

# Help our native wildlife to thrive by stopping the spread of invasive plants

Many popular garden and pond plants are not native to Britain – they have been introduced from other parts of the world. While they can help us to create beautiful displays to enjoy, if they escape into the wild some can become invasive, harming wildlife, the environment, the economy, and even our health and the way we live.



## Why are invasive plants a problem?

Invasive plants can harm native plants by spreading pests and plant diseases, and competing for space, light, nutrients and water. This has a wider impact on other species which rely on native plants, including birds, butterflies and other insects, and could threaten the survival of rare plant species.

Some invasive plants harm the economy and our communities by interfering with agriculture and utilities, or make it harder for us to take part in recreational activities such as fishing, sailing, or paddling. Others can even affect our health. Once established, invasive plants are costly to control and the damage they cause can be irreversible. Pond and aquarium plants can be particularly devastating if they escape into a natural waterbody.

## What can I do to help as a retailer?

We need your help! We all want to look after the environment and our native wildlife for future generations to enjoy. As a retailer you can help by taking simple measures to avoid spreading invasive plants, and educating your customers on how they can do this too.

## Ask your customers to Be Plant Wise:

Gardeners can help by following these three simple steps:



Choose the right plants for your garden, pond and water features



Keep your plants in your garden, don't plant them, or allow them to grow, in the wild



Dispose of your unwanted plants, roots, weeds, seeds and seed heads responsibly



## Prevent the spread of invasive plants

There are a range of plants that are already banned from sale, and it is an offence to allow a number of the most invasive plants to grow in the wild. In Scotland it is an offence to allow any non-native plant to grow in the wild. Many invasive plants can still be legally sold, but should only be grown, managed and disposed of with caution to avoid environmental harm.

An up-to-date list of plants which cannot legally be sold is available on our [website](#).

## Other suggested measures to take in store

- **Label plants correctly** with their correct full botanical name in addition to any other common names (if used). Contact your suppliers if there are discrepancies.
- **Help customers to choose appropriate plants**, depending on the size and purpose of their garden or pond.
- **Make sure there aren't any contaminants** in or on any plants, water or soil that you sell.
- **Clean your tools, equipment and footwear regularly**, including any pots and trays you reuse, to avoid spreading plant fragments, seeds or plant diseases.
- **Look out for anything unusual such as pests and plant diseases and report these** through the [Plant Health Portal](#).
- If you find something that can't be reported using the link above, [you can report any non-native species online through iRecord](#).

## Useful links and resources

- [The Flatworm Code of Practice](#), with information for retailers on preventing the spread of non-native flatworms which pose a risk to earthworms.
- [Plant Health Portal](#) with information on plant pests and diseases.
- Further information and all the links above can be found on the Be Plant Wise website [www.nonnativespecies.org/beplantwise](http://www.nonnativespecies.org/beplantwise)



**Thank you for helping us to look after the environment. It is only with your support that we can hope to significantly reduce the spread of invasive plants.**

**If you have any questions or would like to order any materials please [contact us](#).**

