

Common Invasive Species of Catskill Riparian Areas

Thanks for joining a Catskill Streams Buffer Initiative (CSBI) Invasive Species Pull!

An invasive species is one that is not native to an area and outcompetes native species. Due to their ability to spread rapidly and populate disturbed areas, invasive species can be hard to fight, however, below are some options for management at home.

The overall goal of the CSBI is to inform and assist landowners in better stewardship of their riparian (streamside) area. The Ulster County Soil & Water Conservation District and its partners (NYC Department of Environmental Protection and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County) will assist private, riparian landowners throughout the Ashokan Watershed by providing Riparian Corridor Management Plans for individual properties, best management practice designs and/or prescriptive measures, buffer installations, and educational materials that help landowners understand the critical role of their buffer and how to maintain it in top condition.



Japanese Barberry¹ (*Berberis thunbergii*) -

How to ID - Japanese barberry grows in shrubs that can reach

2-3 feet tall. Leaves are long and oval shaped and grow in alternate clusters along the spiny stem. Leaves out early in the spring season and turns dark purple in the fall. Flowers are stalked small yellow umbel shaped blossoms that occur in clusters of 2-4 along the stem. Blooms from March to April. Berries are red and oval shaped, mature May - September, and remain on the stem through the winter months.

Management Options - Respond to small stands of barberry or early introductions of the plants by hand-pulling, making sure to pull out all of the root material. If stands are large mow and cut to limit its spread and work through pulling the roots of the existing plants. Mowing or cutting alone will not fully eradicate it. Dispose of all plant material in a safe controlled fire when material is dry or bury 3 feet underground.

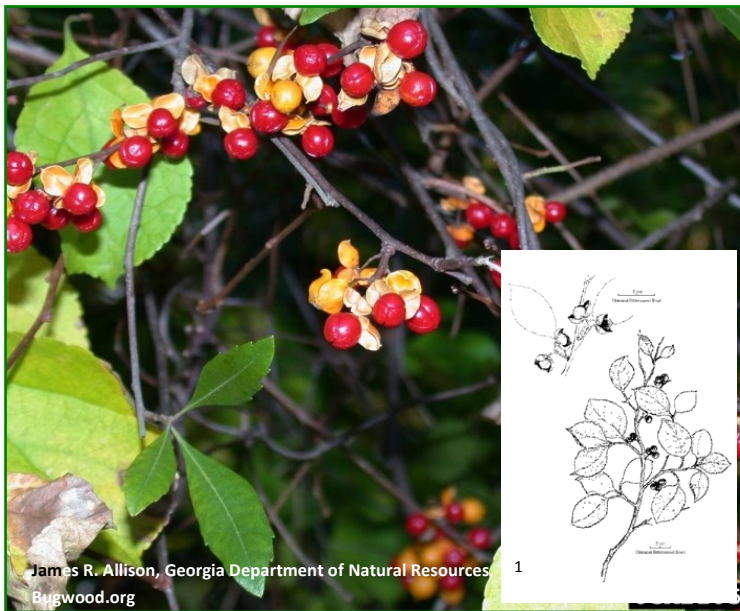


Multiflora Rose¹ (*Rosa multiflora*)-

How to ID - Multiflora rose shrubs are perennial and can grow up to 15 feet tall. Leaves are compound, there are multiple leaflets on a stalk, and alternate, stalks occur alternately on the stem. Leaflets are oval and toothed along the edges and occur in groups of 5 to 11 on the leaf. At the base of the leaf stalk there is a green leafy structure, called a stipule. Curved thorns occur in pairs along the stem. Flowers are white to pink and occur in clusters. Blooms from May - July. A medium sized plant can produce very big seed banks, 500,000 - 1 million seeds.

Management Options - Repeatedly cut and mow, 3 to 6 times, during the growing season. For smaller patches the roots can be dug up, however, due to the large seed banks the areas will have to be monitored until seed bank is exhausted. Proper disposal is important as the branch tips will root in soil. Dispose of all plant material in a safe controlled fire once the material is dry or bury 3 feet underground.

