

## Wineberry (*Rubus phoenicolasius*)



Wineberry is a medium (3-6 ft.) perennial shrub with small, bright red raspberry-like fruit, small **spines**, and red vines. Native to East Asia, it grows in forest edges, fields, and disturbed areas, forming dense thickets that outcompete native plants. It also hosts viruses that can negatively impact native raspberries. It impedes training through its sharp spines, and can inhibit access to training areas and cause physical harm. It is treated with mechanical controls and targeted chemical herbicides.

**Look-A-Likes:** Wineberry resembles its close relevant *Rhus* brambles like raspberries and blackberry, but raspberry lacks the dense reddish hairs wineberry has and blackberry has thicker, ridged canes and larger fruit

## Porcelainberry (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*)



Porcelainberry is a long (up to over 30 ft.) deciduous vine with green/blue grape-like fruit, and heart-shaped leaves. Native to Asia, it is found near roadsides, disturbed areas, and forest edges, particularly in the central and southern regions of the base. It forms dense thickets that smothers native plants. These make access to trails difficult, impeding training and land management efforts. It is most effectively targeted with mechanical and chemical control methods.

**Look-A-Likes:** Porcelainberry can be confused with wild grape and Virginia creeper. Grapes have larger mono-colored (not multicolored) fruits. Creeper has five leaflet leaves versus porcelainberry's single lobed leaf.

**Prickles, Spines & Thorns:** Prickles project from skin tissues like rose or raspberry; spines from leaf and stipule tissue like cacti, barberry or water chestnut; and thorns from stem tissue like autumn olive or locust.

## FAQ - AN INVASIVE PLANT PRIMER

**Q: What are invasive species? A:** Invasive species are non-native species that harm environments and human activities. West Point has many invasive plant species.

**Q: How do invasives spread? A:** Invasives spread to new areas or within an area by wildlife, wind, and water but often by human activities like construction, agriculture, recreation.

**Q: How do invasives establish? A:** Invasive thrive in new areas due to high seed production, no predators/ competitors, fast growth, dense structures, and chemical use (allelopathy).

**Q: How do invasives harm ecosystems? A:** Invasive plants can alter and impair ecosystem composition, structure and function, reducing biodiversity and harming the other plants and animals that live in those invaded ecosystems.

**Q: How do invasives harm people? A:** Invasives harm utilities and infrastructure, human health (toxicity, puncture, tripping etc.) and training and recreation by limiting access.

## INVASIVE MANAGEMENT

**Q: What can be done? A:** Prevention, or keeping invasives from being spread to and in areas, is the best form of management. But if present, treatment may be possible via:

**Mechanical means:** Mechanical removal means the physical removal of plants. Methods include cutting, mowing, girdling, pulling, burning, matting, and drowning cut stems.

**Chemical means:** Herbicides or pesticides can be used to kill targeted plants. Chemicals are researched and deployed by professionals to target invasives in limited scope.

**Biological means:** The use of living organisms, usually from the invasive home range, to fight invasive plant growth. Host specificity is critical. Never release any animal or plants.

At West Point, allow Natural Resources or Roads & Grounds or pest management to handle invasive treatment in non-residential areas, both on and off Main Post.

## WHAT CAN I DO?

**Q: What can readers do? A:** While certain means of invasive species control is best left to land managers, prevention and response is a community effort. You can learn, teach and act.

1. **Learn** — Using this brochure and other resources, learn more about these and other invasive species, how to identify these plants, and how these plants are spread.
2. **Teach** — Share this and other information with others to help them identify and learn about these plants and what can be done to prevent their spread.
3. **Act** — Stop the Spread. Check clean clothing, pets, equipment and vehicles if in or near invasive stands. Stay on established roads, trails and avoid infested areas.

## INVASIVE VINES & BRAMBLES

## OF THE WEST POINT

## MILITARY RESERVATION



West Point Natural Resources Section (NRS)  
Building 667A Ruger Road  
USAG—West Point, NY 10996  
[www.westpoint.isportsman.net](http://www.westpoint.isportsman.net)

# INVASIVE VINES & BRAMBLES

Invasive species are non-native species that harm the environment and interfere with human activities. West Point has many invasive plants that can harm both our ecosystem and the military mission. Proper management of these plants is imperative and identification is a critical first step toward preventing new introductions and further spread of species already here. It is our goal in putting out this brochure - one in a four-brochure series on invasive plants - to help its readers, better understand common invasive species. This brochure contains a description of some of the invasive aquatic and wetland plants at West Point including pictures and a brief species summary including physical description, habitats, ecological and mission impacts, safety concerns, best management options and look-a-like species. We hope this brochure is useful but it is by no means comprehensive guide. For more information, see the NYSDEC website at <https://dec.ny.gov>.

