

SPRING NURSERY SURVEY

2015 FACT SHEET

BACKGROUND

PlantRight works with California's nursery industry to promote the sale of exclusively non-invasive plants throughout the state. To do so, PlantRight recommends commercially viable and environmentally safe alternatives to the most commonly sold horticultural invasive plants. **PlantRight's annual [Spring Nursery Survey](#) tracks the retail market for invasive garden plants in California.** The survey informs our program strategy, monitors the impact of our work, and helps keep our plant list relevant. This fact sheet highlights the collective undertakings and major findings of the 2015 Spring Nursery Survey.

METHODOLOGY

Each year, over 200 garden centers across the state are randomly surveyed from a pool of over 1,500 locations. **This year, over 150 trained volunteers, primarily UC Master Gardeners, collected survey data at 265 nurseries in 38 counties.** The survey plant list changes slightly each year, as certain plants are removed and others are added (see list at top right). New species are evaluated each year as "candidate plants," informing one criteria for potential addition to our plant list. Except where noted, this fact sheet's results reflect the 10 invasive plants featured on PlantRight's 2015 list (Cohort 1 and 2, surveyed since 2013). These results reflect where locally invasive plants – by climate zone or region – are found.

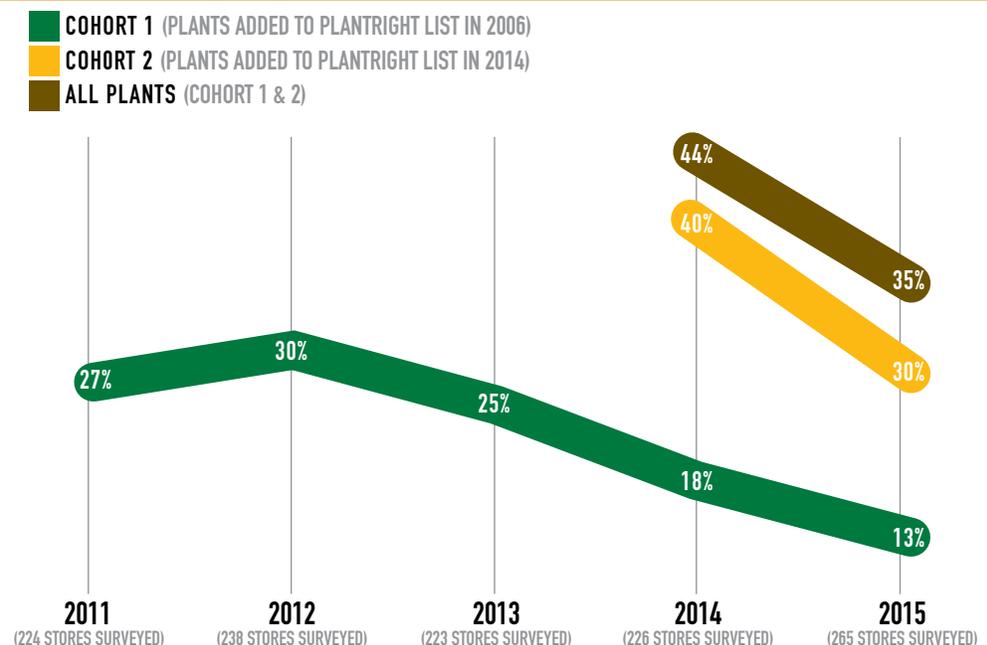
RESULTS

- Invasive plants on PlantRight's original list (Cohort 1) continue to decline in availability, now found at only 13% of stores, decreasing from 18% last year and about 30% from 2011 through 2013.
- Recently added invasive plants (Cohort 2) also decreased. The percentage of stores selling any locally invasive plant on our list (Cohort 1 & 2) dropped significantly, **from 44% in 2014 to 35% this spring**, driven by a decrease in the availability of Mexican feathergrass (*Nassella tenuissima*).
- Perhaps most significantly, the percentage of big-box stores selling a locally invasive plant declined by over 60%, dropping from 43% in 2014 to 16% this year.

