

LEAST WANTED!

P L A N T 2 0 0 7



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JAPANESE KNOTWEED *Polygonum cuspidatum*

Japanese Knotweed is a herbaceous species from east Asia with shrub-like characteristics. The plant forms large colonies which can cover several acres or more, crowding out native vegetation. It reaches 4-10 feet high depending on habitat and variety. It is generally green with large leaves (up to 6 inches long), but some varieties are reddish

to pinkish with smaller leaves. Small flowers are white to greenish-white in small sprays along the smallest branches. The species spreads by rhizomes, seeds and possibly stem fragments. It grows in full sun or partial shade. It is especially invasive in moist or highly disturbed soils and is frequently found along rivers and streams.

NATIVE ALTERNATIVES



JOHN D. BYRD, MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY, WWW.FORESTRYIMAGES.ORG

BUTTONBUSH

Cephalanthus occidentalis

Buttonbush is common in wetlands, but this shrub does well in landscape plantings as it can adapt to a wide range of soil types except dry ones. It averages about 5-8 feet in height. Leaves are glossy, up to 6 inches long, on reddish twigs. Fragrant white flowers in tight round heads about 1 inch in diameter attract butterflies and bees. Flower heads mature into hard spherical ball-like fruits that persist through the winter.



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BLUE FALSE INDIGO

Baptisia australis

Blue False Indigo is a stout herbaceous perennial plant that grows to about 3-5 feet tall. The attractive blue-purple flowers are about one inch in length and grow in erect racemes reaching above the foliage. Leaves are clover-like with a blue-green tinge. The dark seed pods are used in dried arrangements. It grows well in average, dry to medium wet, well-drained soil in full sun to partial shade, and can tolerate drought and poor soils. Over time, plants develop slowly expanding clumps with deep and extensive root systems.



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FRAGRANT SUMAC

Rhus aromatica

Fragrant Sumac is a low growing shrub 3-6 feet in height. It is named for the strong spicy odor given off when twigs are broken. It is easily grown in average, dry to medium wet, well-drained soil in full sun to part shade. It is tolerant of a wide range of soils except those that are poorly drained. Small yellow flower clusters appear on naked twigs in April. The trifoliate leaves appear after flowering. They turn attractive shades of red and purple in the fall. Bright red fruits with dense hairs appear in June and July and are used by wildlife. Although the three leaflets resemble its cousin poison ivy, it does not cause dermatitis.

To heighten awareness of invasive plants that threaten Kentucky's native biodiversity, a Least Wanted plant will be featured in the Spring of each year with suggested alternatives.



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Promoting alternatives to invasive landscape plants