

KENTUCKY'S 2003 LEAST WANTED PLANT

Promoting alternatives to invasive landscape plants

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.

Least Wanted!

Crown vetch

Coronilla varia

Crown vetch is native to Europe, southwest Asia and northern Africa. This perennial herb forms a groundcover in open, sunny conditions and has been planted extensively along disturbed roadsides as a soil stabilizer. Crown vetch spreads by seed and by a creeping root system. Once Crown vetch becomes established, it outcompetes the native understory vegetation: it has become a serious threat to native grasslands and open woodlands. We are requesting the help of nursery owners, landscapers and gardeners to prevent further spread of this species by not using this species in gardens. An alternative is presented below.



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The Nature Conservancy

Good Native Alternative

Prairie mix

The sunny, rocky sites where Crown vetch is often planted are ideal areas to plant a drought-tolerant low-growing mix of prairie species. Prairie species like Little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), Prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*), Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*), Purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), Rough blazing star (*Liatis aspera*), and Gray golden-rod (*Solidago nemoralis*) are just a few of the plants that will thrive in dry, open sites.

Replacing Crown vetch with prairie species will increase the native



photo by Dave Imbrogno

Berheim Arboretum
and Research Forest



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