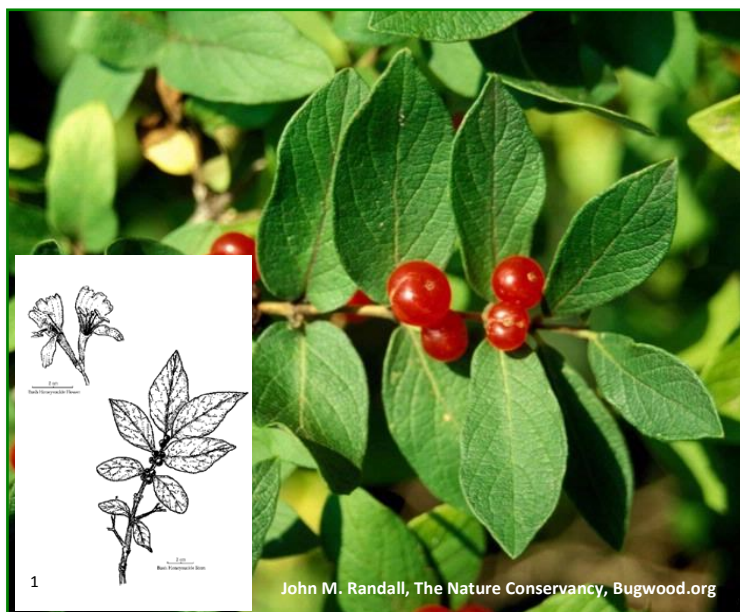
¹ From Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council "Invasive Plants"



Oriental Bittersweet ¹ (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) -

How to ID - Oriental bittersweet is a woody deciduous vine. Leaves are oval to oblong in shape and vary in size. Fruit are found in clusters along the stem, in axillary cymes, and are bright yellow and red. The flowers small and green and have white pollen. Blooms in May. The fast growing vines outcompete native species by constricting and damaging their stems. They can completely suffocate the tree it is climbing and eventually outcompete it for sunlight.

Management Options - Remove entire root and runners of the plant, being careful to also remove as much of the fruit material as possible. Bag all material to prevent reestablishment of the plants. If full removal is difficult, cut the climbing vine as close to the root system as possible. Cut frequently to ensure limit re-sprouting. Removal and control must continue until seed bank is exhausted due to large seed production. Dispose of all plant material in a safe controlled fire once the material is dry.



Honeysuckle ¹ (*Lonicera spp.*) many varieties -

How to ID - There are many varieties of the honeysuckle species but they share many similar features. Honeysuckle are deciduous, multi-stemmed shrubs that can grow 6-15 feet tall and 6-12 feet wide. Leaves are oval to oblong and occur in opposite pairs on the stems. Flowers are tubular, fragrant, less than 1 inch long, and can vary in color from white, pink, to red. Blooms from May to June. The Fruit are typically dark red and occur in opposite pairs at the base of the leaves.

Management Options - Hand-pulling can be an effective method of removal. All root material must be removed or plant will re-sprout. Upon disturbing the soil, revisit the site the following summer to remove all emerging plants. Pruning alone will allow for growth from sprouts and suckers extending from the stem and as such should be coupled with removal of the root. Dispose of all plant material in a safe controlled fire when material is dry or bury 3 feet underground.



Japanese Stiltgrass¹ (*Microstegium vimineum*) -

How to ID - Japanese stiltgrass is an annual colonial grass that grows rapidly and forms large stands in disturbed areas. It is highly shade tolerant. Large stands can form on forested floodplains. Leaves are alternate and lance shaped. Flowers are small, and form on the end of the stalk. Blooms from August to September. Seeds mature from September to October. The seeds are easily dispersed by animals and flowing water, especially when stands occur on floodplains.

Management Options - Stiltgrass is easily managed and removed by hand-pulling when stands are small. Pulling should occur before seeds mature to limit its spread. When stands are too big to pull by hand, the stands can be mowed. Mow close to the ground when plant is flowering and before seeding. Dispose of all plant material in a safe controlled fire when material is dry or bury 3 feet underground.