

Plant Sales: Avoiding Spreading Invasive Plants

Plant sales and swaps are fun places to share plants. They should also be places to swap information about the behavior of a plant. Even though a flower may be pretty, it should not be shared or brought into gardens if its behavior is so 'rude' that it impacts and imperils other plants by spreading too quickly and vigorously. A plant that spreads in the garden, but not much outside the cultivated/disturbed ground of the garden is '**aggressive**'. Mint and plume poppy are examples.

Other plants can spread into the natural, or minimally managed, environment, can establish self-perpetuating populations and can displace natural plants. These plants are '**invasive**' and can greatly diminish biological diversity and cause a cascade of negative ecological effects. Since 60% of invasive plants were introduced via horticulture, (and another 25% for conservation purposes) gardeners have a responsibility to educate themselves to avoid spreading these plants.

I suggest that gardeners who offer plants with aggressive tendencies (vegetative or by self seeding) **attach a note** to the plants they are offering **to alert potential purchasers of the behavior of the plant**. This is especially important for new gardeners, who do not have knowledge of, or experience with, the frustrations and work required to manage aggressive plants.

Truly invasive plants, whether of natural or garden origin, should not be sold or swapped at all. Some are actually **illegal to move, sell or distribute** because they are included in Vermont's 2002 *Noxious Plant Quarantine* regulation or New Hampshire's *Invasive Species* regulation (Chapter Agr 3800). Others on the 2005 *Vermont Invasive Species Watch List*, or that are known to be seriously invasive garden plants should not be spread as they can easily escape and become out of control in natural areas. **Prevention is the best strategy.**

I recommend than none of the following plants be sold or traded at plant sales.

Common Names	Latin Name	Category of invasiveness
Autumn olive	<i>Elaeagnus umbellata</i>	NH Prohibited & VT Watch list
Barberry, Japanese	<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>	NH Prohibited & VT Watch list
Barberry, European	<i>Berberis vulgaris</i>	NH Prohibited & VT Watch list
Black locust	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> L.	VT Invasives Watch List
Buckthorn, common	<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>	NH & VT Prohibited lists
Buckthorn, glossy	<i>Rhamnus frangula</i>	NH & VT Prohibited Lists
Burning bush, winged euonymus	<i>Euonymus alatus</i>	NH Prohibited & VT Watch list
Celadine poppy	<i>Chelidonium majus</i> L.	Invasive garden plant
Cypress spurge	<i>Euphorbia cyparissias</i> L.	VT Invasives Watch List
Dame's rocket	<i>Hesperis matronalis</i> L.	VT Invasives Watch List
False Indigo	<i>Amorpha fruticosa</i> L.	VT Invasives Watch List
Forget-me-not	<i>Myosotis scorpiodes</i> L.	Invasive garden plant
Garden heliotrope	<i>Valeriana officinalis</i> L.	Invasive garden plant
Garden loosestrife (yellow)	<i>Lysimachia vulgaris</i> L.	VT Invasives Watch List

