



Non-Native Invasive ID and Control

A citizen's guide to the
non-native invasive plants
that may be lurking in
your backyard.



Common name

Scientific name



Vines



Shrubs



Trees



Herbaceous

Invasive priority level



High



Moderate



Low



Estimated level

Stars rank degree of invasiveness (negative impact on native plant and animal habitat). The more stars, the greater the impact.

The ranking system of stars is from the Invasive Alien Plant Species of Virginia (2003) list, published by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation.



Flowering season

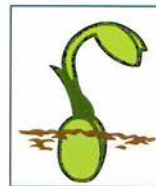


Fruiting season

Attention items:



Resprouts: Plants will regenerate from root fragments left in the ground.



Seed: Seeds remain viable for several years. Plant requires many years to control.



Reroots: Plants will regrow from fragments, please discard with trash.



Rash: Prolonged contact with the plant may cause an allergic reaction in some people.



Bag: Seeds and the rest of the plant should be discarded with trash, not yard waste.

These cards can be cleaned with soap and water. Allow to air dry.

Keep your yard invasive free:

- Plant only non-invasive plants.
- Share your knowledge and skill with your neighbors.
- Volunteer to help manage a natural area near your home.

★★ English Ivy
Hedera helix



Identification:

- Hairy roots
- Thick, leathery leaves

Threat:

- Increases wind damage to trees
- Displaces native species



Autumn



Mid-late winter



Where to find it:

Forests and open areas

Control methods:

- ◆ Remove from vertical surfaces first. Cut two feet above ground and then cut at ground level.
- ◆ Pull up roots (year round).
- ❖ Thick cuticle makes ivy resistant to herbicide.

Attention!



Resprouts



Reroots



Do not
compost



Rash

Native look-alikes:



poison ivy



Virginia creeper

★★★
★★★
★★★
Lonicera japonica
Japanese Honeysuckle



Identification:

- Keeps leaves in the winter
- Leaves are opposite and not joined at the base
- Larger vines have pale, shaggy bark

Threat:

- Girdles other plants
- Blocks sunlight
- Increases wind damage to trees



Where to find it:

Roadsides, trails, forest edges, abandoned fields

★ ★ ★
Japanese Honeysuckle
Lonicera japonica

Control methods:

- ◆ Pull seedlings and young plants.
- ◆ Cut two feet above ground and then cut at ground level.
- ❖ Apply systemic herbicides to cut stumps or leaves in winter when other plants are dormant.

Attention!



Resprouts



Bag fruits

Native look-alikes:



trumpet honeysuckle



★★ Japanese Hops
Humulus japonicus

Identification:

- Barbs on stems
- Toothed leaves, five to nine lobes



Summer



Early autumn

Threat:

- Forms dense mats on natives
- Displaces native species



Where to find it:

Stream banks and forest edges

★ ★ **Japanese Hops**
Humulus japonicus

Control methods:

- ◆ Hand pull before August or September when it reseeds.
- ❖ Systemic herbicides are effective.

Attention!



Resprouts



Reroots



Bag fruits
Do not compost

Native look-alikes:



Virginia creeper



wild cucumber



Kudzu

Pueraria montana



Identification:

- Large leaves have three leaflets
- Root crown at ground level

Threat:

- Displaces native species
- Can grow one foot per day



Summer



Autumn



Where to find it:

Forest edges, roadsides, fields

Kudzu

★★★★
Pueraria montana

Control methods:

- ◆ Cut two feet above ground and then cut at ground level.
- ◆ Remove entire root if possible.
- ◆ Cut or mow frequently.
- ❖ Systemic herbicides are effective.

Attention!



