in its way. Morning glory roots (even just a fragment) can sprout new plants. Popular for their trumpet-shaped flowers, these aggressive plants are hard to control.

### IN YOUR GARDEN:

Native alternative:  
Kinnikinnick or Bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)

Exotic alternative:  
Climbing Hydrangea



## LAMIUM OR YELLOW ARCHANGEL (*Lamium galeobdolon*)

Lamium is a trailing evergreen groundcover with heart-shaped, variegated (green and white patterned) leaves. It is a popular plant for hanging baskets and is commonly available for sale – please avoid it! Lamium is an extremely aggressive invasive plant that can quickly dominate both open and shaded areas.

### IN YOUR GARDEN:

Native alternative:  
Kinnikinnick (or bearberry) (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)

Exotic alternative: Hosta



## JAPANESE KNOTWEED (*Polygonum cuspidatum*)

Japanese knotweed is a large bamboo-like, perennial shrub that grows up to 5 metres (15 feet) tall. A rapid grower, this plant can grow up to 8 centimetres (3 inches) in one day. It is one of the most difficult invasive plants to get rid of.

### IN YOUR GARDEN:

Native alternative: Red-osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*)

Exotic alternative: Bugbane



## HIMALAYAN BLACKBERRY (*Rubus armeniacus*)

Favoured for its fruit, this large plant can grow up to 5 metres (15 feet) tall with individual canes reaching 12 metres (40 feet) long. Left to grow unchecked, it will take over an entire meadow and dramatically change the habitat for the worse.



## GIANT HOGWEED (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)

Giant hogweed is a tall perennial plant that grows up to 5 metres (15 feet) tall. It has large clusters of white flowers in an umbrella-shaped head up to 60 centimetres (2 feet) across. The sap and stem hairs of this plant can cause serious burns, blisters, and scarring.

If you find Giant Hogweed on public property report it right away.

If you see it in a Surrey park, please call the Parks service request line at 604-501-5050.

If you see it along City roads, boulevards and ditches, please call the Engineering service request line at 604-591-4152.

## How can I help?

- Properly dispose of your garden clippings, hanging baskets, and other yard waste. It can all be placed into your green bin for curbside pickup by the City of Surrey to be properly composted. Visit [surrey.ca/rethinkwaste](http://surrey.ca/rethinkwaste) for details. If you'd like to compost your own waste, keep it out of the park by containing it in your yard.
- Learn how to identify Surrey's common invasive plants.
- Avoid using invasive plants or contain them in pots to prevent their spread.
- Volunteer to remove invasive plants in your neighbourhood park. Call 604-501-5132 for information.



Invasive Japanese Knotweed