



# Suggested Alternatives for Invasive Garden Plants

PlantRight's 2017 list of horticultural invasive plants identifies the highest priority invasive plants available for sale in California. If one of these plants is invasive in your climate zone, they should not be used in gardens or landscaping. Instead, consider one of the beautiful, non-invasive alternatives below.

Thank you for joining us to protect California's environment by Planting Right!

## Legend

- South Coast**  
(Sunset Zones 18-24)
- Desert**  
(Sunset Zones 10-13)
- Central Valley**  
(Sunset Zones 7-9)
- Sierra & Coastal Mountains**  
(Sunset Zones 1-3)
- North & Central Coast and Delta**  
(Sunset Zones 14-17)
- Low Water Use**
- CA Native**



| Invasive Grasses  | Suggested Non-invasive Alternatives   | Featured Information   | Suitable Climates |
|---|---|--|-------------------|
| <b>Green fountain grass</b><br>( <i>Pennisetum setaceum</i> )<br>Invasive in climate zones:<br>       | <b>Oriental fountain grass</b> ( <i>Pennisetum orientale</i> )<br><b>Pennisetum 'Fireworks', 'Skyrocket' &amp; 'Fairy Tails'</b> ( <i>Pennisetum x advena</i> , often mislabeled as <i>P. setaceum</i> cultivars)<br><b>Purple fountain grass</b> ( <i>Pennisetum macrostachys</i> 'Burgundy giant')<br><b>California fescue</b> ( <i>Festuca californica</i> )<br><b>Pink muhly</b> ( <i>Muhlenbergia capillaris</i> 'Regal Mist') | Compact, floriferous, cold hardy, very similar aesthetic and habit<br>Cultivars, similar aesthetic and habit. 'Fireworks' is magenta striped with green and white. 'Skyrocket' is green with white edges, and 'Fairy Tails' is solid green.<br>Cultivar, trim in winter for bright red new foliage, not frost hardy<br>Shade tolerant grass, needs good drainage, tolerates mowing<br>Fluffy pink cloud-like blooms, frost tolerant, needs drainage, good en masse |                   |
| <b>Mexican feathergrass</b><br>( <i>Stipa/Nassella tenuissima</i> )<br>Invasive in climate zones:<br> | <b>Blue grama grass</b> ( <i>Bouteloua gracilis</i> 'Blonde Ambition')<br><b>Alkali sacaton</b> ( <i>Sporobolus airoides</i> )<br><b>Mexican deer grass</b> ( <i>Muhlenbergia dubia</i> )<br><b>White awn muhly</b> ( <i>Muhlenbergia capillaris</i> 'White Cloud')<br><b>Autumn moor grass</b> ( <i>Sesleria autumnalis</i> )  | Attractive flowerheads, best when cut back in winter, cultivar of CA native<br>Robust yet slower growing, does well in a range of soils<br>Semi-evergreen mounder, likes well-drained soils, good en masse<br>Fluffy white cloud-like flower heads, easy care<br>Neat clumper, good en masse, tough  |                   |
| <b>Pampas grass</b><br>( <i>Cortaderia selloana</i> )<br>Invasive in climate zones:<br>               | <b>Foerster's reed grass</b> ( <i>Calamagrostis x acutiflora</i> 'Karl Foerster')<br><b>Deer grass</b> ( <i>Muhlenbergia rigens</i> )<br><b>Lomandra hystrix</b> 'Katie Belles' and 'Tropicbelle'<br><b>Lindheimer's muhly grass</b> ( <i>Muhlenbergia lindheimeri</i> )<br><b>Giant sacaton grass</b> ( <i>Sporobolus wrightii</i> )   | Stately white plumes from summer until frost, durable and showy<br>Smaller form with simple, clean plumes, easy to grow<br>Tidy, tough, 4 ft. with low spring/summer flowers, not for salty soils<br>Graceful plumes to 7 ft., 3-4 ft. foliage, tough, evergreen<br>Deciduous 4 ft. foliage, 6 ft. with plumes, appreciates extra water  |                   |
| Invasive Water Plants   | Suggested Non-invasive Alternatives   | Featured Information   | Suitable Climates |
| <b>Water hyacinth</b><br>( <i>Eichhornia crassipes</i> )<br>Invasive in climate zones:<br>            | <b>King of Siam water lily</b> ( <i>Nymphaea</i> 'King of Siam')<br><b>Pickerel weed</b> ( <i>Pontederia cordata</i> )<br><b>Cape pondweed</b> ( <i>Aponogeton distachyos</i> )   | Large, double purple flowers, floating leaves, roots in bottom soil<br>Similar flowers, not free-floating, good in ponds, winter dormant, spreads vegetatively<br>Bright fragrant flowers, foliage floats on water, dormant in winter  |                   |
| <b>Yellow water iris</b><br>( <i>Iris pseudacorus</i> )<br>Invasive in climate zones:<br>             | <b>Canna species</b> ( <i>Canna</i> hybrids)<br><b>Japanese iris</b> ( <i>Iris ensata</i> and cultivars)<br><b>Laevigata iris</b> ( <i>Iris laevigata</i> and cultivars)  | Many colors and sizes available, robust in ponds, needs to be wintered indoors<br>Best on pond margins, not to be submerged, showy flowers<br>Grows in shallow water, available flower colors are purple, red or white; poisonous  |                   |

Find your **Sunset** climate zone: <http://www.sunset.com/garden/climate-zones>

[www.PlantRight.org](http://www.PlantRight.org)

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# Why using non-invasive plants matters:



When invasive plants spread into natural areas, they push out native plants and wildlife. This impairs waterways, increases fire severity, harms ecosystems and reduces biodiversity. It also creates financial burden on taxpayers: in California, over \$80 million and countless hours of painstaking labor is spent each year addressing invasive plants. This does not include financial losses from reduced agricultural yields, land values, and recreational opportunities.

