

BITTERSWEET

invasive
fact sheet



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Asiatic bitter-sweet invades Vermont's forests and fields. It is **easy to see in the fall** when its red and yellow fruit lines its vines.

DID YOU KNOW?

The leaf shape and fruit color of Asiatic bitter-sweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) have a very similar appearance to the native Vermont vine, American bitter-sweet (*Celastrus scandens*). The best way to distinguish between the two plants is by the location of the flowers and fruits on the stem. On the invasive Asiatic bitter-sweet, they are scattered along the entire stem (above), while on the native American bitter-sweet, they are found at the terminal end of each stem (below).



Asiatic
bittersweet



American
bittersweet

Photos © IPANE



Asiatic bitter-sweet



light green, alternate
leaves that spiral
around stem

woody stem

fruit: yellow
outer cover with
inner red flesh



© Leslie Mehrhoff/IPANE

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Mechanical control:

For small plants: Hand pull entire plants, including all roots and runners. Place everything into a plastic bag for disposal.

For large plants: Cut climbing or trailing vines close to root collar. Repeat every two weeks.

Chemical control:

Foliar spray: This method is best used for dense populations. In the fall, when native plants are losing their leaves, spray a 2% glyphosate or triclopyr solution on the entire leaf surface of the plant. In order to avoid drift to native plants, spray on calm days.

Cut stump: Cut plant 4 inches from ground in fall. Treat stumps with a triclopyr herbicide. Glyphosate-based products are not strong enough for this plant.

Safe Chemical Application

- ✓ **Develop an Integrated Plant Management approach.** Use chemical control as only ONE piece of your prevention and management strategy.
- ✓ **The label found on the herbicide container is the law.** It indicates the concentrations to use, what protective clothing to wear, how to apply the product, and what environmental and human health hazards are associated with the chemical.
- ✓ **Use aquatic formulations within 10 feet of water.** You need a permit to apply herbicides in wetlands. Do not apply herbicides within 100 feet of a wellhead. Contact VT DEC at 802-241-3761.
- ✓ **You need to be certified to apply herbicides on land that you do not own.**
- ✓ **Hire a contractor to manage large infestations.** A good contractor will have the knowledge to help create an effective management plan. For a list of certified contractors, contact the VT Department of Agriculture at 802-828-3482.

DO NOT COMPOST THIS PLANT! Plant fragments can re-sprout.



Non-invasive Alternatives



trumpet vine
Campsis radicans



Virginia creeper
Parthenocissus quinquefolia

trumpet
honeysuckle

*Lonicera
sempervirens*



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American
bittersweet

*Celastrus
scandens*



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