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Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas

Swearingen, J., K. Reshetiloff, B. Slattery, and S. Zwicker. 2002. Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas. National Park Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 82 pp.



Jil Swearingen, NPS

Porcelainberry

Ampelopsis brevipedunculata

Origin: China, Korea, Japan and Russia

Background

Porcelainberry was originally cultivated as a bedding and landscape plant. In spite of its aggressiveness in some areas, it is still widely used and promoted in the horticultural trade.

Distribution and Ecological Threat

Porcelainberry occurs from New England to North Carolina and west to Michigan. It grows well in most soils, especially in pond margins, streambanks, thickets and waste places, where there is full sunlight to partial shade, and where it is not permanently wet. This climbing vine shades out native shrubs and young trees. Porcelainberry grows and spreads quickly in open areas of the urban landscape. The seeds of porcelainberry germinate readily in the soil after natural or human disturbance.

Description and Biology

- Plant: a deciduous, woody, perennial vine of the grape family (Vitaceae); climbs by tendrils that grow opposite the leaves on the stem; vines grow to heights of 15 to 20 feet.
- Leaves: simple, heart-shaped, and dark green with coarsely toothed edges; shiny underneath with delicate hairs along the veins; vary from slightly lobed to deeply dissected; arranged alternately along the stem.
- Flowers, fruits and seeds: small, greenish-white flowers appear in clusters in summer. The berries appear in the fall, ranging in color from white to yellow, to shades of green, lilac, purple, turquoise and sky blue. Each ¼ inch berry carries two to four seeds.
- Spreads: birds and other small animals eat the berries and disperse the seeds in their droppings.
- Look-alikes: native grape (*Vitis*) species and several native species of *Ampelopsis*.



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Prevention and Control

Mechanical and chemical methods have been used successfully to control porcelainberry infestations. Hand pruning in the fall or spring will prevent flower buds from forming the following season. Vines on trees can be cut to prevent seed formation and further damage to trees. Systemic herbicides are also effective.

Native Alternatives

virgin's bower (*Clematis virginiana*)



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trumpet creeper (*Campsis radicans*)



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trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*)



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trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*)



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[[Home](#)] [[Contents](#)]



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