


Garden Waste – What do we take?			
Yes please		No thanks	
✓	Flowers, plants and garden weeds	✗	Plastic, compostable & biodegradable bags/packaging
✓	Grass cuttings, leaves and hedge trimmings	✗	Bio-degradable/compostable coffee pods
✓	Small branches (less than 15 cm or 6 inches in width)	✗	Bio-degradable/compostable cups
✓	Straw or sawdust (if bedding material then only from vegetarian pets such as rabbits)	✗	Paper/plastic/cardboard
✓	Virgin wood chip	✗	Flowerpots/ plastic trays
✓	Wastes from fruit, vegetables, cereals, preparation and processing	✗	Kitchen food waste
		✗	Cat litter
		✗	Dog or cat waste
		✗	Soil, stones and rubble
		✗	Vacuum cleaner waste
		✗	Material with ash dieback, treated with herbicides, injurious or invasive weeds
		✗	Invasive plants, such as Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed etc
		✗	No concrete
		✗	No metal
Birch Airfield Composting Services Ltd, Blind Lane, Birch, Colchester, Essex, CO5 9XE. Tel: 07747866923			

Compostable packaging

Compostable packaging should not be placed into your garden waste as it is not suitable for the open windrow composting process. Many forms of compostable packaging take longer than garden waste to break down. We would advise checking with the manufacturer if the packaging is suitable for home composting but please note that this could take some time, alternatively you can place such items into your general waste bin.

Noxious Weeds

Japanese Knotweed is a highly vigorous and hardy weed which can grow almost anywhere. It grows in clumps and can reach a height of 3 metres. Japanese Knotweed has a thick bamboo like stem which has a red and green pattern. Its leaves are light green, broad and triangular in shape. It can also have small white flowers.



Common Ragwort is highly poisonous to cattle and other animals, however not harmful to humans. This weed is a stout ragged plant which can grow to a height of 1 metre. It has long thin toothed leaves which are green on the top and have a whitish underside. It also has large clusters of yellow flowers measuring approximately 2cm across.



Curled Dock occurs most commonly in fields and particularly in drier soils. It is a very resilient plant, its seeds can survive up to 70 years underground before growing. This plant may grow to 1.2 metres in height and has leaves which grow in a long thin heart shape and can reach 30cm in length. The leaves sprout from its bottom section and on its upper part it has flowering stems which are reddish-brown in colour.



The Broad-Leaved Dock is very similar to the Curled Dock, only with wider leaves which can have wavy edges.



Spear Thistle is a native weed which can grow to between 1-2.5 metres tall. Its leaves are very long and spiny growing up to 25cm long. Its most striking feature is its spiky thistle flowers which are reddish pink in colour on the top and green on the bottom thorny section and around 2-4cm across.



Creeping Thistle is a smaller relative of the Spear Thistle which grows to between 1-1.5 metres tall. It has long thin barbed leaves and a thin stem. It will also grow a deep root system making it strong and perseverant. Its flowering thistle heads are pinky purple in colour and less spiky than the Spear Thistle.



Giant hogweed is a tall, cow parsley-like plant with thick bristly stems that are often purple-blotched and it's sap can cause severe skin burns. The flower heads can be as large as 60cm (2ft) across. Giant Hogweed can reach a height of 3.5m (11.5ft) or more and has a spread of about 1-2m (3.5-7ft).



Himalayan balsam is a tall growing annual, 2-3m (6-10ft) in height. Between June and October it produces clusters of purplish pink (or rarely white) helmet-shaped flowers.

The flowers are followed by seed pods that open explosively when ripe. Himalayan balsam grows rapidly and spreads quickly, smothering other vegetation as it goes.



Ash dieback

Ash dieback a highly infectious fungal disease (previously also referred to as 'Chalara') is threatening to wipe out our native ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), as well as most other non-native members of the ash family.

