GOUTWEED

invasive fact sheet

© John Randall/The Nature Conservancy

Goutweed invades Vermont's fields, river edges and floodplain forests. It is **easy to see in July** when its white flowers are in bloom.

© Leslie Mehrhoff/ IPANE

Recognize goutweed

small white flowers found on tall stalks rising above leaves

© IPANE

variegated-leaf variety

leaf with 3 sets of 3 leaflets

© IPANE

The Problem

- Goutweed, also called Bishop's Weed, (*Aegopodium podagraria*) spreads quickly by fast growing underground roots called rhizomes. Even a small piece of rhizome can re-sprout into a new plant, so take care to dispose of all plant material carefully and clean your clothing and shoes after going through or working with a patch of goutweed.
- Beautiful floodplain forests can easily become inundated with goutweed, impacting the populations of ostrich ferns, silver maple and other native plants.
- While the plant is illegal to sell, local plant sales still sell this plant and some gardeners think it makes a nice groundcover, inadvertently introducing a problem into their flower beds and nearby natural areas.

Wise On Weeds!

The Nature Conservancy, Montpelier, Vermont
802-229-4425 x120
www.nature.org/vermont/weeds

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Remove goutweed

For new infestations:

- New infestations should be treated rapidly before an extensive root system is established. Hand pull and grub-up all stems, roots, and rhizomes. Bag all plant material and allow to sit for one week before disposing in a landfill. Re-check site each year.

For large infestations:

- Cover the patch with thick black plastic in the spring as soon as new growth appears. Lay plastic on an area larger than the patch and secure edges with sandbags, bricks or ground staples. Leave for a full year.
- Goutweed may also be cut in late summer, after leaf-out, and then covered with plastic.

DO NOT COMPOST! DO NOT DISCARD IN WOODS OR FIELD!
Plant fragments will re-sprout.

Replant Non-invasive Alternatives

© Stefan Bloodworth/Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

Christmas fern
Polystichum acrostichoides

© Phyllis Weyand/Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

bearberry
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi

lowbush blueberry
Vaccinium angustifolium

© Allan G. Austin/Canadian Museum of Nature

sweet fern
Comptonia peregrina

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