



Aggressive Plants

Aggressive plants are those that not only spread but are also difficult to control and may be taking resources from other plants in the landscape. This publication includes only ornamental non-native plants that might be found in local nurseries or plant sales.

Plants have multiple ways to spread in the landscape: windblown seeds, bird droppings, invasive roots, aggressive rhizomes, friendly neighbors bearing gift plants, etc. When shopping, be aware of potentially aggressive plants that can be identified by certain phrases on plant ID tags, for example: “spreads easily,” “readily reseeds,” etc. If someone offers you a plant saying “I have so much. Would you like some?”, think about why they are offering the gift.

Cultivation or division can control plants that merely spread. Deadheading flowers, removing seed heads, or cultivation of small seedlings will give some control over plants that reseed. Very hard-to-control plants may require repeated cultivation or application of herbicides.

Preventing root invasion is important when working with aggressive plants. Plan to isolate the plant with physical barriers, if possible. Aggressive root-spreading perennials can be controlled by planting them in containers and making sure that roots do not go through the drain holes or over the top of the container into surrounding soil. Lining containers with weed barrier fabric works well for this purpose.

In some cases, specific cultivars of a perennial are not as aggressive as others. Use this list to check into the plants you are considering for your garden and consult the noxious weed list from the Spokane County Noxious Weed Control Board.

Definitions:

Deadhead: remove spent flowers before seeds can disperse. **Isolate:** plant in an area that the roots, runners, or other aggressive parts cannot penetrate (deep hardscapes, concrete, blacktop, etc.)

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PLANT	COMMON NAME	PROPAGATION METHOD	CONTROL MEASURES	POTENTIAL USES	DO NOT PLANT
<i>Achillea</i> spp.	Yarrow	Invasive roots		Lawn alternative	
<i>Aegopodium</i> spp.	Goutweed, Bishop's weed	Reseeds, invasive roots	Isolate planting	Groundcover	
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree of heaven	Reseeds prolifically, wind dispersed, root suckers	Remove		Noxious weed, host for spotted lanternfly (invasive pest)
<i>Ajuga</i>	Bugleweed	Invasive roots,	Isolate planting	Shade groundcover	
<i>Anchusa</i> spp.	Common Bugloss				Noxious weed
<i>Artemisia</i> spp.	Wormwood	Invasive roots	Isolate		Noxious – Absinth wormwood
<i>Borago officinalis</i>	Borage	Reseeds, invasive roots	Deadhead, isolate		
<i>Campanula rapunculoides</i>	Creeping bellflower	Reseeds, invasive roots, small root pieces grow new plant	Deadhead, isolate, remove		Noxious weed watch list, pesticide resistant
<i>Campsis radicans</i>	Trumpet vine	Reseeds, invasive roots, aerial roots, suckers profusely from underground runners	Deadhead, isolate, keep away from structures	Vine	Extreme fire hazard, can choke out nearby plants
<i>Carex grayi</i>	Mace sedge, Gray's sedge	Reseeds	Deadhead, isolate	Rain garden, pond edges	
<i>Carex muskingumensis</i>	Palm sedge, Muskingum sedge	Reseeds, rhizomes, invasive roots	Deadhead, isolate	Rain garden, pond edges	
<i>Centaurea cyanus</i>	Bachelor button	Reseeds	Deadhead		

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<i>Cerastium tomentosum</i>	Snow in the summer	Invasive roots			Overwhelms desirable plants in rock gardens
<i>Chrysarrthenium parthenium</i>	Feverfew	Reseeds	Deadhead		
<i>Convallaria majalis</i>	Lily of the valley	Invasive roots	Isolate	Groundcover Shade areas	
<i>Coronilla varia</i>	Crownvetch	Reseeds, invasive roots	Deadhead, isolate		
<i>Corydalis lutea</i>	Yellow corydalis	Seeds prolifically	Deadhead	Groundcover	Difficult to remove
<i>Echinops ritro</i>	Globe thistle	Reseeds	Deadhead		
<i>Epilobium canum</i>	California fuchsia	Reseeds by wind, rhizomes	Isolate		
<i>Equisetum arvense</i>	Horsetail	Rhizomes to 6' deep	Isolate		Toxic to livestock, esp. horses, extremely difficult to remove
<i>Festuca glauca</i>	Blue fescue	Reseeds	Deadhead		
<i>Filipendula rubra</i>	Queen of the prairie	Reseeds, invasive roots	Deadhead, isolate		
<i>Galium odoratum</i>	Sweet woodruff	Invasive roots	Isolate	Shade groundcover over tree roots	
<i>Geranium</i>	Cranesbill geranium	Reseeds	Deadhead		
<i>Gypsophila paniculata</i>	Baby's breath	Reseeds	Deadhead		Some are noxious weeds – check before planting
<i>Hedera helix</i>	English ivy	Spreads by rooting stems & berries	Remove		Illegal to buy in WA
<i>Hieracium auranatiacum</i>	Orange hawkweed				Noxious weed