Resprouts



Reroots

Native look-alikes:

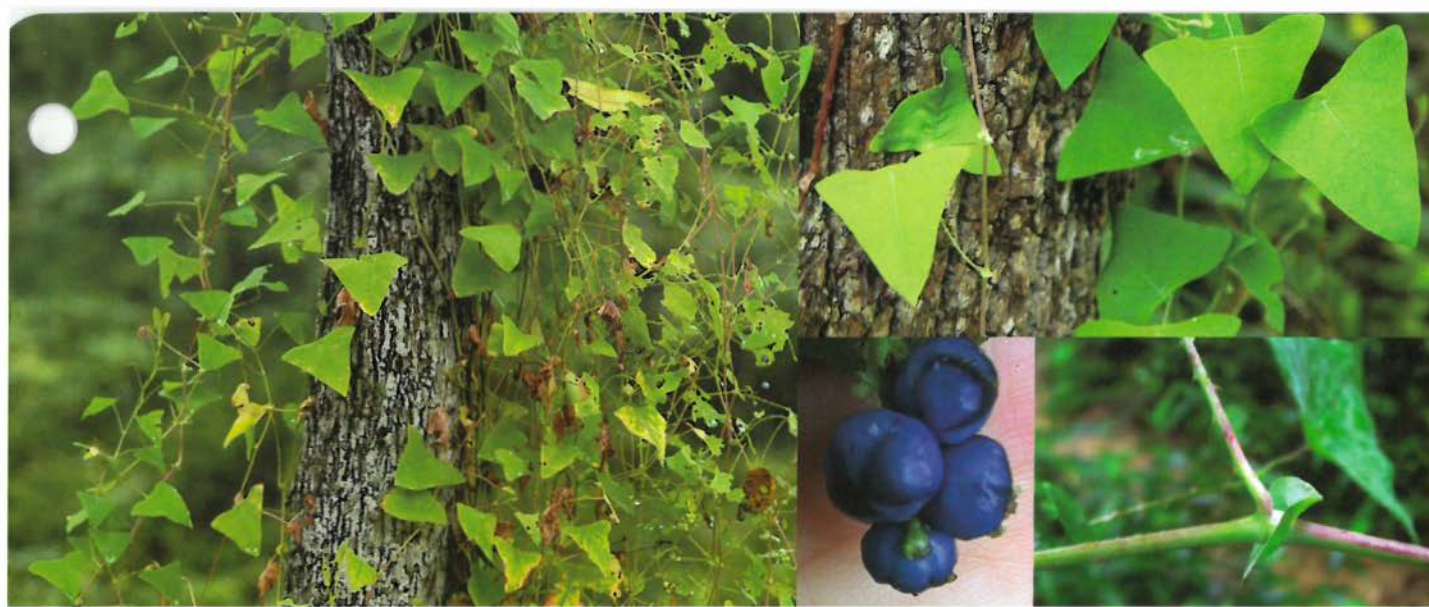


poison ivy



grape

★★★
Mile-a-Minute
Polygonum perfoliatum



Identification:

- Small barbs
- Alternate, triangular leaves

Threat:

- Thorns create barrier to movement
- Displaces native species



Summer



Late summer



Where to find it:

Open areas in full sun

Control methods:

- ◆ Remove from vertical surfaces first. Pull up roots and bag if fruiting.
- ❖ Contact and systemic herbicides should be mixed with surfactant to help adhere to waxy leaves.

Attention!



Do not compost

Native look-alikes:



pokeweed



greenbriar



★★★
Oriental Bittersweet
Celastrus orbiculatus

Identification:

- Alternate, glossy, round leaves with elongated tips
- Long curling tendrils
- Small greenish flowers
- Red-orange fruit along entire length of stem



Late spring



Autumn-mid winter

Threat:

- Covers and kills native plants
- Displaces American bittersweet
- Increases wind damage to trees



Where to find it:

Forest edges, open woods,
fields, roadsides

Oriental Bittersweet
Celastrus orbiculatus
★ ★ ★

Control methods:

- ◆ Cut climbing vines two feet above ground and then at ground level.
- ◆ Remove roots.
- ❖ Treat leaves and stems with systemic herbicides.

Attention!



Resprouts



Bag fruits
Do not compost

Native look-alikes:



American
bittersweet



greenbriar

★ Periwinkle

Vinca minor, *Vinca major*



Identification:

- Opposite, elliptical leaves
- Blue, lilac or white flowers



Spring-early summer



Rare

Threat:

- Forms dense groundcover
- Displaces native species



Where to find it:

Woods, fields and roadsides

★ Periwinkle

Vinca minor, Vinca major

Control methods:

- ◆ Remove entire plant or mow frequently.
- ❖ Cut plant in spring and apply a systemic herbicide to regrowth.

