



WEED ALERT

Mile-a-Minute Vine

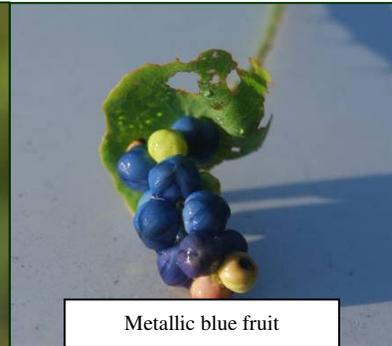
Persicaria perfoliata



Mile-a-Minute weed is a fast-growing annual vine. This plant is native to Asia, and grows up to 6 inches per day. It can easily overgrow and outcompete native plants on roadsides, stream banks, fields and forest edges. MAM prefers low, wet land in full sun. The stems are covered with short curved spines that give the plant another nickname, “tearthumb.” Mile-a-Minute vine was recently found in Alleghany Co, NC, by Derick Poindexter, an Appalachian State University botanist.

Mile-a-Minute vine has several distinct features:

- Triangular leaves
- Rounded ocreae (small leaves) at the nodes
- Thin reddish stems
- Short curved spines along the stems



Flowers are small, white and inconspicuous. During the summer, metallic blue berry-like fruit develop in clusters. Fruit are segmented and each segment bears a single seed. Seed may be spread by birds, small mammals, and ants. Seed may persist in the soil for up to 6 years.

If you have seen this weed with all of its identifying characteristics, contact the Weed Specialist Rick Iverson at (919) 733- 6930 ext 246 or contact the NCDA&CS Invasive Species Hotline at: 1-800-206-9333 or report by email: newpest@ncagr.gov.

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Biological Control of Mile-A-Minute Vine

Although over 35 species of insects have been documented to feed on MAM vine in North America, they do not cause enough damage to keep the weed below damaging levels. A collaborative project between scientists with the USDA-Forest Service, the University of Delaware and the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, screened insects found feeding on MAM and selected a weevil *Rhinoncomimus latipes*. This weevil feeds only on mile-a-minute vine, and does not harm other plants, people, or livestock. The MAM weevil is now being reared by the NJ Department of Agriculture, and specialists with the NCDA&CS Biological Control Program plan to begin making releases of the weevil in spring 2011. Releases will occur in 5 plots in the infested area, which will be evaluated for establishment and spread of the weevils and population changes of MAM vines.

The weevils are small, about 2mm (1/8th in) long and black (1). As they feed they develop an orange film (2). Adults feed on the foliage, leaving a shothole appearance (3).



Females lay eggs on leaves, stems, and terminals. Larvae (4) bore into the stems where they feed and develop. Feeding results in the defoliation plants, reduced cover by the vines, and decreases the number of seeds produced. When mature, larvae drop to the soil to pupate. Development time from egg to adult is about 26 days, and they may have 3-4 generations each season. Each female can lay about 130 eggs (in tests they averaged 130 -180). Adults overwinter under vines and can live up to a year. Weevils have been shown to move over a mile per year from the release site and they are able to locate small isolated patches of MAM as well as large infestations.

For information about the release of weevils, contact Kathy Kidd, Biological Control Administrator at (919) 233-8214 or Kathleen.kidd@ncagr.gov.