

MILE-A-MINUTE WEED

Polygonum perfoliatum



Description: Mile-a-Minute weed is an annual herbaceous vine that climbs to 15 feet tall. It has a stem with hooked barbs and circular, cup-shaped, leafy structures around the stem at nodes. Leaves are alternate and shaped like an equilateral triangle with barbs on undersides, with leaf bases arrow to heart-shaped. Flowers are small, white and inconspicuous. The fruit is a fleshy, blue, pea-sized berry.



Native range: India to Eastern Asia, China and the Islands from Japan to the Phillipines, including Nepal, Burma, Manchuria, Korea, Taiwan and the Malay Peninsula (<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/pope1.htm>).



Ecological threat: This plant grows rapidly over shrubs and other vegetation blocking them from available light and reducing their ability to photosynthesize. This lack of photosynthetic ability weakens the plant and can kill it. It has been known to have a negative effect on Christmas tree farms, forestry operations on pine plantations and reforestation of natural areas because it can easily smother tree seedlings.

Current North American Range: Refer to USDA and more detailed distribution in the Midwest.

Current Midwest general distribution, including southern Ontario Not Known Isolated Locally Abundant Widespread

Early Detection and Rapid Response Can Help Stop the Spread!

MILE-A-MINUTE WEED, *Polygonum perfoliatum*

Management options: (http://na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/pest_al/mm/pa_mam.pdf)

Mechanical Methods

Handpulling, weeding and cultivation are useful for small infestations. Hand pulling of seedlings should be done before the sharp recurved barbs harden. Plant removal can continue throughout the summer, but is more effective when done before seeds are produced. Repeated mowing and trimming will prevent flowering and reduce or eliminate seed production. However, seeds that remain in the ground may germinate for up to four years.

Cultural Methods

Maintain vegetation continuity and avoid creating gaps in existing vegetation. Maintain vegetative buffers along streams and forest edges to prevent establishment of and seed dispersal.

Herbicides

Glyphosate applied at a low rate will probably be effective in killing mile-a-minute weed. Prior approval and recommendations should be obtained from the department of agriculture in the state where the application will take place.

Biological Control

From 1997 to 2002, weed populations were surveyed in China and 111 insect species were collected and identified. Among the insect species, a weevil, *Rhinoncomimus latipes* Korotyaev (Coleoptera: Curculionidae) proved to be the most promising biological control agent. The larva of the weevil causes damage to mile-a-minute weed by boring into the plant's stem. In 2000-2004 *R. latipes* was shipped to a Delaware quarantine facility for host range testing. In 2004, *R. latipes* was reared at the University of Delaware and released in New Jersey and Delaware based on recommendations of Technical Advisory Group (TAG), which functions under APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine (APHIS-PPQ).

For more information on control and management of this species, please visit the following Web sites: www.usda.plants.gov, www.nps.gov/plants/alien/factmain.htm, tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/control.html, www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/plants/main.shtml, <http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/pope1.htm>

Early Detection and Rapid Response Can Help Stop the Spread!