Attention!



Resprouts

Native look-alikes:



partridgeberry



moss phlox

★★★
Porcelainberry
Ampelopsis brevipedunculata



Identification:

- Variably colored berries
- Center of mature stem is white

Threat:

- Increases wind damage to trees
- Shades out shrubs and young trees



Where to find it:

Pond edges, stream banks
and thickets

★ ★ ★
Porcelainberry
Ampelopsis brevipedunculata

Control methods:

- ◆ Prune in fall or spring to prevent flower buds.
- ◆ Cut at ground level and again two feet above ground.
- ❖ Apply systemic herbicides on leaves or cut stumps.

Attention!



Resprouts



Bag fruits

Native look-alikes:



grape



pokeweed



★★
Wintercreeper
Fuonymus fortunei

Identification:

- Evergreen, perennial vine
- Shiny, egg-shaped leaves

Threat:

- Increases wind damage to trees
- Displaces natives



Mid-summer



Late autumn/
mid-winter



Where to find it:

Forest openings, wet areas

★★ **Wintercreeper**
Euonymus fortunei

Control methods:

- ◆ Hand pull.
- ◆ Cut two feet above ground and then cut at ground level.
- ❖ Systemic herbicides effective on leaves or cut stumps.

Attention!



Resprouts



Reroots



Do not
compost

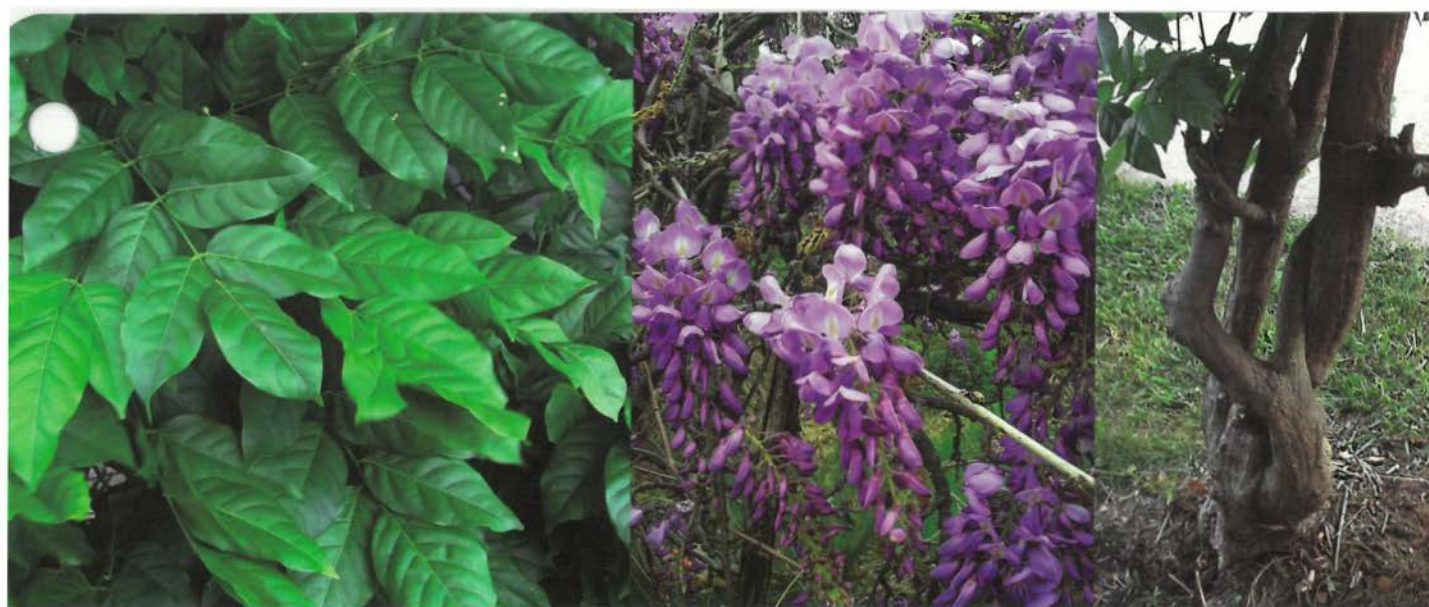
Look-alikes:



periwinkle



English ivy



★ ★ **Wisterias**
Wisteria floribunda, *Wisteria sinensis*

Identification:

