

# Appears Deceptively Harmless, Behaves Badly

## The Culprit: Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*)



*Japanese stiltgrass can be found from the coast to the mountains in Virginia.*

Japanese stiltgrass was first introduced to North America quite by accident when it was used as packing material for porcelain.

**Now we know =>**

Japanese stiltgrass can form a dense ground cover that displaces native plants and prevents forest regeneration. Thick mats of dried leaves and stems intensifies forest fires. Unpalatable to wildlife like white-tailed deer.

### Why It's a Problem

- Displaces desirable native grasses, ferns, and wildflowers
- Changes soil chemicals that help it spread
- Prevents regeneration of forests
- Produces up to 1,000 seeds from a single plant



## What Does It Look Like?



Leaves are 2-4 inches long. Leaves usually have a faint silvery main vein that sits slightly off center.



Inflorescence (flowering stalks) are produced August through September. Stiltgrass dies back after frost and forms a straw-like mat, making winter identification easy from a distance in the forest.

## How Do I Control It?

- Individual small plants can be pulled by hand.
- Mow or weed wack once prior to the plant flowering in August.
- Use a foliar application of herbicide from June until the plant flowers.



Foliar application involves applying an herbicide to the leaves killing the plant. Grass specific herbicides are effective when applied during the growing season from June until when the plant begins to flower.

### Additional Information

#### Blue Ridge PRISM

-- [Japanese Stiltgrass Fact Sheet](#)

-- [Resources on Invasive Plants](#)



### Photo Credits

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