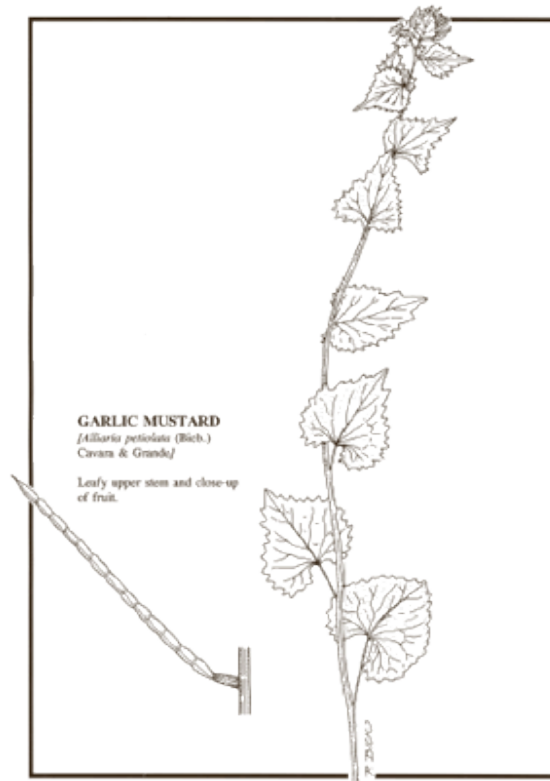


## What is an Invasive Plant Species?

An invasive species is non-native to the ecosystem under consideration and causes, or is likely to cause, economic or environmental harm by replacing desirable native plants.

## Why are invasive plants successful?

- Many invasive plants reproduce rapidly and in large numbers by producing large quantities of seed or plant parts that remain viable in the ground for long periods.
- Many invasive plants thrive on disturbed soil.
- Invasive plant seeds are often distributed by birds, wind, or over long distances by unknowing humans.
- Some invasive plants have aggressive, dense root systems that spread long distances from a single plant and out compete native plants.
- Plants that had natural controls such as diseases, insects, or other plant-eating organisms in their native habitat, may have nothing to check their spread in a new area.
- Some plant species produce chemicals in their leaves or root systems that inhibit the growth of surrounding plants.
- Non-native plants may grow and leaf-out earlier than natives and gain competitive advantage when capturing sunlight, soil moisture, and nutrients.



## What are the impacts of non-native invasive plant species?

- Native plant species may disappear.
- Hybridization with native plants can lead to loss of original strains.
- Biological diversity may decline.
- The need to use herbicides can increase with long established non-native plants.
- Plants pests or diseases hosted by non-native plants can threaten native plants.
- They cost the US economy as much as \$35 billion per year.
- They threaten productive agricultural land, recreational activities, and human and livestock health.

## Just some of the most noxious non-native invasive plants in Missouri today.

- Sericea lespedeza (*Lespedeza cuneata*)
- Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*)
- bush honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*)
- garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)
- autumn olive (*Eleagnus umbellata*)
- crown vetch (*Securigera varia*)
- musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*)
- sweet clovers (*Melilotus alba & officinalis*)
- wintercreeper (*Euonymus fortunei*)
- spotted knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*)
- purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)
- Johnson grass (*Sorghum halepense*)
- teasels (*Dipsacus fullonum & laciniatus*)
- tall & meadow fescue (*Festuca arundinacea & pratensis*)



## To Learn More About Non-Native Invasive Plants

*Invasive Plants of the Upper Midwest*,  
Elizabeth J. Czarapata,  
University of Wisconsin Press, 2005.

*Missouri Vegetation Management Manual*,  
Tim E. Smith, Missouri Department of  
Conservation, 1997

Can be downloaded from:  
[www.mdc.mo.gov/nathis/exotic/vegman](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/nathis/exotic/vegman)

*Plants that Won't Stay Put*, Tim E. Smith,  
Missouri Conservationist, April 2001

### Informational websites:

Midwest Invasive Plants Network  
[www.mipn.org](http://www.mipn.org)

MO Botanical Garden site ranking worst offenders  
[www.mobot.org/mobot/research/mepp/welcome.html](http://www.mobot.org/mobot/research/mepp/welcome.html)

The Nature Conservancy invasive weed site  
[tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/index.html](http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/index.html)

The Plant Conservation Alliance alien plant site  
[www.nps.gov/plants/alien](http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien)

National Park Service invasive plants mgmt. program  
[www.nature.nps.gov/biology/invasive/species](http://www.nature.nps.gov/biology/invasive/species)

US Forest Service invasive plants site  
[www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/invasives/index.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/invasives/index.shtml)

Center for Plant Conservation  
[www.centerforplantconservation.org](http://www.centerforplantconservation.org)  
Select - "Learn how you can fight invasives"

## About the Missouri Native Plant Society

MoNPS is devoted to the conservation  
and study of plants growing wild in  
Missouri, to the education of the public  
about the significance of the native  
flora and its habitat, and to the  
publication of related information.  
MoNPS was founded in 1979.

Our chapters are:

Hawthorn (Columbia)  
Kansas City  
Osage Plains (Clinton)  
Ozark (West Plains)  
St. Louis

For more information on MoNPS, becoming a  
member, and a chapter in your area, write to:

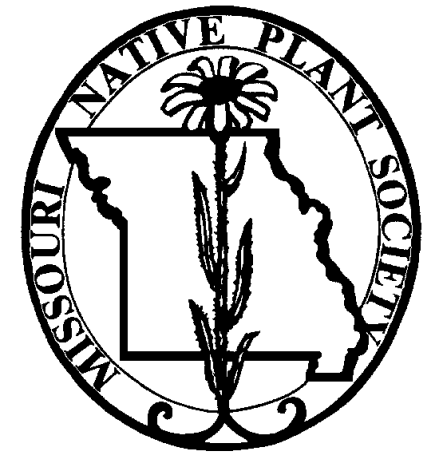
**Missouri Native Plant Society**  
**PO Box 20073**  
**St. Louis, MO 63144-0073**

or check our website at:  
[http://www.missouri.edu/~umo\\_herb/monps](http://www.missouri.edu/~umo_herb/monps)

This is one in a series of information  
brochures on native plants in Missouri.  
Check our website for new brochures  
as they become available.

# Non-Native Invasive Plants

## Fact Sheet 5



**Missouri Native Plant Society**

August 2006