



# Go Beyond Beauty



NORTHWEST MICHIGAN  
INVASIVE SPECIES NETWORK  
*Protecting, enhancing, and promoting Northwest Michigan's natural communities through terrestrial invasive plant management and outreach.*

## Program Overview and Details

As coordinated by the Northwest Michigan Invasive Species Network (ISN), the Go Beyond Beauty program exists to provide positive recognition of Garden Professionals who exemplify business practices that benefit and protect our region's natural areas. The program offers support to Garden Professionals and concerned citizen groups in removing high-priority invasive plants from trade in a business-positive manner, provides science-based information to staff, and helps businesses gain new customers through free publicity and outreach. Participants will also receive additional recognition for further steps they may choose to take, such as selling native plants, participating in Buy Back and Trade Up programs, or organizing community workshops.

### Eligible Participants

Retail and wholesale nurseries, landscapers, garden clubs, lake and neighborhood associations, municipalities, and concerned individuals who buy, sell, distribute or install any kind of landscaping or gardens are invited to participate in this voluntary program. From herein, these business, groups, and individuals shall be referred to as “participants”.

### Program Engagement Criteria

To qualify for recognition, eligible participants need only meet the requirements listed below under Invasive Plant Standard. Participants are also encouraged to meet the following criteria in addition, and will be recognized for doing so.

### Invasive Plant Standard (Required)

To be eligible, potential participants must meet this program requirement. Participant pledge not to buy, sell, distribute, or install invasive plants listed under the *Top 20* and *Early Detection* categories in the document “*Invasive Ornamental Plants*”, available online at [www.HabitatMatters.org](http://www.HabitatMatters.org).

**Note:** Water lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*) and water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) may still be sold and used. However, “Buyer Beware” signs must be displayed immediately adjacent to both plants. These signs ask customers to ensure containment and die-off of both species each season within the artificial pond environment, and to explore alternative options for the future. A PDF version of the sign is provided free of cost to participants who wish to sell these plants. A sturdier sign printed on aluminum is available at low cost through ISN.

### Invasive Plant Staff Training (Highly Recommended for Garden Professionals)

It is highly recommended that all managing, supervising, and buying staff receive training on how to help customers find alternatives to invasive species. By removing high-threat invasive species from stock, GBB participants make this step easy. Lead staff can take on this education themselves or half and full-day trainings are available from ISN for an annual fee. Please contact ISN for more information.

## **Native Plant Standard (Highly Recommended for Garden Professionals)**

To meet this standard, participants should provide their customers/clients with a variety of native plants<sup>1</sup> to meet most landscaping needs. At least twenty species can be provided from the following categories - trees/shrubs, vines, groundcover, grasses, and/or wildflowers.

Visitors to nurseries and garden centers can learn through beautiful signage detailing the critical importance of native plants to our region. Signs will help customers distinguish native plants from non-natives without nursery assistance, show off key landscaping features of native plants, and communicate what butterflies, pollinators, or birds any given plant supports. PDF versions of the signs are available for free, and low-cost aluminum signs are available through ISN.

## **Buy Back Program (Optional, when available)**

The optional Buy Back program has been developed for nurseries and landscapers who may have stock from the *Top 20* and *Early Detection Rapid Response* lists, but want to participate in GBB. The program is designed to provide partial reimbursement to participants for removing top-priority invasive species from shelves. Reimbursements require an invoice for the stock and will be limited to priority species. Nurseries and landscapers will be reviewed on an individual basis and accepted plants may vary depending on quantity and original costs. Below is a list of plants that will be considered. (\* indicates a “Top 20” species).

amur cork-tree	dame's rocket*	non-native honeysuckles*
autumn/Russian olive*	dotted duck-weed	oriental bittersweet*
baby's breath*	European water clover	pale swallow-wort
black alder	Japanese barberry*	reed manna grass
black swallow-wort	Japanese hops	ribbon (reed canary) grass
blue lyme grass*	kudzu	sacred lotus
coltsfoot	lesser naiad	water hyacinth
common/glossy buckthorn*	moneywort	water lettuce
cotton thistle	multiflora rose*	

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<sup>1</sup> In brief “native” means plants from our bioregion. This includes plants found in Michigan that were not introduced to the area by humans (check <http://plants.usda.gov/> or [Michiganflora.net](http://Michiganflora.net)), but does not include cultivars of native plants. Landscapes that incorporate greater species diversity and a greater percentage of native plants, especially when used in concert with low-impact development methods, play a critical role in regional efforts to meet the challenges of habitat loss, invasive species, and climate change. Nurseries are encouraged, though not required, to obtain stock grown from seed or cuttings collected near the Grand Traverse region.

## **Trade-up Program (Optional, when available)**

The optional Trade-up program is designed to drive business to GBB Participating Nurseries and Landscapers. Landowners who own species on the *Top 20* and *Early Detection Rapid Response* lists may bring their plants to the ISN office, and in exchange, will receive a coupon for a discounted price on an alternative, non-invasive plant. The coupon value for plants “traded up” will be determined by ISN staff and can be validated at any participating Go Beyond Beauty location. Designated “Dumpster Days” will be scheduled in advance for landowners to dispose of plants. Under no circumstances will plants banned in the State of Michigan be accepted. Additional assistance will be necessary to remove such plants (i.e. Japanese knotweed).

This program brings new customers to participating business, opens up a discussion of alternatives to invasive ornamental plants, and prevents new infestations. Please refer to the above “Buy Back Program” section for a complete list of accepted plants.

## **Community Workshops (Optional for garden professionals and other organizations)**

Resources, including educational information, power point presentations, and ISN staff time may be provided free of cost to GBB Participants who wish to host a community workshop at their place of business. Topics range from the harm invasive ornamental plants cause to natural areas, using native alternatives in gardens, attracting pollinators, and building a rain garden. Community workshops are a great way to invite the public into your business and gain customers.

## **MAEAP Environmental Risk Assessment (Optional)**

Nurseries can participant in an environmental risk assessment through the Michigan Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP), an assessment of value to any nursery that uses either fertilizers or pesticides during the course of business. This benefit is available to any nursery at no cost regardless of program participation – call Lauren Silver, MAEAP Technician, at (231) 941-0960 x22 to learn more about this program.

## **Program Enforcement**

Recognition will operate on the honor system. Standards were kept simple so that informed members of the public could readily perceive participant adherence to the recognition agreement. Should any participant be reported for deviating from the agreed standards, every effort will be made to resolve the issue privately. Should any participant be found in violation, ISN reserves the right to dismiss the participant from the program and/or deny future participation.



**NORTHWEST MICHIGAN  
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**Major Partners:**



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