- Large leaves, usually 13 leaflets
- Violet flower clusters



Spring



Summer-late
autumn

Threat:

- Increases wind damage to trees
- Can alter sun and shade levels



Where to find it:

Forests and forest edges

★ ★ Wisterias

Wisteria floribunda, *Wisteria sinensis*

Control methods:

- ◆ Cut two feet above ground and then cut at ground level.
- ◆ Repeated cutting can exhaust root stores.
- ❖ Systemic herbicides can be applied to stumps and foliage.

Attention!



Resprouts



Reroots

Native look-alikes:



trumpet creeper



American wisteria



Autumn Olive
Elaeagnus umbellata

Identification:

- Silvery, white scales and brown dots on underside of leaves
- Small, yellow flowers, red berries



Early summer



Early autumn

Threat:

- Displaces native species



Where to find it:

Forests, open areas and disturbed areas

Control methods:

- ◆ Pull sprouts and seedlings in early spring.
- ◆ Prune flowers and fruits.
- ❖ Glyphosate applied to cut stumps.

Attention!



Resprouts



Do not
compost

Native look-alikes:



spicebush

★★★
Bush Honeysuckles
Lonicera species



L. maackii

L. morrowi

L. tatarica

L. bella

Identification:

- Leaves are egg-shaped and opposite along the stem
- Older stems are often hollow

Threat:

- Displaces native species
- Negatively alters natural ecosystems



Early-late spring



Early summer-fall



Where to find it:

Forests edges, fields, pastures, roadsides, homesites

Control methods:

- ◆ Pull seedlings or small plants.
- ◆ Repeated cutting to ground level is also effective.
- ❖ Treat leaves or cut stumps with systemic herbicides.

Attention!



Resprouts



Bag fruits

Native look-alikes:



spicebush

★ Butterfly Bush

Buddleja species



Identification:

- Finely toothed, opposite leaves
- Clustered flowers can be purple, pink, red or white



Summer



Autumn

Threat:

- Forms dense thickets
- Draws pollinators away from native plants



Where to find it:

Forests, roads and highly disturbed areas

★ **Butterfly Bush**
Buddleja species

Control methods:

- ◆ Hand pull or cut off flowers before they seed.
- ❖ Treat cut stumps with systemic herbicides.

Attention!



Resprouts



Reroots

Look-alikes:



New Jersey tea



purple lilac



★★ Japanese Barberry
Berberis thunbergii

Identification:

- Red or green leaves
- Red berries, yellow flowers, wood and thorns

Threat:

- Displaces native plants
- Raises soil pH



Where to find it:

Forests and open areas

★★ **Japanese Barberry**
Berberis thunbergii

Control methods:

- ◆ Hand pull, including roots.
- ❖ Systemic herbicides are effective in early spring or during late summer fruiting.

Attention!



Resprouts



Reroots

Native look-alikes:



American barberry



hawthorne



★★
Japanese Spiraea
Spiraea japonica

Identification:

- Showy, white and pink flowers



Summer



Summer

Threat:

- Rapid, dense growth
- Displaces native herbs



Where to find it:

Disturbed areas and
along streams

Control methods:

- ◆ Repeated cutting controls spread but will not eliminate spiraea.
- ❖ Systemic herbicides are effective on leaves.

Native look-alikes:



Virginia spiraea



corymbid spiraea

Attention!



