



Invasive Plants
By Sarah Robinson
UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County

Many landscaping plants and invasive plants share characteristics that make them successful in our yards as well as in going rogue. Nursery plants are highly prized if they are easy to germinate and propagate, grow rapidly, have an abundance of flowers for color, and are drought and deer resistant. These same characteristics are ideal for plants to spread out of the yard and into unintended areas. As one author notes: “give them an inch and they’ll take an acre.” Invasive plants propagate easily, grow rapidly, have an abundance of seed, and generally do not have any natural predators. Invasive plants are not native to an area and they out-compete native plants for nutrients and water. By crowding out native species, infestations result in decreased plant diversity, changes to the structure of soil, and altered water flows. They can also restrict visibility and create hazards along roads and interfere with outdoor recreation. They impact wildlife by decreasing available forage and habitat. Invasive weeds are the second greatest threat to species conservation, second only to land development.

The best defenses against invasive weeds are prevention of introductions, early detection, and eradication. When land is cleared for any reason, including defensible space projects, care should be taken to avoid spreading invasive weeds. The California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC), El Dorado County Weed Management Group, California Native Plant Society, and the University of California Master Gardener program offer free guidelines to prevent introduction of invasive weeds during a work project and for control of established invasive weeds. Additionally, these groups can assist in identifying invasive species and offer alternative suggestions to invasive garden plants.

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Join the UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County to learn about highly aggressive non-native weeds in our region. Discover ways to identify, control, and report invasive weeds of county-wide concern. Then, take a look at weeds commonly found in the home landscape, their culture, and control strategies. This free Public Education class will be held Saturday, July 20, 2019, from 9 a.m. to noon at the El Dorado County Government Center, room C, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville.

Helpful online sites: cal-ipc.org: <http://pubhtml5.com/sucj/lode>, UCCE: [http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.edu/Invasive Weed Management Program/El Dorado County/](http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.edu/Invasive_Weed_Management_Program/El_Dorado_County/)

For more information on the UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County, see our website at <http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu>. Master Gardeners are available to answer home gardening questions Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to noon, by calling (530) 621-5512, or send us an email using the Ask a Master Gardener option on our website. Walk-ins are welcome at our office, located at 311 Fair Lane in Placerville. We also encourage you to visit us at the Sherwood Demonstration Garden, located at 6699 Campus Drive in Placerville, behind Folsom Lake College, El Dorado Center. See [http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu/Demonstration Garden](http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu/Demonstration_Garden) for more information and days and hours of operation, or call us to schedule a tour. To sign up for notices and newsletters, see [http://ucanr.edu/master gardener e-news](http://ucanr.edu/master_gardener_e-news). Master Gardeners are also on Facebook and Instagram; we hope you enjoy our postings and will share them with your friends.