By Planting Right you are protecting our natural resources, local ecosystems and our economy.

| Invasive Groundcovers  | Suggested Non-invasive Alternatives   | Featured Information   | Suitable Climates |
|--|---|--|-------------------|
| <p><b>Highway iceplant</b><br/>(<i>Carpobrotus edulis</i>)</p> <p>Invasive in climate zones:<br/>● ●</p> | <p><b>Trailing iceplant</b> (<i>Delosperma cooperi</i>)</p> <p><b>Wild strawberry</b> (<i>Fragaria chiloensis</i>, <i>F. vesca</i>)</p> <p><b>White trailing iceplant</b> (<i>Delosperma 'Alba'</i>)</p> <p><b>Rosea iceplant</b> (<i>Drosanthemum floribundum</i>)</p> <p><b>Prostrate coyote bush</b> (<i>Baccharis pilularis</i> 'Twin Peaks' or 'Pigeon Point')</p> <p><b>Prostrate grevillea</b> (<i>Grevillea x gaudichaudii</i>)</p>   | <p>Showy pink flowers, low maintenance, cold-hardy</p> <p>Edible, best in sandy or well-drained soil, tolerates drought or moderate water</p> <p>White flowers, attracts bee pollinators, small-leaved</p> <p>Good for erosion control, tough, moderate to minimal water, can be weedy on coast</p> <p>Easy care, habitat plant, drought tolerant on coast, reliably deer-proof, good for slope stabilization</p> <p>Colorful, easy-care, best in part shade, spreads to 15 ft. wide, moderate water</p>   |                   |
| <p><b>Periwinkle</b><br/>(<i>Vinca major</i>)</p> <p>Invasive in climate zones:<br/>● ● ● ●</p>          | <p><b>Dwarf periwinkle</b> (<i>Vinca minor</i>)</p> <p><b>Hardy geranium</b> (<i>Geranium 'Rozanne'</i>)</p> <p><b>Serbian bellflower</b> (<i>Campanula poscharskyana</i>)</p> <p><b>Star jasmine</b> (<i>Trachelospermum jasminoides</i>) or</p> <p><b>Asian jasmine</b> (<i>Trachelospermum asiaticum</i>)</p> <p><b>Ceanothus groundcovers</b> (<i>Ceanothus</i> spp.)</p> <p><b>Hummingbird sage</b> (<i>Salvia spathacea</i>)</p> <p><b>Taiwan raspberry</b> (<i>Rubus pentalobus</i>)</p> | <p>Nice in containers or groundcover in a wide range of soils, long-blooming, blue flowers</p> <p>Reliable spring to early summer blooms, medium water, hardy, 2 ft. tall x 3 ft. wide</p> <p>Similar flowers in spring to early summer, low water, fast growth, 8" tall, spreading</p> <p>Both species have fragrant and abundant flowers, shrub-like, grow as mat or on trellises. Climbs 18 to 20 ft. tall. 1 to 2 ft. tall as a groundcover.</p> <p>Blue flowers, low water, slow growing, native w/ many varieties; ask for local options</p> <p>Habitat plant, showy flowers and foliage, great for dry shade under oaks</p> <p>Dense, mild autumn color, creeps over rocks, tough groundcover, slower growing</p> |                   |

Looking for more California native plants? Visit a PlantRight Retail Nursery Partner for great, local planting ideas – view locations near you at [PlantRight.org/nursery-partners](https://PlantRight.org/nursery-partners). PlantRight encourages gardeners to see what native plants do great in your neighborhood at: [calscape.cnps.org](https://calscape.cnps.org). Find your local California Native Plant Society Chapter at [cnps.org](https://cnps.org).

PlantRight has 'retired' the following invasive plants from this list as retailers have largely phased them out of California's nursery trade. These should not be used in gardens or landscaping. For information on these retirees, visit [www.PlantRight.org](https://www.PlantRight.org).

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|-------------------|--|---|--|
| <b>Do Not Use</b> | • Capeweed ( <i>Arctotheca calendula</i> )     | • Russian olive ( <i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i> )               | • Bridal veil broom ( <i>Retama monosperma</i> )   |
|                   | • Arundo, giant reed ( <i>Arundo donax</i> )   | • Blue gum eucalyptus ( <i>Eucalyptus globulus</i> )            | • Scarlet wisteria ( <i>Sesbania punicea</i> )     |
|                   | • Jubata grass ( <i>Cortaderia jubata</i> )    | • French broom ( <i>Genista monspessulana</i> )                 | • Spanish broom ( <i>Spartium junceum</i> )        |
|                   | • Scotch broom ( <i>Cytisus scoparius</i> )    | • Crystalline iceplant ( <i>Mesembryanthemum crystallinum</i> ) | • Saltcedar ( <i>Tamarix ramosissima</i> )         |
|                   | • Portuguese broom ( <i>Cytisus striatus</i> ) | • Myoporum ( <i>Myoporum laetum</i> )                           | • Chinese tallow tree ( <i>Triadica sebifera</i> ) |