Resprouts



Seeds remain viable in soil for several years



viburnum

★★★
Multiflora Rose
Rosa multiflora



Identification:

- Five to eleven sharply toothed leaflets
- Base of leaf stalk is “hairy”
- Thorny, arching stems



Spring-summer



Summer-
mid winter

Threat:

- Displaces native species
- Competes for soil nutrients
- Thorns create barrier to movement



Where to find it:

Fields, pastures, roadsides
and forest openings

★ ★ ★
Multiflora Rose
Rosa multiflora

Control methods:

- ◆ Pull out by root.
- ◆ Cut or mow repeatedly.
- ❖ Apply systemic herbicide to freshly cut stumps or regrowth.

Attention!



Resprouts



Bag fruits

Native look-alikes:



swamp rose



pasture rose



blackberry



Identification:

- Shrub, can be 15 feet tall
- Opposite, oval, evergreen leaves
- White flowers



Late spring



Late summer

Threat:

- Forms dense thickets
- Displaces native species



Where to find it:

Forests, fields, floodplains

Control methods:

- ◆ Remove entire plant.
- ❖ For larger plants, apply systemic herbicide to the leaves or freshly cut stumps.

Attention!



Resprouts

Look-alikes:



purple lilac



itea

★★★
Wineberry
Rubus phoenicolasius



Identification:

- Reddish hairs cover entire plant



Threat:

- Displaces native species
- Thorns create barrier to movement



Where to find it:

Shade to full sun areas.
Prefers slopes and uplands.

Control methods:

- ◆ Hand pull.
- ◆ Remove all root and cane fragments.
- ❖ Treat the canes and leaves with systemic herbicides.

Attention!



Resprouts



Do not
compost

Native look-alikes:



blackberry
and
raspberry



★★★
Winged Burning Bush
Euonymus alatus



Identification:

- Winged branches
- Brilliant red leaves in autumn

Threat:

- Forms dense thickets
- Displaces native species



Where to find it:

Forests, scrubland

Winged Burning Bush

Euonymus alatus



Control methods:

- ◆ **Seedlings** - Hand pull.
- ◆ **Shrubs** - Cut repeatedly to control resprouting or uproot.
- ❖ Treat cut stumps with systemic herbicides.

Attention!



Resprouts



Reroots

Native look-alikes:



American euonymus



sweetgum



spicebush



☆☆
Bradford Pear
Pyrus calleryana

Identification:

- Leaves turn red in late fall
- White flowers, brown fruit



Early spring



Spring-summer

Threat:

- Displaces native species
- Disrupts natural succession



Where to find it:

Fields and road edges,
full or partial sun

Bradford Pear
Pyrus calleryana

Control methods:

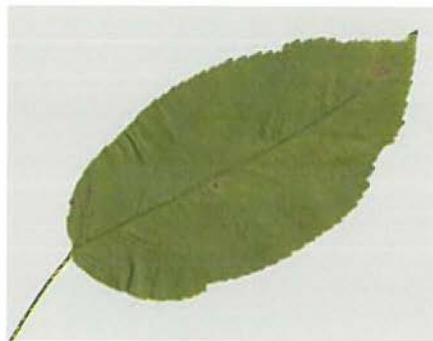
- ◆ Hand pull. Remove entire root system.
- ◆ Cut large trees or girdle them in spring and summer.
- ❖ Apply systemic herbicides to stumps.

Attention!



Resprouts

Native look-alikes:

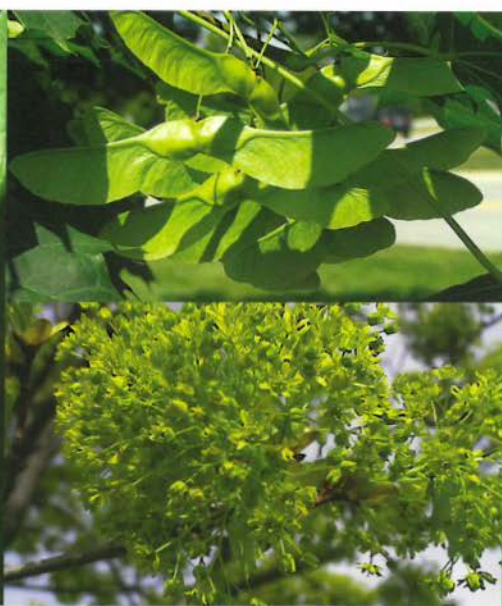


apple tree



basswood

★★ Norway Maple
Acer platanoides



Identification:

