

The Maryland Plant Big Year: A Year-Long Search for Maryland's Wild Plants

By JIM BRIGHTON

IN THE LATE SUMMER OF 2025, I began toying with the idea of attempting a Maryland Plant Big Year. A true Big Year is not something to take lightly. I had already competed in a Maryland Birding Big Year back in the early 2010s, and when it was over, I swore I would never do another.

That promise didn't last.

Now, eight months into my Maryland Plant Big Year, I've documented around 1,100 species. The year has taken me to remarkable places and I've observed a vast array of plants, many of which I had never seen before, but the favorite part of my big year has been spending time in the

field with other amazing naturalists. If you'd like to follow along as the adventure continues, subscribe to my Substack at jimbrighton.substack.com

Jim Brighton is co-founder and President of the Maryland Biodiversity Project. He lives with his family on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Jim will be giving
a full presentation
on his adventure for MNPS
on May 25, 2027.

Photos by Jim Brighton.



Nodding Wild Onion (*Allium cernuum*)



Shrubby St. Johnswort (*Hypericum prolificum*)



Vasevine (*Clematis viorna*)

Seven Invasive Plants Added to Prohibited List

By KRISTIN HOFFMAN

In July 2026, these seven invasive plants were added to Maryland's Prohibited Invasive Plant List which prohibits the sale of certain damaging plants:

Chocolate Vine (*Akebia quinata*)

Leatherleaf Mahonia (*Berberis bealei*)

Chinese Fountaingrass (*Cenchrus alopecuroides*)

English Ivy (*Hedera helix*)

Atlantic Ivy (*Hedera hibernica*)

Orange Daylily (*Hemerocallis fulva*)

Chinese Silvergrass (*Miscanthus sinensis*)

For a complete list of plants on Maryland's Prohibited List go to mda.maryland.gov/plants-pests/Pages/maryland_invasive_plant_law_and_regulations.aspx

How do invasive plants get prohibited from sale?

Plants go through a lengthy assessment process, including research on the plants' characteristics, their behavior and effects on our ecosystems, and their distribution. These assessments are then reviewed by the Invasive Plant Advisory Committee (IPAC), and if appropriate, the species are recommended for inclusion on the Prohibited List. Newly prohibited plants enter a phase-out period during which nurseries can sell off existing stock but cannot grow or acquire any new stock.

What individuals can do.

If you see these plants for sale, consider talking to the seller about Maryland's Prohibited Invasive Plant List. If you have one of these plants in your landscape, please consider removing it and bagging it up for the landfill. Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas has information on effective removal methods and also provides suggestions for replacements. In addition, we encourage you to talk to your neighbors about invasives, and record your plant observations on iNaturalist.

REFERENCES

Maryland Department of Agriculture's Prohibited Invasive Plant List

mda.maryland.gov/plants-pests/Pages/maryland_invasive_plant_law_and_regulations.aspx

Swearingen, J.M. & J.P. Fulton. 2022. *Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas, Field Guide*. Passiflora Press. 200 pp.