

UC WEED SCIENCE

Weed control, management, ecology, and minutia

UC Master Gardeners Help Defend California Gardens From Invasive Species, One Nursery Center At A Time.



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Working in concert with the California Nursery industry and PlantRight, the UCCE Master Gardeners participated in an on the ground nursery survey to track the retail market for "garden related" invasive plants in California.

This is the 2nd year in which more than 140 Master Gardener (MG) volunteers conducted the survey of over 200 randomly selected retail nurseries. The survey asks the MGs to go through assigned nurseries to evaluate the presence or absence of any of the PlantRight targeted 19 invasive species. By understanding which invasive species were still being sold through the retail markets, PlantRight can develop better strategies to target their outreach and educational efforts directed at the nursery industry and make planting recommendations for alternatives to those plants considered invasive.

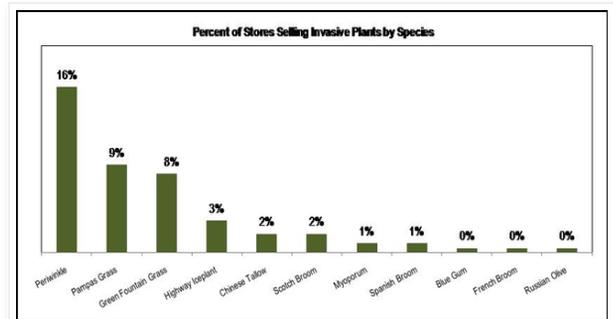
The results were interesting in that the data showed that there were really only a very few nurseries selling invasive species and of those, most were located in the South Coast region. About 70% of the surveyed nurseries were not selling any of the invasive on PlantRights list. Of those that did sell them, 66% only sold one species and that typically was Periwinkle first, followed by Pampas grass and green fountain grass. Another surprising finding was that the nurseries that did sell invasive species were generally either small, independent retailers or large retailers, but not big Box Store Retailers. This is surprising in that one tends to think of larger corporate entities to not pay as much attention to local issues.



Results by Plant Species

Eleven of the 19 listed invasive plants were found for sale in California. Eight of the listed plants were not found at any surveyed stores, including: arundo, bridal veil broom, capeweed, crystalline iceplant, jubata grass, Portugese/ striated broom, saltcedar, and scarlet wisteria.

In addition to helping PlantRight better target their outreach efforts, the Spring Nursery Survey also had the added benefit of providing continuing education to the Master Gardeners. All Master Gardeners recieved training from Joe DiTomaso on recognizing key invasive species, the importance of invasives in California both economically and environmentally and how to become more involved in prevention. These Master Gardener volunteers are now well acquainted with the important invasive species in California and can help further the mission of reducing the spread of these "ornamental invasives" into other California gardens and wild landscapes.



Special thanks to Greg Richardson of PlantRight for photos and graphics. <http://www.plantright.org/>

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Comments:

by Wendy West

on December 14, 2011 at 9:48 AM

great work MGs! Really important program to help educate Californias to protect the lands we love from invasion!

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