Ground Covers

DO NOT PLANT!        INVASIVE!

California English Ivy

Algerian ivy

Irish ivy (Hedera helix; Holmskioldia sanguinea; Holmskioldia azurea)

Many of the characteristics that make a plant a good ground cover are present in one or all of these invasive plants. It is difficult to eradicate ground cover species because they grow rapidly and are usually not feasible for control by herbicides.

There are several members of the grape family that creates big groundcover very plant to remove invasive relatives. Some of the many groundcover species commonly confused with ornamental grasses include:

1. Pampas Grass (Mexican Feather grass)
2. Common Reed (Cattail)
3. Onion Grass (Habanera)
4. Reed Canary Grass (Bowles)

Be sure when choosing a ground cover plant that it will not become invasive. The following characteristics are present in some invasive species:

- Many leaves or stems per plant
- Thick and succulent leaves
- Rapid spreading and flowering
- Invades natural areas

Pachysandra (Japanese spurge; Creeping spurge; Creeping burnet)

Japanese spurge has a slightly glossy, gray-green, mat-like growth form. New growth is white, and appears in spring. It is considered invasive in Hawai’i and has spread in some places. It is recommended as a ground cover species because it is non-invasive and easy to maintain.

Star jasmine (Garden jasmine; Jasmine; Chinese jasmine; Garden jasmine; Chinese jasmine)

Jasminum nudiflorum

Star jasmine has beautiful white flowers in early spring. It is a fast-growing vine and can overgrow other plants in this situation. It is considered invasive in Hawai’i and has spread in some places. It is not a good choice for ground cover because it is non-invasive and difficult to control.

California wild lilac (Helianthemum californicum)

California wild lilac has small purple flowers and very similar function to ornamental grasses. It can cause erosion and flooding, and is difficult to control. It is considered invasive in Hawai’i and has spread in some places. It is not a good choice for ground cover because it is non-invasive and difficult to control.

Ornamental Grasses

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Fountaingrass (Pennisetum setaceum)

Invasive types are difficult to control and may cause damage to native plants and trees. It is recommended not to plant invasive grasses, as they can spread rapidly and cause harm to other plants.

Bamboo (clumping species) (Bamboo)

Bamboo is a clumping species and should not be planted as a ground cover. It can cause erosion and flooding, and is difficult to control. It is considered invasive in Hawai’i and has spread in some places. It is not a good choice for ground cover because it is non-invasive and difficult to control.

Lavender (lavender)

Lavender is a clumping species and should not be planted as a ground cover. It can cause erosion and flooding, and is difficult to control. It is considered invasive in Hawai’i and has spread in some places. It is not a good choice for ground cover because it is non-invasive and difficult to control.

Lindheimer’s mullbush (Lindheimer’s mullbush)

Lindheimer’s mullbush is a clumping species and should not be planted as a ground cover. It can cause erosion and flooding, and is difficult to control. It is considered invasive in Hawai’i and has spread in some places. It is not a good choice for ground cover because it is non-invasive and difficult to control.
**Shrubs**

**DO NOT PLANT!  INVASIVE!**

Bromus (French; Portuguese; Spanish; Spanish)
- Crabgrass spp.
-setImage

Scarlet wisteria
- (Wisteria sinensis)
-setImage

**CONSIDER PLANTING THESE INSTEAD**

Bush poppy
- (Hesperocallis undulata D. P.

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Golden currant
- (Ribes aureum)

-setImage

Jerusalem sage
- (Phlomis fruticosa)

-setImage

Cleveland sage
- (Salvia clevelandii)

-setImage

**Trees**

**DO NOT PLANT!  INVASIVE!**

Eucalyptus (Blue gum; Red gum)
- (Eucalyptus globulus; E. citriodora; E. sideroxylon)

Chinese tallowtree
- (Fremontodendron californicum)

Saltodar (Salix spp.)

**CONSIDER PLANTING THESE INSTEAD**

Marina strawberry tree
- (Arbutus unedo)

Tupelo
- (Nyssa sylvatica)

Crane myrtle
- (Lagerstroemia indica)

Fern pine
- (Podocarpus gracilior)

Valley oak
- (Quercus lobata)

Eastern; Western redbud
- (Cercis canadensis; C. occidentalis)

**CAUTION!  POTENTIAL PESTS!**

The plants in this section have been observed escaping into California wildlife, but in certain climates where they thrive, they are viewed as noxious. You may want to consider removing them if they are already growing on your property or as substitutes. They are subject to being a non-native or open space species.

Rambutan tree
- (Nephelium lappaceum; Ficus microcarpa; F. altissima)

Catalpa
- (Catalpa bignonioides; C. speciosa; C. aurea)

Common olive
- (Olea europaea)

Edible fig
- (Ficus carica)

**Low Water Use and Xeriscaping**

California has a limited supply of fresh water, and gardeners can do their part to conserve this precious resource, as well as to reduce flood, by planting drought-tolerant plants that use water. Instead of using water-intensive plants, you can also reduce the need for fertilizers, insecticides, and pesticides. This can be achieved through proper irrigation, soil management, and the use of native plants.

Lawn is the water user most often established.