PLANTS IN 2015 SURVEY

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
COHORT 1: PLANTS ON PLANTRIGHT'S LIST SINCE 2006	
<i>Carpobrotus edulis</i>	Highway iceplant
<i>Cortaderia selloana</i>	Pampas grass
<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	Scotch broom
<i>Genista monspessulana</i>	French broom
<i>Pennisetum setaceum</i>	Green fountain grass
<i>Triadica sebifera</i>	Chinese tallow tree
<i>Vinca major</i>	Periwinkle
COHORT 2: PLANTS ADDED TO PLANTRIGHT'S LIST IN 2014	
<i>Eichhornia crassipes</i>	Water hyacinth
<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	Yellow water iris
<i>Nassella tenuissima</i>	Mexican feathergrass
CANDIDATE PLANTS: EVALUATED¹	
<i>Carex divulsa</i> ²	Grassland sedge
<i>Fraxinus uhdei</i>	Shamel/evergreen ash
<i>Ligustrum lucidum</i>	Glossy privet
<i>Osteospermum fruticosum</i> ²	African daisy
<i>Schinus terebinthifolius</i>	Brazilian pepper tree
RETIRED PLANTS¹	
<i>Cytisus striatus</i>	Portuguese broom
<i>Myoporum laetum</i>	Myoporum
<i>Sesbania punicea</i>	Scarlet wisteria

PERCENTAGE OF STORES SELLING A LOCALLY INVASIVE PLANT

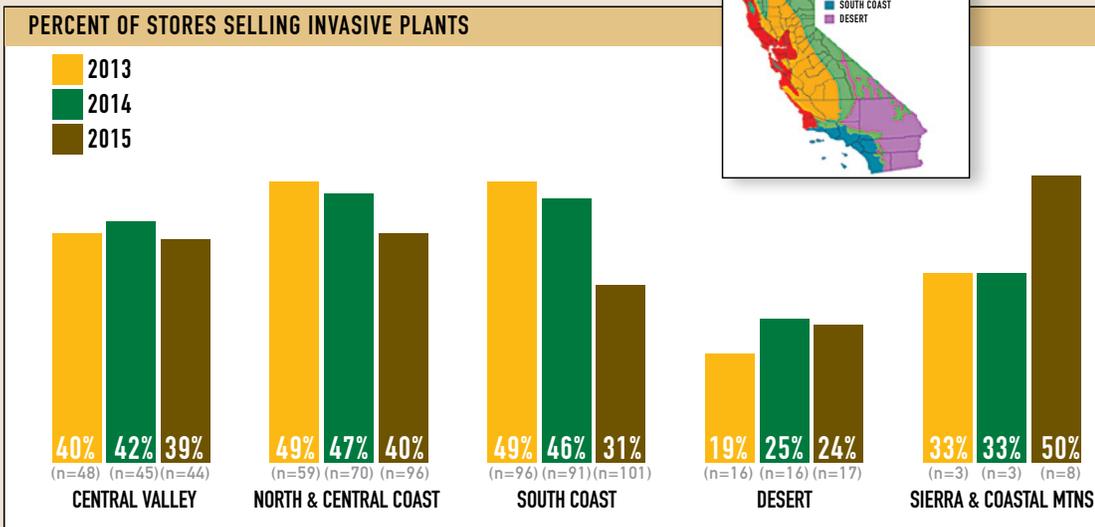


¹ Candidate plants are evaluated for potential addition to PlantRight's list, and like Retired Plants, are not included in charts on this fact sheet.

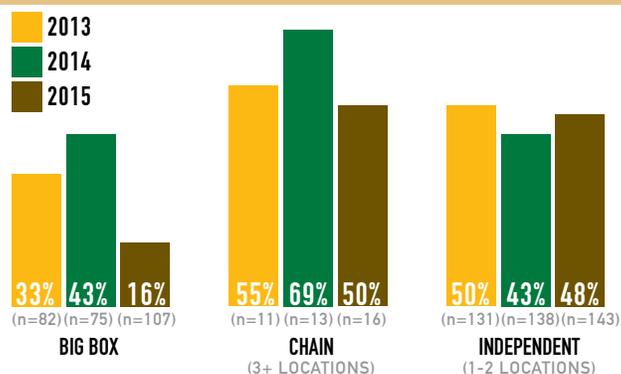
² Plant Risk Evaluation (PRE) research shows that these plants pose a low risk of becoming invasive.

RESULTS BY CLIMATE ZONE

Locally invasive plants were most often found in the **North & Central Coast** (available at 40% of stores) and **Central Valley** (39%) climate zones, followed by the South Coast climate zone (31%). Because the survey sample included only a few stores in the *Desert* and *Sierra & Coastal Mountain* climate zones (17 and 8 stores respectively), we cannot assume the results to accurately represent these two regions.



