



Monongahela National Forest

Invasive Species to Watch Out For

Richard Gardner, Bugwood.org



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Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*)

Appearance: A delicate, sprawling, annual grass that is 0.5-3.5 ft. tall with stems that can root weakly at the nodes.

Foliage: Leaves are pale-green, alternate, lance-shaped, 1-3 in. long, with a shiny, off-center midline vein. Upper and lower leaf surface is slightly hairy.

Flowering Head: One to three delicate flower stalks develop from where the leaves meet the stem or at the top of the stems.

Fruit/Seeds: Fruit is small and may be attached to an awn (a twisted, threadlike bristle).

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Ansel Oommen, Bugwood.org

Garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)

Appearance: An herbaceous, biennial (living two years) forb. Easily recognized by a garlic odor when any part of the plant is crushed.

Foliage: First year rosettes have green, heart-shaped, 1-6 in. long leaves. Second year foliage becomes more triangular, alternate on stem, and strongly toothed.

Flowering Heads: Second year plants produce a 1-4 ft. tall flowering stalk. Each flower is 0.25 in. across and has four small, white petals and occurs in clusters.

Fruit/Seeds: Shiny black and produced in erect, slender green pods which turn pale brown when mature.

Richard Gardner, Bugwood.org



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Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*)

Appearance: A small deciduous shrub from 2-8 ft. tall. The thin, grooved branches have thin, straight spines.

Foliage: Leaves are up to 1 in. long, paddle-shaped, and green to blue-green or red-purple (ornamental varieties).

Flowering Head: Pale-yellow flowers are 0.5 in. wide and occur in drooping clusters of 2-5 where the leaves meet the stem.

Fruit/Seeds: Berries ripen to a bright red color and are 0.25-0.3 in. long.



Richard Gardner, Bugwood.org



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Tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*)

Appearance: A rapidly growing, typically small tree up to 80 ft. tall. It has large, triangular leaf scars on the twigs.

Foliage: Leaves are compound, with 10-41 leaflets opposite each other on a main vein ending in one leaf at the tip, 1-4 ft. long. Underside of the leaflets have round glands at the notched base.

Flowering Head: Male and Female flowers occur on separate plants and flowering occurs in early summer when large clusters of yellow flowers develop above the foliage.

Fruit/Seeds: Fruit produced in clusters on female plants are tan to reddish, single winged and can be wind or water-dispersed. One seed is contained in each fruit.

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