



Impacts:

Japanese stiltgrass is especially well adapted to low light conditions. It threatens native plants and natural habitats in open to shady, and moist to dry locations. Stiltgrass spreads to form extensive patches, displacing native species that are not able to compete with it. Stiltgrass may impact other plants by altering soil chemistry.



Suspected Means of Introduction:

First documented in Tennessee around 1919, stiltgrass may have accidentally escaped as a result of its use as a packing material for porcelain.

BioBullies

Japanese Stiltgrass

Microstegium vinineum



Description: Japanese stiltgrass is a delicate bamboo-like, sprawling, annual grass that is ½ to 3 feet in height. It is recognized by the pale green alternate leaves, which are short, flat, and lance-shaped with off-center veins. The leaves are about 3 inches long and have a silvery stripe of hairs down the middle of the upper leaf surface. Delicate flowers emerge from the tips starting in late summer and continuing into fall. Seeds persist through the fall.

Native Range:

Japan, Korea, China, Malaysia, and India

Resources for Identification and Control of Japanese Stiltgrass

Headwaters Invasive Plant Partnership

University of Illinois Extension - Champaign, Ford, Iroquois, and Vermilion Counties

Plant Profile Database - USDA

Weed of the Week - USDA Forest Service

Midwest Invasive Plant Network



Japanese Stiltgrass

Microstegium vinineum



Habitat: Most commonly an invader of forested floodplains, Japanese stiltgrass, is also found in ditches, forest edges, fields, and trails. It is often found invading disturbed areas, like floodplains that are prone to natural scouring, and areas that are mowed, tilled, or frequently used for animal activity.

Biology: Japanese stiltgrass is an annual grass, with entire plant dying each fall after fruiting. It is a colonial species that spreads during the summer and fall by rooting at stem nodes that touch the ground. Individual plants may produce 100 to 1,000 seeds that fall close to the parent plant.

Seeds may be carried further by water currents during heavy rains or moved in contaminated hay, soil, or potted plants, and on footwear and vehicles. Stiltgrass seeds remain viable in the soil for 5 years.

Control Methods: Japanese stiltgrass can be hand pulled or cut using a weed whacker on smaller infestations. For large infestations, a systemic herbicide (e.g. glyphosate) or an herbicidal soap may be used. Control should be undertaken prior to seed set. When using herbicides, read label and follow all state and federal requirements.