

PLANTS maps: a new system

We are trying out a new mapping system for PLANTS, using dynamic, zoomable maps like many others on the web today. Rather than clicking on a state in a small-scale map to go to a separate map for that state showing counties, this new system allows the user to zoom in gradually, showing county-level distributions regionally to locally. This new mapping system will have more changes and improvements in the future.

Navigation:

Vertical and horizontal

You can move the map vertically or horizontally either by using the arrow keys on your keyboard or by using your mouse. With your mouse, center the arrow over the place of interest, hold down the left mouse button, and move your mouse.

Zooming in and out

Our new maps have nine scale levels, the default at the smallest scale, showing most of North America. County-level distributions are shown at the seven higher scale levels. There are three ways you can zoom in or out.

- Use the slider bar to the left side of the map. Click on a point on the slider bar to adjust the map to that approximate scale, or click and drag the slider on that bar to adjust scale.
- Double-click on the spot you are interested in to zoom in by one step (you would need to double-click eight times to zoom in all the way).
- Zoom in by centering the mouse arrow on the point of interest and use the scroll wheel on the mouse (if your mouse has that function).

Map colors and nativity:

We no longer show separate nativity status maps. Instead, nativity status and distribution are presented in one map. Native plants are mapped in green, non-native (introduced) in blue, and plants that are both native and non-native in orange. If no county-level data is present (U.S. states and possessions only) then at the seven higher scale levels those regions will fill in a paler shade of the same nativity color.

The nativity status color scheme is shown in the legend below the map, and a summary of nativity within Native Status Jurisdictions is given in filled or unfilled circles below the map legend. This nativity summary using circles is most handy for jurisdictions not easily visible in the smallest map scales (e.g. Hawaii, Puerto Rico).

Known issues:

Our new maps frequently do not work on computers used by the U.S. Forest Service, with the map pane blank except for the slider bar and logos (NRCS/PLANTS and ESRI). We are investigating this issue but we encourage USFS staff to discuss this with their computer-support staff as well.