Five-leaf Aralia (*Eleutherococcus sieboldianus*)  
Also called: *Acanthopanax sieboldianus* 'variegatus'  

**Family:** Aralia (Araliaceae)  
**Native range:** Eurasia  
**General:** Fast growing deciduous shrub 6 to 8 feet tall and 6 to 8 feet wide. Branches arcing with short spines at each leaf bud along the stems  
**Leaves:** Alternate, toothed, palmately compound leaves with 5 to 7 leaflets; 1 to 2.5 inches long, bright green. Variegated forms have leaves edged in white. Turning yellow in autumn.  
**Flowers:** Small, greenish white borne in clusters. Appearing May through June.  
**Fruit:** Small, black borne in clusters.  

**Look-alikes:** Goutweed also called Bishop's weed (*Aegopodium podagraria*) is a highly invasive, non-native groundcover or creeping plant with 9 leaflets on lower leaves. Upper leaves may be variable. Some varieties of this plant may have white edges. Goutweed is widely planted in landscaping. It is *highly threatening* to natural plant communities. All detected occurrences should be eradicated.  
**Habitat:** Forest, open forest, forest edge, hedgerow, garden. Highly tolerant of a wide range of conditions.  

**Threats to native habitats:** Five-leaf aralia can form thickets that displace native plants and prevent growth of native trees, shrubs, and herbs.  
**NJ Status:** Five-leaf aralia is uncommon. It is *highly threatening* to natural plant communities. All detected occurrences should be eradicated.  
**Commercial Availability:** Five-leaf aralia is widely planted for landscaping.

Sources: [http://en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org)  
[http://www.hort.uconn.edu/Plants/campus/vermont/5/21/21.html](http://www.hort.uconn.edu/Plants/campus/vermont/5/21/21.html)