

Mile-A-Minute (*Persicaria perfoliata*)

Identification:

Mile-a-minute is an herbaceous annual vine with distinct equilateral leaves, flat leaves, that encircle the stems at the nodes, thorny stems, and dark blue berries. Mile-a-minute gets its name from its rapid growth, up to 6 inches a day. Mile-a-minute will quickly, and detrimentally, take over a habitat. The vine will block sunlight from native plants, eventually killing them. The sheer weight of growth can actually crush other competing plants.



Habitat and Spread:

Mile-a-minute prefers disturbed areas in full sunlight such as, roadsides and old fields. Mile-a-minute grows most rapidly on moist soils but tolerates extremely wet or dry soils. The plant uses its barbed stems to climb up other plants, tree trunks, or manmade objects to reach direct sunlight. It is self-fertile (i.e. does not require pollinators) and disperses by seed. It's seeds are dispersed by birds, mammals and even one species of ant. It's seeds can float and survive for 7-9 days in water, so can float downstream to invade other areas.

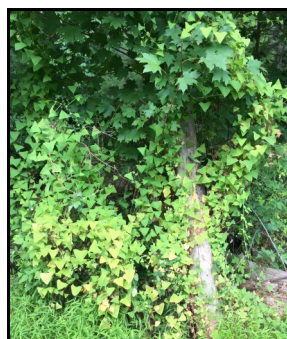


Management Techniques:

Plants can uprooted by hand-pulling to prevent re-growth. Fruits should be carefully collected and placed in a black plastic bag and allowed to decompose for several weeks or until they have decayed to the point that is no longer recognizable (i.e. liquefied). Foliar herbicide treatment is effective if vines are accessible. Mowing may be effective for low growing patches if repeated over multiple growing seasons. Biological control is available.

Native Range and Original Introduction:

Originally from India and Eastern Asia, mile-a-minute was introduced accidentally with nursery stock in York county, PA in 1930. Mile-a-Minute is now found in all the Mid-Atlantic states, southern New England, North Carolina and west to Ohio and even Oregon. It is estimated that mile-a-minute is found only in 20% of its potential U.S. range.



Left: Mile-a-minute infestation climbing up trees and over other plants. Eventually, mile-a-minute may grow densely and shade out other plants.

Right: A close up of the leaf node where fruit is produced on the stem of the mile-a-minute plant

