



TEXAS A&M FOREST SERVICE

Forest Health: Common Invasive Plants in East Texas



1. Chinese Tallow



2. Chinese Privet



3. Japanese Climbing Fern



4. Japanese Honeysuckle



5. Kudzu



6. Asian Bamboos



7. Chinaberry Tree



8. Chinese Wisteria



9. Giant Reed



10. Mimosa



11. Tropical Soda Apple



12. Giant Asian Dodder

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Descriptions of 12 Common Invasive Plants in the East Texas Landscape:

1. **Chinese Tallow:** *Triadica sebifera*. Introduced from China in the 1700s as an ornamental and for its waxy seeds. Deciduous tree reaching 60 feet in height. Readily invades open land and has distinct heart-shaped, alternate leaves that display brilliant fall colors. Attractive white berries persist on the tree in the fall and winter.
2. **Chinese (European) Privet:** *Ligustrum sinense* (and others). Native to China and Europe and brought to the U.S. by the mid-1800s as ornamentals. Mostly evergreen, thicket-forming shrub having opposite, elliptical leaves with smooth margins. Fragrant, white flowers form in spring and produce clusters of dark purple berries.
3. **Japanese Climbing Fern:** *Lygodium japonicum*. Native to Asia and Australia and brought to the U.S. in the 1930s as an ornamental plant. Climbing, twining, mat-forming fern that invades open forests, road edges, and wet areas. Leaves are mostly deciduous, opposite, compound, lacy and finely divided.
4. **Japanese Honeysuckle:** *Lonicera japonica*. Introduced from Japan in the early 1800s for erosion control and as an ornamental. Semievergreen, woody vine with simple, opposite leaves. Produces white to yellow (sometimes pink) fragrant flowers from April through September.
5. **Kudzu:** *Pueraria montana*. Introduced from Japan and China in the early 1900s for erosion control. Deciduous, twining, mat-forming, ropelike woody vine and may completely cover large trees. Stems are covered with dense hairs. Leaves are alternate, compound and contain three leaflets.
6. **Asian Bamboos:** *Phyllostachys* and *Bambusa* spp. Native to Asia and widely planted as ornamentals and for fishing poles. Perennial grass forming jointed cane stems and reaching heights of 40 feet. Leaf blades are long and lanceolate with parallel veins and often are a golden yellow color. Dense thickets may form in pine understory in wet areas of East Texas.
7. **Chinaberry Tree:** *Melia azedarach*. Introduced from Asia in the mid-1800s as an ornamental tree. Dark green leaves are doubly compound, alternate, deciduous, and display bright yellow fall colors. Fruit is spherical, about ½" in diameter, yellow, persists on the tree in winter and is poisonous.
8. **Chinese Wisteria:** *Wisteria sinensis* (and others). Introduced from Asia in the early 1800s as an ornamental. Deciduous, high-climbing woody vine with alternate, compound leaves up to 16 inches long. Large, fragrant, showy lavender to purple flowers in spring. Seed pod is typical of legumes.
9. **Giant Reed:** *Arundo donax*. Cornlike stalks growing in thickets to 20 feet tall. Alternate, cornlike, lanceolate leaves. Flowers are dense plumes on ends of stalks. Introduced from Asia and Europe in 1800s.
10. **Mimosa:** *Albizia julibrissin*. Brought from Asia in 1745 as an ornamental. Deciduous tree with alternate, doubly compound leaves and showy, fragrant pink blossoms. Leguminous seedpods persist during winter. Leaves resemble those of honeylocust.
11. **Tropical Soda Apple:** *Solanum viarum*. Upright shrub with leaves like oak leaves with thorns, clusters of tiny white flowers. Green-to-yellow golf-ball sized fruit having white and green stripes. From South America.
12. **Giant Asian Dodder:** *Cuscuta japonica*. First detected in Houston in 2001. A yellow green vine about the diameter of a pencil that attaches itself to a variety of host plants. Vines of native dodder are smaller in diameter.

For detailed descriptions and more photos, see James H. Miller's publication "Identification of Invasive Plants in Southern Forests."

This plant list is only a recommendation and has no legal effect in the state of Texas.

The Texas Department of Agriculture has sole authority to label terrestrial plants as noxious or invasive.