**Hazards:** Some of these invasives and other plants have sharp spines, thorns, and prickles that may injure. In case of severe injury: **Keller Army Community Hospital 900 Washington Rd., West Point NY 10996.**

**Toxicity:** Some of these invasives and other plants are poisonous. Though most plants are not fatal, ingestion is still dangerous and unpleasant. If ingested, contact: **Poison Control Hotline, 800-222-1222**

**TOXIC    HAZARD    BOTH    NEITHER**

## Oriental Bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*)



Oriental bittersweet is a large (up to 60 ft. long) woody vine w/ green to red/orange berries, and glossy, round leaves. This Chinese native grows in dense thickets on roadsides, or up trees, fences, and utility poles. It is spread by wildlife which eat its fruit and excrete seeds at new sites. It can imperil trees and utility lines and be a hazard. It is also **toxic**, causing gastrointestinal distress, and can cause a contact dermatitis like poison ivy. It is controlled mechanically and chemically.

**Look-A-Likes:** American bittersweet is the species most often confused, but the native produces fruit only at tip clusters while invasive oriental bittersweet has fruit clusters all along the vine at leaf axils.

**Vines VS Brambles:** Vines are climbing or trailing plants that use tendrils, twining stems, or aerial roots to grow upward on supports. Brambles are thorny, arching shrubs that form dense, prickly thickets.

## Black Swallow-wort (*Vincetoxicum nigrum*)



Black swallow-wort is a smaller (up to 6 ft.) perennial vine with dark green, heart-shaped leaves, dark purple star-shaped flowers, and a green bean-like fruit. Native to Europe, it is most often found climbing on other plants in open, often in disturbed sites. It is **toxic** to people and animals, particularly to monarch butterflies (*Danaus Plexippus*) as it crowds milkweed that monarch caterpillars depend on. Swallow-wort is most effectively treated by a joint mechanical and chemical approach.

**Look-A-Likes:** Pale swallow-wort has lightened colored flowers and thinner leaves than BSW. Bindweeds have bright trumpet (not dark star) shaped flowers. Honeyvine milkweed produces pale (not dark) seed pods.

## Japanese Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*)



Japanese honeysuckle is a tall (up to 20 ft.) vine with yellow/white fragrant, tubular flowers and simple, ovate oppositely-arranged leaves. Native to East Asia, it can be found in disturbed areas, woodlands, and gardens. It grows aggressively and outcompetes native plants, forming dense thickets that block both sunlight and soil nutrients. These thickets can also impede movement and limit access to training areas. Mechanical means are most effective for control.

**Look-A-Likes:** Native trumpet and fly honeysuckle can resemble JHS but the former has red-orange (not yellow-white) flowers while the latter is a shrub whereas JHS is a twining woody vine.

## Chinese Wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*)



Chinese wisteria is a tall (to 100 ft.) deciduous climbing, woody vine with long, blue/violet flower clusters. This Chinese native overtakes trees, fences, and utility lines, choking out native species and weighing down structures. It impacts training by causing damage to trees, infrastructure, and utility lines, and, due to its dense growth, can limit access to training. It is **toxic**, causing mild gastrointestinal pain. Repeated, timed mechanical and chemical controls are effective.

**Look-A-Likes:** Native wisterias like American wisteria and Kentucky wisteria can resemble this invasive but Chinese wisteria has longer flower clusters that twist counterclockwise. The other species twist clockwise.

## Mile A Minute (*Perisicaria perfoliata*)



Mile-a-minute is a smaller (up to 6 ft.) fast-growing vine with triangular leaves and **barbed stems**. Native to eastern Asia, it covers areas like fields, disturbed sites, and forest edges, forming dense carpets. It smothers native plants and hinders wildlife movement. It impedes training through obstructing access and visibility, and can cause harm through its barbs. It can be managed mechanically and chemically, and has been managed biologically in the past, incl. at West Point (see below).

**Look-A-Likes:** Native tearthumbs can resemble MAM since both have triangular leaves and small barbs but tearthumbs have smaller, narrower, less aggressive leaves. MAM also has bright blue berries.

**Mile-a-minute beetles:** MAM weevil releases by Lake Frederick and Camp Shea have been effective in stunting MAM stand growth. West Point will work with APHIS to coordinate future releases to battle MAM.