

Massachusetts Invasive Trees

What are invasive plants?

Invasive plants are non-native species (native to New England). Most introduced plants do not threaten our native plants but some non-native plants spread rapidly in our natural areas, thrive in a variety of habitat types, and are difficult to remove or control. These Invasive or Likely Invasive species pose the greatest threat to the native biodiversity of Massachusetts and, if unchecked can cause economic or environmental harm such as:

- Displace native species
- Reduce plant diversity
- Alter ecosystem processes
- Hybridize with native plants, changing their genetic makeup
- Destroy the habitats that support native animals, insects, and micro-organisms
- Create ecosystems that support aggressive, non-native plants pathogens

The Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group (MIPAG) has identified 66 "invasive" plant species of which 5 are shade trees. These 5 problem (invasive or likely invasive) trees as of 2008 are listed below:

Norway Maple *Acer platanoides* L. (status: Invasive)

Sycamore Maple; or Planetree Maple *Acer pseudoplatanus* L. (status: Invasive)

Tree-of-heaven *Ailanthus altissima* (status: Invasive)

Amur Cork-tree *Phellodendron amurense* Rupr. (status: Likely Invasive)

Black Locust *Robinia pseudoacacia* L. (status: Invasive)

For More information we would suggest the following:

- "A Guide to Invasive Plants in Massachusetts" published by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. (address all 66 invasive plants)
- The Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group web-site <http://www.massnrc.org/mipag/>
- For purpose of Tree identification "Manual of Woody Landscape Plants", by Michael A. Dirr