- Stalks and leaf veins ooze a milky white sap
- Fruits at 180° angle
- Bark may appear black

Threat:

- Forms single species stands that create dense shade
- Displaces native species



Where to find it:

Forests, fields and other natural habitats

Control methods:

- ◆ Seedlings can be pulled.
- ◆ Small to large trees can be cut to the ground repeatedly.
- ❖ Treat cut stumps with a systemic herbicide.

Native look-alikes:



sugar maple

Attention!



Resprouts



Bag fruits



★★★
Tree-of-Heaven
Ailanthus altissima

Identification:

- Large, compound leaves
- Crushed leaves and stems have strong, offensive odor
- Large leaf scars on trunk



Late spring



Early autumn

Threat:

- Displaces native species
- Produces toxins that discourage other plants



Where to find it:

Fields, roadsides, forest edges and openings, disturbed urban environments

Control methods:

- ◆ Pull seedlings. Remove roots.
- ◆ Repeated cutting of sprouts over time may also be effective.
- ❖ Treat leaves or freshly cut stumps with systemic herbicides.

Attention!



Resprouts



Bag fruits

Native look-alikes:



staghorn sumac



black walnut

★★ Bamboo

Bambusa, Phyllostachys and Pseudosasa



Identification:

- Woody, perennial evergreens
- Long, narrow, pointed leaves
- Jointed stems



Once/life cycle



Once/life cycle

Threat:

- Spreads quickly through underground stems
- Displaces native species



Where to find it:

Usually near homes or on stream banks

★★ Bamboo

Bambusa, Phyllostachys and Pseudosasa

Control methods:

- ◆ Cut to the ground in June.
- ❖ Apply systemic herbicide in fall to re-growth. Reapply two weeks later.

Attention!



Resprouts



Reroots



Do not
compost

Native look-alikes:



giant cane

★★★
Garlic Mustard
★★★
Alliaria petiolata



Identification:

- Cylindrical seed pods and small, white, cross-shaped flowers
- Heart-shaped, coarsely toothed leaves
- Leaves smell like garlic when crushed



Spring-early
summer



Early summer

Threat:

- Displaces native species
- Threatens rare native insects
- Interferes with tree establishment



Where to find it:

Wooded stream banks,
forests and floodplains

Garlic Mustard
Alliaria petiolata
★★★

Control methods:

- ◆ Hand pull, including roots.
- ◆ Cut flowering stems at ground level to prevent seed dispersal.
- ❖ Systemic herbicides can be effective on leaves.

Attention!



Resprouts



Do not compost

Native look-alikes:



early saxifrage



sweet cicely

★★★
Japanese Knotweed
Polygonum cuspidatum



Identification:

- Broad, oval to triangular leaves, pointed at top
- Jointed stems that resemble bamboo
- Sprays of greenish-white flowers



Threat:

- Forms dense thickets
- Alters natural ecosystems



Where to find it:

Near water sources, along streams and in low areas

Japanese Knotweed
Polygonum cuspidatum
★★★

Control methods:

- ◆ Single young plants can be pulled by hand. Remove roots.
- ◆ Cut repeatedly.
- ❖ Treat foliage or freshly cut stems with systemic herbicides.

Attention!



Resprouts



Bag fruits
Do not compost

Look-alikes:



prince's feather



Virginia knotweed

★★★
Japanese Stiltgrass
Microstegium vimineum



Identification:

- Short grass less than 3' tall
- Silver stripe down center of leaf
- Pulls up with gentle tug



Late summer



Early autumn

Threat:

- Displaces native species
- May alter forest and water chemistry



Where to find it:

Almost anywhere. Readily invades disturbed areas.

Control methods:

- ◆ Pull at any time.
- ◆ Mow flowering plants before seed production (July).
- ❖ Contact or systemic herbicides useful for large infestations.

Attention!



