

Invasive Plants of the Eastern United States

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



James H. Miller

**Creeping Euonymus***Euonymus fortunei*

Creeping euonymus, or winter creeper, is an evergreen perennial vine in the bittersweet family (Celastraceae) that was introduced from China as an ornamental groundcover. It tolerates a variety of environmental conditions including full sun to deep shade, poor soils, and acidic to basic soils and is found in about 20 states in the eastern United States. Natural forest openings, caused by wind, insects or fire, are especially vulnerable to invasion by this plant. Creeping euonymus climbs trees and other vertical surfaces and grows vigorously across the ground, displacing native plants and appropriating soil, moisture, nutrients, sunlight and space that would otherwise be available to native species. It spreads vegetatively and by seed that is dispersed by wildlife and water.

**Prevention and Control**

A variety of mechanical and chemical methods are available for management of climbing euonymus, including hand pulling, cutting and application of systemic herbicides.

**Native Alternatives**

pipevine (*Aristolochia macrophylla*), crossvine (*Bignonia capreolata*), trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*), American wisteria (*Wisteria frutescens*)

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 The Bugwood Network, USDA Forest Service & USDA APHIS PPQ.  
 The University of Georgia - Warnell School of Forest Resources and  
 College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences - Dept. of Entomology  
 Last updated on Wednesday, November 05, 2003 at 01:26 PM  
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