PERCENT OF STORES SELLING INVASIVE PLANTS



RESULTS BY RETAIL TYPE

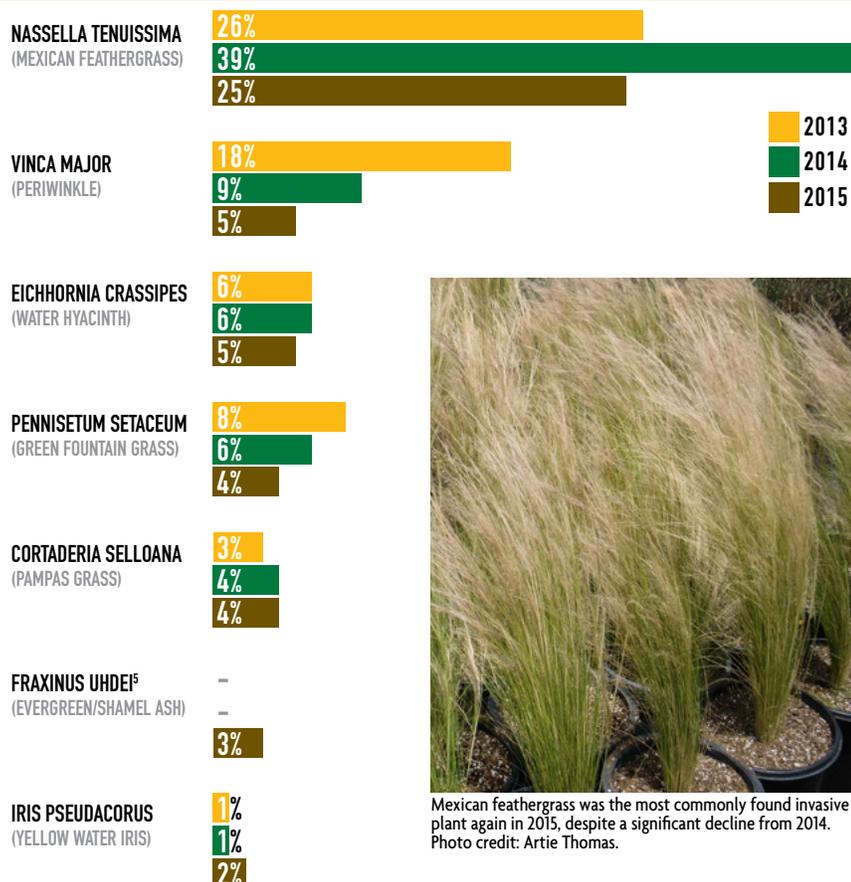
Chain retailers (3 or more locations) were most likely to sell locally invasive plants in 2015, followed closely by independent retailers (1-2 locations). Fewer chain retailers sold invasive plants this year, while availability at Independent Retailers increased slightly. **Most notably, availability at big-box stores saw a 60% decrease in just one year.** Given the large volume of plants these stores sell (constituting 50% of total plant sales by volume³, or higher according to some estimates), this drop will have a large impact on overall invasive plant sales throughout the state. We attribute a portion of this positive progress to PlantRight's recent partnership with The Home Depot in California⁴.

RESULTS BY PLANT SPECIES

Fourteen of the 18 surveyed plant species were found for sale in 2015. Three of these plants were found at less than 1% of nurseries: highway iceplant, Chinese tallow tree, and French broom. Four plants were not found at all: Scotch broom, along with myoporum, Portuguese broom, and scarlet wisteria. None of these retired plants (the latter three) have made a resurgence.

Shamel/evergreen ash (*Fraxinus uhdei*) is the only candidate plant that meets our criteria for future addition to our plant list, and is the only candidate included in the chart. Plant Risk Evaluation (PRE) research conducted on African daisy (*Osteospermum fruticosum*) and grassland sedge (*Carex divulsa*) show these plants to pose a low risk of becoming invasive.

PLANTS FOUND AT MORE THAN 1% OF STORES



Mexican feathergrass was the most commonly found invasive plant again in 2015, despite a significant decline from 2014. Photo credit: Artie Thomas.

³ Carman, Hoy. 2011. Economic Aspects of the California Nursery and Floral Industry, 2001–2009. Davis, CA: Giannini Foundation of Agricultural Economics Information Series No. 11-1. Available at <http://giannini.ucop.edu/info/series.htm>.

⁴ Sustainable Conservation. 2015. Alliance to Combat Invasive Plants Grows. <http://suscon.org/plantright/alliance.php>.

⁵ Candidate plant selected for future addition to PlantRight's list.