

Vincas, Periwinkles



Bigleaf periwinkle



Common periwinkle

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Nancy Loewenstein

Common periwinkle (*Vinca minor* L.) and bigleaf periwinkle (*V. major* L.) are evergreen (leaves always present), somewhat woody, trailing or scrambling vines to 3 feet (1 m) long and upright to 1 foot (30 cm) that form dense ground cover. They have opposite lanceolate-to-heart-shaped leaves and five-petaled pinwheel-shaped violet single flowers. They form mats and extensive infestations even under forest canopies by vines rooting at nodes. Viable seed appear to be produced only rarely.

Management strategies:

- Do not plant. Remove prior plantings, and control sprouts and seedlings. Bag and dispose of plants in a dumpster or burn.
- Treat when new plants are young.
- Mowing treatments or injury of the leaves by a string trimmer immediately prior to herbicide spraying improves control with herbicides lacking soil activity.
- Burning treatments are suspected of having minimal effect.

Recommended control procedures:

- Thoroughly wet all leaves (until runoff) with one of the following herbicides in water with a surfactant (July to October for successive years): Tordon 101^{* †} as a 3-percent solution (12 ounces per 3-gallon mix) or Tordon K^{* †} as a 2-percent solution (8 ounces per 3-gallon mix); or in spring when safety to surrounding vegetation is desired before stands become dense with new growth, Garlon 4 as a 4-percent solution (1 pint per 3-gallon mix); or during the growing season, repeatedly apply Garlon 4 or a glyphosate herbicide as a 2-percent solution in water (8 ounces per 3-gallon mix) with a surfactant. In winter, herbicide treatments should be limited to warm days.

* Nontarget plants may be killed or injured by root uptake.

† When using Tordon herbicides, rainfall must occur within 6 days after application for needed soil activation. Tordon herbicides are restricted use pesticides.