

Invasive Plants in Pennsylvania

Porcelain Berry

Ampelopsis brevipedunculata

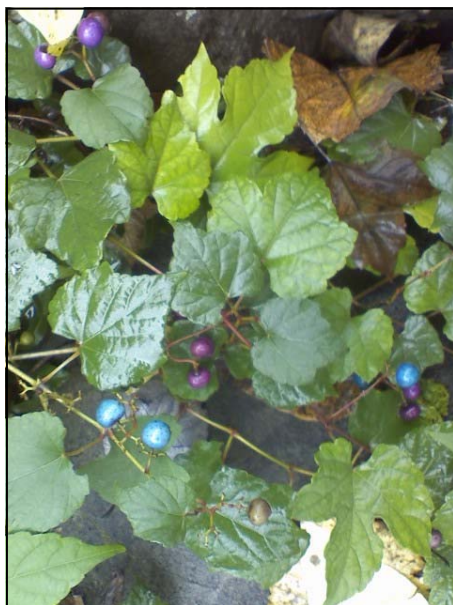


Photo: Jessica Sprajcar, DCNR

Background:

Also known as amur perppervine, this vine is native to Japan and northern China. It was brought to the U.S. in 1870 as an ornamental and landscaping plant.

Range:

Found in scattered locations throughout southern New England, the Mid-Atlantic states and parts of the South and Midwest. In Pennsylvania it is mostly found around Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

Description:

This deciduous, woody vine can climb to heights of 20 feet or more. The alternate leaves are simple and variable—from heart shaped to palmately lobed (three to five lobes). Leaves have coarsely toothed margins. Inconspicuous flowers appear in mid to late summer. Fruits appear in the fall. They change color from light purple to green to blue to as the season advances.

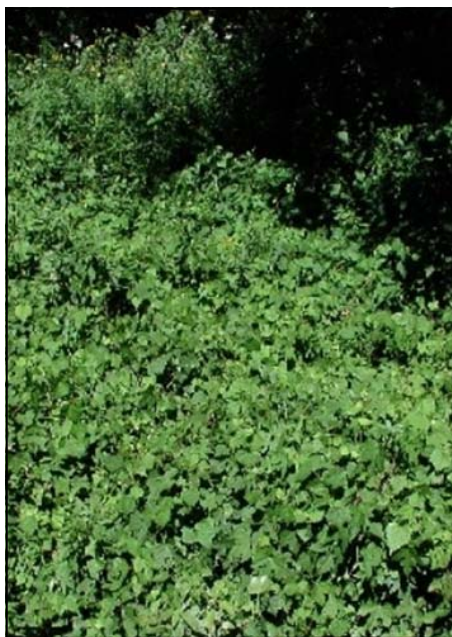


Photo: Leslie Mehrhoff, U. of Connecticut,
www.invasive.org

Biology and Spread:

Birds and other wildlife eat the fruits and spread the seeds to new locations. Fruits may also be spread by water.

Habitat:

Porcelain berry prefers moist, rich soils and full sunlight, although it can tolerate partial shade. It invades stream-banks, forest edges and disturbed areas—anywhere that is not permanently wet.

Ecological Threat:

This vine grows quickly, forming thick mats that cover native vegetation. It can also climb into the trees and shade out young shrubs and seedlings.



Photo: Leslie Mehrhoff, U. of Connecticut,
www.invasive.org

How to Control this Species:

Because this plant can grow so quickly and has seeds that may be viable in the soil for several years, monitoring and follow-up are necessary.

Hand pulling the vines in the fall or spring will prevent flower buds from forming the following season. For vines that are too large to pull, cut them near the ground and treat with a systemic herbicide like triclopyr or glyphosate.

From summer to fall, apply a water-based solution of 2.5 percent triclopyr to the leaves or cut vines. If the basal bark method is preferred, apply a 20 to 30 percent solution of triclopyr mixed with a basal oil to the base of the vine in a two to three feet long section.

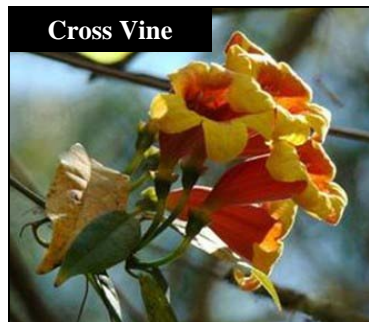


Photo: Rebekah Wallace, U. of Georgia,
www.forestryimages.org

Native Alternatives:

There are many great native vines that can be used in place of porcelain berry, including cross vine (*Bignonia capreolata*), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) and trumpet creeper (*Campsis radicans*).



Photo: U. of Georgia Press,
www.forestryimages.org

Look-A-Likes:

Porcelain berry resembles our native grapes. The easiest way to tell them apart is to look at the pith (interior) of the vine. Porcelain berry's pith is white, wild grape's is brown. Grape bark peels or shreds, while porcelain berry bark does not.



Photo: Howard Schwartz, Colorado State U.
www.forestryimages.org

References:

Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health:

<http://www.invasive.org/browse/subinfo.cfm?sub=3007>

Invasive Exotic Plant Tutorial for Natural Lands Managers:

http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/invasivetutorial/Porcelain_berry.htm

For More Information:

DCNR Invasive Species Site: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/conservationscience/invasivespecies/index.htm>

Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas, National Park Service: <http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/pubs/midatlantic/midatlantic.pdf>

Invasive Plants Field and Reference Guide, U.S. Forest Service: http://na.fs.fed.us/pubs/misc/ip/ip_field_guide.pdf