Humulus japonicus
(Japanese hops)

Common Name(s) | Full Scientific Name | Family Name Common | Family Scientific Name | Images | Synonyms | Description | Similar Species | Reproductive/Dispersal Mechanisms | Distribution | History of Introduction in New England | Habitats in New England | Threats | Early Warning Notes | Management Links | Documentation Needs | Additional Information | References | Data Retrieval | Maps of New England Plant Distribution

COMMON NAME

Japanese hops

FULL SCIENTIFIC NAME

Humulus japonicus Sieb. & Zucc

FAMILY NAME COMMON

Hemp family

FAMILY SCIENTIFIC NAME

Cannabaceae

IMAGES

Leaves and Inflorescences
Fruits Close-up
Habit
Habitat
Climbing Habit
NOMENCLATURE/SYNONYMS

Synonyms: *Humulus scandens* auct. non (Lour.) Merr.

DESCRIPTION

Botanical Glossary

*Humulus japonicus* is a monoecious, annual vine that can grow between 0.5-2.5 m (1.5-8 ft.) in length. The stems and leaves of this plant have a very rough texture. The leaves are cordate in outline and palmately lobed. The leaves have 5 to 9 lobes separated by V-shaped sinuses. The margins of the lobes are serrulate and they have an acuminate apex. The leaves measure 5-12 cm (2-4.75 in.) in length, and the petiole is often longer than the leaf blade itself. The uppermost leaves are often 3-5 lobed.

The staminate inflorescences are erect and measure 15-25 cm (6-10 in.) in length, while the pistilate inflorescences are cone-shaped spikes, 7-10 mm (0.25-0.4 in.) in size and the margins of the bracteoles are densely ciliate. The pistilate spikes are dull green in color and become abruptly acuminate. The flowers bloom in early to mid-summer. The achenes are yellow-brown, ovoid-orbicular in shape, and 4-5 mm (0.2 in.) in length.


SIMILAR SPECIES

*Humulus lupulus* L. (Common hops) Picture of *H. lupulus*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th><em>Humulus japonicus</em></th>
<th><em>Humulus lupulus</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life cycle</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>Perennial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaf lobes</td>
<td>5-9 lobes</td>
<td>3-7 lobed, sometimes unlobed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apex of leaf lobes</td>
<td>Acuminate</td>
<td>Rounded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petiole</td>
<td>Longer than the blade</td>
<td>Shorter than the blade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bracteoles of pistilate spike</td>
<td>Ciliate</td>
<td>Not ciliate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REPRODUCTIVE/DISPERSAL MECHANISMS

*Humulus japonicus* reproduces by seed. Its small seeds are dispersed by mechanical means, most notably by wind and by the moving water of rivers and streams.
DISTRIBUTION

*Humulus japonicus* is native to eastern Asia. In North America its range is from southern Quebec and Ontario to northern Georgia and west from North Dakota to Kansas. It is found in all of the states of New England.

HISTORY OF INTRODUCTION IN NEW ENGLAND

It is unclear when *Humulus japonicus* was first brought to North America, but it probably arrived here for intentional cultivation. In New England, the earliest records of its escape and naturalization come from eastern Massachusetts and southern Connecticut at the end of the nineteenth century. There are also records from several locations in Vermont (Brattleboro, Burlington, Bellows Falls) from the early part of the twentieth century. Most of these early records note that *Humulus japonicus* had escaped to "waste places." Robinson (1908) described *Humulus japonicus* as having "occasionally escaped from frequent cultivation." By 1950, Fernald characterized it as being found in waste places, roadsides and along fencerows from New England to Michigan and south from Virginia and Missouri.

HABITATS IN NEW ENGLAND

Abandoned Field  
Edge  
Open Disturbed Area  
River or Stream  
Roadside  
Vacant Lot  
Yard or Garden

*Humulus japonicus* is often found in disturbed areas, along roadsides and utility right-of-ways, and in open fields, particularly when the soil is moist. It is also commonly found along river or stream banks and in floodplain areas, where it can form dense, almost continuous stands.

THREATS

When forming dense stands, *Humulus japonicus* can out compete native vegetation.

DOCUMENTATION NEEDS

Documentation required: A specific photograph or mounted snippet of the leaves with inflorescences.  
Best time for documentation: Summer, fall.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
General information and map

Flora of North America
Extensive description and distribution map

Delaware Wildflowers
A close-up image of inflorescence

REFERENCES


DATA RETRIEVAL

Select a task by clicking the radio button and then click "Submit Selection."

- Formatted display as table
- Export as comma-delimited text file

Submit Selection

MAPS OF PLANT DISTRIBUTION IN NEW ENGLAND
Select a study area by clicking the radio button and then click "Submit Selection."

- The whole New England area
- One or more states
- One or more counties
- One or more towns (county sub-divisions)

Submit Selection