

## **Invasive alien plant species (invasive neophytes) in Switzerland: report and need for action**

**Summary** of “Invasive Neophyten in der Schweiz: Lagebericht und Handlungsbedarf”, Gigon A. & Weber E., 2005. Report for the BUWAL, Bern, ~ 40 pp.

An overview is given regarding naturalised alien species of the Swiss flora especially the invasive alien species.

1. According to the Red Lists (Moser et al. 2002, but without species of category C), the Swiss flora presently encompasses a total of 2943 species of which 350 (12%) are alien species, i.e. species naturalised in Switzerland after the year 1500 due to human activity and reproducing themselves (these species are called neophytes in German and other languages). About 10% of these i.e. the invasive alien species (IAS), can cause problems. This has not been the case (up to now) for the other 90%.
2. In this report, alien plant species are understood as *invasive* (in German: invasive Neophyten) if they disperse easily, propagate efficiently and cause damage in the areas of biodiversity, health, and/or economy or have the potential to do so. They are classified in the Black List or the Watch List. Both lists have to be revised every 5-10 years.
3. The Black List (BkL): Register of alien invasive plant species of Switzerland that actually cause damage. In general, these species have to be controlled. The following 20 species are currently on the Black List of Switzerland: *Ailanthus altissima*, *Ambrosia artemisiifolia*, *Artemisia verlotiorum*, *Buddleja davidii*, *Elodea nuttallii*, *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, *Impatiens glandulifera*, *Lonicera japonica*, *Ludwigia grandiflora*, *Lysichiton americanus*, *Polygonum polystachyum*, *Prunus serotina*, *Reynoutria japonica* (= *Polygonum cuspidatum* = *Fallopia japonica*), *R. sachalinensis*, *Rhus typhina*, *Robinia pseudoacacia*, *Rubus armeniacus*, *Senecio inaequidens*, *Solidago canadensis* s.l. (incl. *S. altissima*), *S. gigantea* (= *S. serotina*).
4. The Watch List (WL): Register of alien invasive plant species of Switzerland, which have the potential to cause damage or already cause damage in neighbouring countries and/or are on an official Black List or similar list in these countries. The spreading and the effects of these species should be regularly documented. If necessary, control measures should be taken. The following 20 species are currently on the Watch List of Switzerland: *Amorpha fruticosa*, *Bunias orientalis*, *Cornus sericea* (*C. stolonifera*), *Cyperus esculentus*, *Elodea canadensis*, *Helianthus tuberosus*, *Lonicera henryi*, *Lupinus polyphyllus*, *Mahonia aquifolium*, *Prunus laurocerasus*, *Pueraria lobata*, *Sedum spurium*, *Senecio rupestris* and *Trachycarpus fortunei*.
5. For all 20 species of the BkL and some of the WL there are two-page information leaflets (in German) for the public; most of them can also be obtained in French and Italian (see Chapter 4. Appendix 2 and [www.cps-skew.ch](http://www.cps-skew.ch), [www.cjb.unige.ch](http://www.cjb.unige.ch), [www.naturschutz.zh.ch](http://www.naturschutz.zh.ch)).
6. Appendix 1 contains a key to determine in which list, BkL or WL, an alien invasive species has to be classified.

7. The evaluation of the alien species must be performed carefully. Across the board statements against these species are out of place.
8. In Switzerland, alien invasive species cause local damage amounting to hundreds of thousands of francs. Trading and distribution of these plants should therefore be prevented and, after a cost benefit analysis, a professional, focused and efficient control should be started at once, especially for species of the BkL. This is a requirement of the Convention on Biological Diversity of Rio that was also ratified by Switzerland.
9. Recommendations for the prevention and combating of invasive alien plant species are given.
10. The responsibilities of the various institutions in dealing with alien species and recommendations for taking action also at the legal and public level have been tabulated.
11. Appendices 3 and 4 contain addresses of institutions and persons currently involved with alien plant species in Switzerland.

\* Report established by Gigon A. & Weber E. (Geobot. Institut, ETH-Zentrum Zürich) in collaboration with the working group "Invasive Neophytes" of the Swiss Commission for Wild Plant Conservation CPS/SKEW and the Swiss Floristic Network CRSF/ZDSF.

-> [www.cps-skew.ch/english/info\\_invasive\\_plants.htm](http://www.cps-skew.ch/english/info_invasive_plants.htm)