

CENTRAL JERSEY INVASIVE SPECIES STRIKE TEAM

Invasive Plant Fact Sheet

English Ivy (*Hedera helix*)



Family name: Ginseng family (Araliaceae)

Native range: Eurasia

General: Perennial, climbing, evergreen vine or groundcover. Climbs using small, sticky rootlike structures.

Leaves: Alternate, dark green with white veins, waxy or leathery, usually 3 to 5 lobed. Mature, flowering plants may have unlobed rounded leaves. Many cultivars are available making leaf color variable. Leaves may be edged in white, reddish, or yellowish.

Flowers: small, pale yellow-green, borne on terminal clusters, appearing August through September. Vines may grow for up to ten years before producing flowers.

Fruit: Black to purple fruits with a thin fleshy outer covering and containing 1 to 3 hard seeds. Ripening October to November.

Look-alikes: Boston Ivy (*Parthenocissus tricuspidata*) is also non-native, highly invasive climbing vine or groundcover. Its leaves are bright green and shiny.

Habitat: Forest, forest edge, field, hedgerow, coastal area, salt marsh edge, yard, garden. Prefers drier sites.

Threats to native habitats: English ivy is a fast growing vine that can smother shrubs and trees, completely shading them from the sun. The weight of the vine makes trees susceptible to blow-down. In the absence of vegetation or other structures to climb, English ivy will create dense mats that prevent the growth of other plant life. English ivy also serves as a reservoir for Bacterial Leaf Scorch (*Xylella fastidiosa*), a plant pathogen that is harmful to elms, oaks, maples and other native plants.

NJ Status: English ivy is uncommon in natural settings. This plant is *potentially threatening* to natural plant communities. All newly detected occurrences should be eradicated. This species is considered highly invasive in warmer climates.



Commercial Availability:

English ivy is widely planted in landscaping and gardens.



Sources: Forestry Images: Forest Health, Natural Resources & Silviculture
Images: <http://www.forestryimages.org/>
<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/>
Rhoads, A.F. and T. Block. 2007. Plants of Pennsylvania. 2nd ed. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA. p. 856.



Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team (CJISST) is a regional cooperative effort to detect, map, and manage emerging populations of invasive species. This initiative is a partnership of state, county, and municipal agencies, conservation groups, and private citizens. To learn more, please contact us: **Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space**, (609) 730-1560, www.fohvos.org or **Upper Raritan Watershed Association**, (908) 234-1852, www.urwa.org.