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<i>Hierochloe odorata</i>	Sweetgrass	Rhizomes	Isolate in container		
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	St. John's wort				Noxious weed
<i>Lamiastrum galeobdolon</i>	Yellow archangel	Reseeds, roots at nodes, stems, & root fragments	Deadhead, isolate	Groundcover	
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Oxeye daisy				Noxious weed
<i>Leucanthemum x superbum</i>	Shasta daisy				
<i>Lithrum salicaria</i>	Purple Loostrife	Reseeds, roots at nodes, stems, & root fragments	Remove		Noxious Weed
<i>Lunaria annua</i>	Money plant	Reseeds	Deadhead		
<i>Lysimachia clethroides</i>	Gooseneck loosestrife	Reseeds, invasive roots, aggressive rhizomes	Deadhead, isolate		
<i>Lysimachia nummularia</i>	Creeping jenny, Creeping charlie	Invasive roots	Isolate		
<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	Purple loosestrife				Noxious weed
<i>Macleaya cordata</i>	Plume poppy	Reseeds, invasive roots	Deadhead, isolate in large containers		Spreads by rhizome, 5'-8' tall
<i>Mentha</i>	All mints	Reseeds, invasive roots	Deadhead, isolate	Herb	
<i>Mondarda didyma</i>	Beebalm	Invasive roots	Deadhead, dig & divide every 2-3 years controls spreading	Attracts pollinators especially hummingbirds & bumblebees	
<i>Myosotis</i>	Forget-me-not	Reseeds, spreads	Deadhead, cut to ground after flowering		

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<i>Nasella tenuissima</i>	Mexican feather grass	Aggressively seeds	Difficult to deadhead sufficiently to prevent spread		
<i>Oenothera spp.</i>	Evening primrose	Reseeds, invasive roots, some varieties have taproot	Isolate	Groundcover in sun	
<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	Oregano	Reseeds, underground runners	Deadhead	Mint family	
<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>	Virginia creeper	Reseeds, attaches with adhesive holdfasts (difficult removal)	Deadhead	Vine	Extreme fire hazard, can ruin painted surfaces
<i>Parthenocissus tricuspidata</i>	Boston ivy				Illegal to buy in Washington
<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	Reed canary grass	Invasive roots	Isolate in container		
<i>Physalis alkekengi</i>	Chinese lantern	Invasive roots	Isolate		
<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>	Obedient plant	Reseeds, invasive roots	Deadhead, isolate		
<i>Polygonum cuspidatum</i>	False bamboo, Japanese knotweed	Spreads rapidly from rhizomes	Remove		Noxious weed
<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	Quaking aspen	Invasive root suckers	Isolate		Susceptible to poplar willow borer
<i>Pulmonaria officinalis</i>	Lungwort	Reseeds, rhizomes	Deadhead, isolate		
<i>Rhus typhina</i>	Cutleaf staghorn sumac	Reseeds, invasive roots	Isolate	Shrub	
<i>Sedum spp.</i>	Sedum	Dropped pieces will re-root	Careful maintenance	Groundcover	
<i>Stachys byzantina</i>	Lamb's ear	Creeping stems root & spread	Isolate, careful maintenance		
<i>Tradescantia</i>	Spiderwort	Reseeds, invasive roots	Deadhead, isolate		

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PLANT	COMMON NAME	PROPAGATION METHOD	CONTROL MEASURES	POTENTIAL USES	DO NOT PLANT
<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	American arborvitae	Dense fibrous root system	Plant in containers raised off ground	Hedge, specimen plant	Extreme fire hazard
<i>Tradescantia</i>	Spiderwort	Reseeds, invasive roots	Deadhead, isolate		
<i>Veronica spp.</i>	Speedwell	Invasive roots, dropped pieces will re-root	Isolate, careful maintenance		
<i>Viola spp.</i>	Viola	Reseeds	Deadhead	Potential lawn enhancement	
<i>Yucca spp.</i>	Yucca	Invasive roots	Isolate		