

Mecklenburg Audubon Society

Backyard Notes: Invasives

What's Growing in Your Yard?



Besides watching the migrating birds fall is a great time to think about what to plant in your yard that will provide the best habitat for both migrants and resident birds alike. While you are considering what to plant think about this:

- According to the North Carolina Botanical Gardens "Biota of North America" study, at least 4,000 species of non-native plants occur outside cultivation in the United States. Most of these escaped species cause few problems, but 79 species cost the U.S. economy more than 97 billion dollars annually in lost crops, failed recovery efforts for endangered species, and control efforts.

- Invasive species have contributed to the decline of 42% of U.S. endangered and threatened species, and for 18% of U.S. endangered or threatened species, invasives are the main cause of their decline. Invasive species compete directly with native species for moisture, sunlight, nutrients, and space.
- Additionally, some studies suggest that the fruit produced by invasives may not be as nutritious for local wildlife, requiring them to eat more frequently. Fruits and seeds of invasive species are the "junk food" of the natural world.



Butterfly Bush



Beautyberry

Do you have either of these thugs in your yard? If so try these alternatives.

Butterfly Bush (*Buddleia davidii*) try:

- Beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*)
- Wild Hydrangea (*Hydrangea arborescens*)
- Sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboreum*)
- Azalea (*Rhododendron spp.*)
- Elderberry (*Sambucus spp.*)
- Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos spp.*)

Russian Olive (*Viburnum Elaeagnus angustifolia*) try:

- Ceanothus (*Ceanothus spp.*)
- Silverberry (*Eleagnus commutatus*)
- Bayberry (*Myrica spp.*)

For More Information:

Invasive Plants

<http://www.newfs.org/conserve/invasive.htm>

Plant Conservation Alliance

<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/>

National Invasive Species Information Center

<http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/>

Biological Control of Non-Indigenous Plant Species

<http://www.invasiveplants.net/>

Invasives [USDA]

<http://www.usna.usda.gov/Gardens/invasives.html>

Exotic and Invasive Plants [Mecklenburg Co.]

<http://www.charmeck.org/Departments/StormWater/Storm+Drain/Invasive+Plants.htm>