

INVASIVE OF THE MONTH

Invasive wineberry is spread by birds, animals, humans

From Brodhead Watershed Association



Wineberries are edible. Its leaves are green above and silvery white below.

Wineberry is a shrubby member of the raspberry family. Like so many plants that escape to become pests in the wild, wineberry was brought here intentionally, arriving from eastern Asia in 1890. It is still used by berry breeders today.

Formerly found in Pennsylvania mostly along the Appalachian ridge, it has spread, and now it is common along our local trails, roads, and creeks.

HOW TO IDENTIFY WINEBERRY

In spring, wineberry canes shoot up to six feet and more. The canes look a lot like other raspberries and blackberries, except that they are covered with fine, red hairs. The leaves are similar, too — green above and silvery white below, but the flowers, which bloom in May, are very hairy. Clusters of the edible berries appear from June through August.

Birds and animals eat the berries, spreading the seeds in their droppings. Humans can spread the seeds, too. Dropping a few of the berries you've collected to take home for your cereal can easily create a new patch.

WHY WINEBERRY IS A PEST

The shrub prefers moist, open areas, but tolerates a wide range of growing conditions — soil type, light and moisture levels — and is hardy down to -20 degrees F. Because Wineberry is so adaptable, its dense, prickly thickets can form even in deep woods. It crowds out native plants, prevents light from reaching lower-growing plants, and can make natural areas impossible to use for hunting, fishing, hiking, and wildlife.

CONTROLLING WINEBERRY

If you have a small infestation, wear thick gloves and hand-pull them. Be sure to get all the roots and branches, or it will resprout. You can also use herbicides like glyphosate or triclopyr. Spray the leaves, or cut the plant at the base and paint the herbicide on the wound.

You'll find fact sheets on wineberry and many other Pennsylvania invasives at <https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Conservation/WildPlants/InvasivePlants/InvasivePlantFactSheets/Pages/default.aspx> and at www.brodheadwatershed.org