



Where Did That Come From? Invasive Ornamentals in Managed Landscapes

Introduction

‘Exotic Species’ - In the world of gardening, exotics can be striking and beautiful, but in the world of the natural resource manager, they can be the proverbial ‘thorn in the side.’ What are they? Exotics are plants which come from another part of the world and are not native to the local landscape.

Here in the southeast, the most prominent example is kudzu (*Pueraria lobata*), that perennial, semi-woody vine, that can grow almost 12 inches per day. Brought from Asia to battle soil erosion and serve as livestock forage, kudzu can overtake any area where it gains a foothold, smothering buildings, utility lines, and all other vegetation in its path, actually enhancing erosion and outpacing any animal that may find it palatable.



Beautiful, But A Nuisance

Exotic plants were imported from foreign lands for their beauty and ability to withstand a wide range of climatic conditions. Too late did we learn that many

were also opportunists which could quickly out-compete native species and spread like wildfire when allowed to escape from manicured gardens and landscapes. Well-known examples include:



Japanese Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) - Native to eastern Asia, this plant was deliberately introduced to North America in 1896 for horticultural use.

Chinese Privet (*Ligustrum sinense*) - Planted as hedges, the species has escaped and become invasive in many areas.



English Ivy (*Hedera helix*) - Widely planted as an ornamental, this plant is adaptable to a wide range of moisture and soil conditions, allowing it to form dense ground cover or climb trees to almost 90 feet by means of aerial roots.

Japanese/Chinese Wisteria (*Wisteria floribunda/sinensis*) - Introduced from Asia in the early 1800s, this is a traditional southern porch vine.



Practicing Good Stewardship

Today, resource managers work diligently to eliminate these exotic species from the natural landscape to promote the growth and revegetation of native species. Good resource and land stewardship requires vigilance in preventing the spread of exotic species,

including removal of non-natives from the natural landscape, avoiding indiscriminate planting of these species, preventing the spread from contaminated areas to non-contaminated, and proper disposal of garden refuse.

Common Invasive Ornamentals in Vicksburg National Military Park



Common Morning Glory
(*Ipomoea purpurea*)
Origin: Mexico and Central America



Periwinkle/Vinca
(*Vinca minor*)
Origin: Europe and Asia



Red Top
(*Photinia x fraseri*)
Origin: Japan and China



Crimson Clover
(*Trifolium incarnatum*)
Origin: Europe



Paper Mulberry
(*Broussonetia papyrifera*)
Origin: Eastern Asia



Chinese Tallow Tree
(*Triadica sebifera*)
Origin: Eastern Asia



Four O'Clock
(*Mirabilis jalapa*)
Origin: Peruvian Andes



Ground Ivy
(*Glechoma hederacea*)
Origin: Europe and Southwestern Asia



Chinaberry
(*Melia azedarach*)
Inset: Berries
Origin: India, China, and Australia



Queen Anne's Lace
(*Daucus carota*)
Origin: Europe and Asia



Heavenly Bamboo
(*Nandina domestica*)
Origin: Eastern Asia and India



Tree-of-Heaven
(*Ailanthus altissima*)
Origin: China and Taiwan



Red Rain Lily
(*Lycoris radiata*)
Origin: China and Japan



Rose Wood Sorrel
(*Oxalis rubra*)
Origin: Brazil



Princess-Tree
(*Paulownia tomentosa*)
Inset: Flowers
Origin: Asia



Daffodil
(*Narcissus sp.*)
Origin: Europe, North Africa, and Asia



Elephant Garlic
(*Allium ampeloprasum*)
Origin: Southern Europe and Western Asia



Chinese Parasol Tree
(*Firmiana simplex*)
Inset: Seed pods
Origin: Asia



Multiflora Rose
(*Rosa multiflora*)
Origin: Eastern Asia



Spearmint
(*Mentha spicata*)
Origin: Europe and Southwestern Asia



Silktree Mimosa
(*Albizia julibrissin*)
Origin: Southern and Eastern Asia



Trifoliolate Orange
(*Poncirus trifoliata*)
Origin: Northern China and Korea