Seeds remain viable
in soil for at least
three years

Native look-alikes:

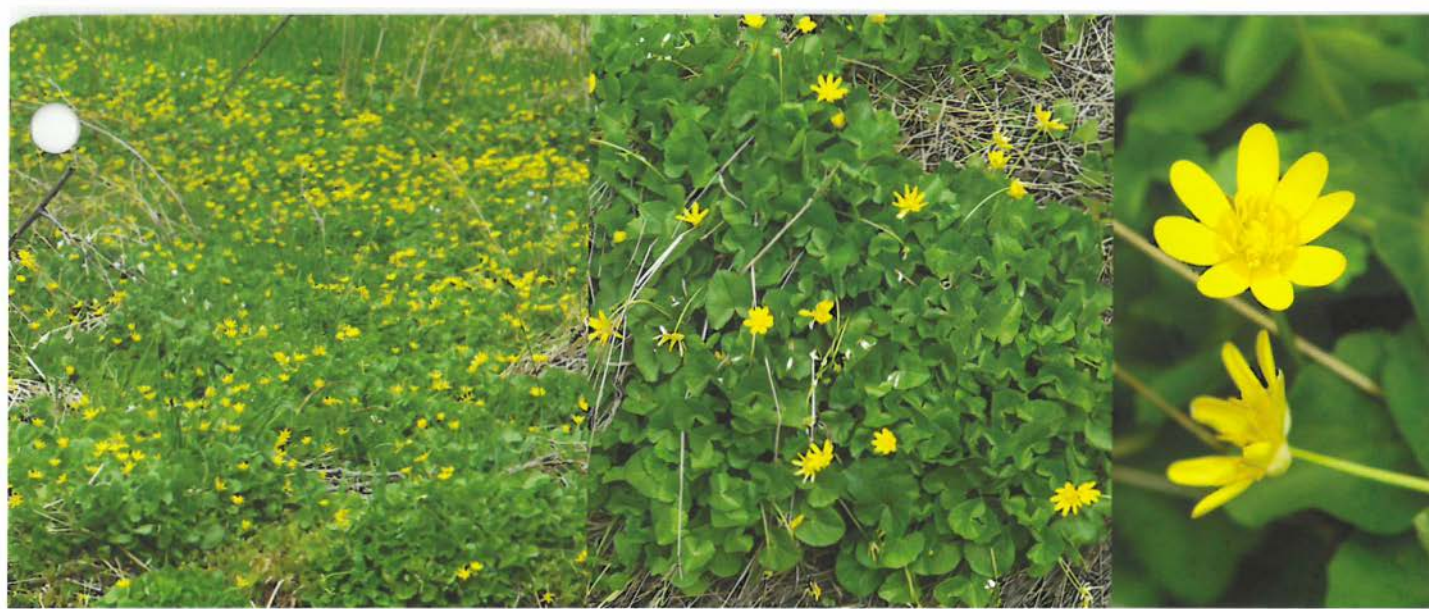


deertongue



bearded shorthusk

★★★
★★★
★★★
Ranunculus ficaria
Lesser Celandine



Identification:

- Dark green leaves
- Glossy, butter-yellow flowers

Threat:

- Emerges earlier than most native plants
- Displaces native species



Late winter/
early spring



Early summer



Where to find it:

Moist, forested floodplains

Lesser Celandine
Ranunculus ficaria
★ ★ ★

Control methods:

- ◆ Do not pull by hand, tubers will spread.
- ❖ Apply contact or systemic herbicides before flowers appear.

Attention!



Resprouts from
unearthed tubers



Do not
compost

Native look-alikes:



marsh
marigold



buttercup

☆☆
Pachysandra
Pachysandra terminalis



Identification:

- Evergreen ground cover
- Small white flowers



Spring



Rare

Threat:

- Displaces native species



Where to find it:

In dense shade along forest edges, near streams

Control methods:

- ◆ Pull year-round, being careful to get all root fragments.

Attention!



Resprouts



Reroots

Look-alikes:



Allegheny spurge



archangel

**This work supports the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors'
20-year environmental vision.**



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