

CENTRAL JERSEY INVASIVE SPECIES STRIKE TEAM

Invasive Plant Fact Sheet

Mile-a-minute vine (*Polygonum perfoliatum*)

Also called: Mile-a-minute knotweed, Asiatic tearthumb, Devil's tail



Family name: Knotweed family (Polygonaceae)

Native range: Asia

General: Herbaceous, annual, climbing vine of up to 23 feet long. Grows up to 6 inches per day. Stems, leaf stalks, and veins are covered in recurved prickles. Stems are thin, jointed, highly, and branched green to reddish-green in color. Stems can persist through winter.

Leaves: Alternate, toothless, triangular, 0.75-3.0 inches wide. A saucer-shaped leaf surrounds the stem where the leaf stem joins the main stem and at the base of flower stalks.

Flowers: Small, white, borne on short stalks, appearing in late spring and early summer.

Fruit: Small, round, 0.2 inch in diameter. Immature fruit is green, turning blue at maturity. Each fruit contains a shiny, black or reddish-black, nearly round achene 2 mm (0.08 in.) in diameter.

Polygonum perfoliatum produces fruit continuously until the first frost, when the plant begins to die back.

Habitat: Forest, forest edge, meadow, roadside, yard or garden.

Threats to native habitats: Mile-a-minute vine can quickly overtop shrubs and trees, completely shading them from the sun. Its dense growth crowds out native plants. In the absence of vegetation or other structures to climb, Mile-a-minute vine will create will create dense mats that suppress the growth of other plant life.



NJ Status: Mile-a-minute vine is common and spreading rapidly. It is *highly threatening* to natural plant communities. All newly detected occurrences should be eradicated.

Commercial Availability: None found.

Sources: <http://nbii-nin.ciesin.columbia.edu/ipane/icat/browse.do?specield=13>
Rhoads, A.F. and T. Block. 2007. *Plants of Pennsylvania*. 2nd ed. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA. p. 449.



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. Please contact us: **Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space**, (609) 730-1560 or **Upper Raritan Watershed Association**, (908) 234-1852.

