

## For More Information About This Problem Plant and Removal Programs Please Contact:

Arlington County Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Resources – Park and Natural Resources Division and Virginia Cooperative Extension

Invasive Species Program 703 228 7636  
[http://www.co.arlington.va.us/prcr/scripts/parks/invasive\\_plants.htm](http://www.co.arlington.va.us/prcr/scripts/parks/invasive_plants.htm)

## Visit these websites for current information on English Ivy and other natural invaders.

Virginia Native Plant Society  
<http://www.vnps.org>

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation  
<http://www.dcr.state.va.us/dnh/invinfo.htm>

Plant Conservation Alliance – Alien Plant Working Group  
<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien>

The Nature Conservancy Wildland Invasive Species Team  
<http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/>

Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds  
<http://ficmnew.fws.gov/>

National Invasive Species Council  
<http://www.invasivespecies.gov>



Please call Virginia Cooperative Extension for a companion brochure, *Invaders in Our Backyards*, about other invasive plants in Arlington •703-228-6414.

This brochure was prepared in collaboration with Virginia Cooperative Extension - Arlington County, Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Resources - Natural Resources Division - Arlington County and the Virginia Native Plant Society.

Permission for the use and reprinting of this material by Arlington County has been given from the Ivy Removal Project, headquartered in Forest Park, Portland, Oregon, AKA, The No Ivy League, and its publication partner, the City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services.

Arlington  
County,  
Virginia  
Department  
of Parks,  
Recreation  
and  
Community  
Resources

## Controlling English Ivy

**Help Protect  
Arlington From  
Invasive Vines**

**For information call  
(703) 228-7636**

## English Ivy is destructive!

- ▶ **English ivy is everywhere.** It has an attractive, 3-pointed, dark green, glossy leaf. We plant it in our yards and landscapes as a tough, perky green groundcover. It soon climbs trees then makes itself a home in our parks and streamsides and other natural areas.
- ▶ English ivy may look harmless, but it is very aggressive when left untended!
- ▶ English ivy is an invader of our parks and landscapes that does an extensive amount of damage.
- ▶ English ivy will grow up trees on vines that can exceed 6" in diameter.
- ▶ English ivy is sold to unsuspecting homeowners as a carefree and "fast grower"!

## Why the concern about English Ivy?

English ivy is sneaky! It disguises itself as a nice green plant. "It's green, it must be good," we say! However, when left unmanaged, it overwhelms landscapes and natural areas, smothering and choking other plants as it grows!

- ▶ English ivy grows up trees and may eventually kill them.
- ▶ Unmanaged, it replaces biodiversity and turns natural areas into "ivy wastelands."
- ▶ It makes cozy homes for rats, slugs, mosquitoes and other problem wildlife.

- ▶ Its shallow, matted root system increases the likelihood of erosion and slope failure.
- ▶ It weakens trees by keeping the bark damp and wet, and blocking sunlight.
- ▶ Simply put, English Ivy is a major problem in our parks and home landscapes. It spreads fast from its roots, vines and seeds. It will quickly displace wildflowers, shrubs and eventually trees.

## But it is so pretty!

English ivy has been used for years as an attractive groundcover in the landscape. It has two basic profiles.

- ▶ The immature or "juvenile" form is the familiar vine with pointy green leaves that climbs fences, walls or trees. It may remain in this form for years, or forever, if you manage it.
- ▶ The mature form develops after it reaches a certain height and age. The leaves become rounder and tiny greenish-white flowers bloom. Soon, black-ish purple berries follow the flowers that are spread innocently by birds and other wildlife.

## What can you do about this growing problem?

### Don't plant it!

- ▶ **Keep it down!** Save your trees and prevent spread of ivy by seed. Remove ivy from trees by cutting all vines at ground level. Cut the vines again several feet up the trunk. Peel the cut section of ivy off, but be careful not to strip the bark of the tree. The portion left growing on

the tree will eventually die. Pull ground ivy back a few feet from the base of the tree to slow regrowth up the tree trunk.

- ▶ **Use a mower or weed wacker** once per year to trim the portion left on the ground. Bag and dispose in the regular trash.
- ▶ **Be a good neighbor!** Do not allow English ivy and other non-native groundcovers to spill from your yard into parks or other natural areas. If you have ivy begin by removing it from your property borders and keeping it contained. Remove by hand pulling, cutting and mulching over top, and/or applying a systemic herbicide like triclopyr to leaves or freshly cut large stems. Expect all control techniques to require small amounts of monitoring and retreatment for complete elimination.
- ▶ **Plant native vines** such as Trumpet Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*), Trumpet vine (*Campsis radicans*) or Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) in lieu of planting English Ivy.
- ▶ **Visit the Quarry Garden at Bon Air Park** for other groundcover options to use in place of English ivy.
- ▶ **Help remove it** from our parks and greenspaces by volunteering with organized removal programs. Call (703) 228-7636 for more information.
- ▶ **Educate a friend!**