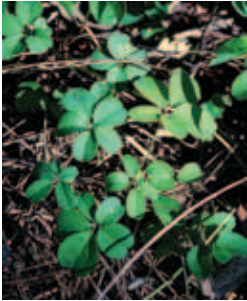


Five-Leaf Akebia, Chocolate Vine



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Nancy Loewenstein

Five-leaf akebia or chocolate vine [*Akebia quinata* (Houtt.) Decne.] is a woody, semievergreen or evergreen vine that climbs by twining to dangle and sprawl in tree and shrub crowns to 40 feet (12 m) long. It also can form solid ground cover up to 1 foot (30 cm) deep. Leaves are dark green and palmately compound with five elliptical leaflets on long petioles. Showy, dangling purple flowers infrequently appear with leaves in spring, and some female flowers yield sausage-shaped pods in fall. When the pods are ripe, their skin splits to reveal a pulpy, edible inner core that splits further to expose many (100+) imbedded black seeds. Rarely spreads by animal-dispersed seeds and colonizes by prolific vine growth that root and sprout. Still produced, sold, and planted.

Management strategies:

- Do not plant. Remove prior plantings, and control sprouts and seedlings. Bag and dispose of plants and fruit in a dumpster or burn.
- Treat when new plants are young to prevent seed formation.
- Manually pull new seedlings when soil is moist, ensuring removal of all roots.
- Burning treatments are suspected of having minimal effect due to multiple plants with root crowns that will resprout.

Recommended control procedures:

- Thoroughly wet all leaves with Garlon 3A as a 2- to 3-percent solution (8 to 12 ounces per 3-gallon mix) in water with a surfactant (early to midfall).
- To control climbing vines in trees, cut large stems close to the ground and immediately treat the stump tops with Garlon 3A or a glyphosate herbicide as a 25-percent solution (3 quarts per 3-gallon mix). ORTHO Brush-B-Gon, Enforcer Brush Killer, and Vine-X are effective undiluted for treating cut-stumps and available in retail garden stores (safe to surrounding plants). A subsequent foliar application may be required to control new resprouts.