

Multiflora Rose

Why is it so important to eradicate Multiflora Rose? This super-spreader invades fields and forests, creates impenetrable thickets, and destroys habitat. Like many invasives, it arrived by seemingly innocent means...in 1886, this brambly shrub was imported to the East Coast from Japan as a rootstock for garden roses. Unfortunately it soon escaped planted areas and became a serious invader of agricultural lands and natural areas. Multiflora Rose competes for soil nutrients and alters the structure of grasslands and forests, rendering them less desirable for nesting birds and mammals, and it shades out native plants, reducing biodiversity and preventing forest regeneration.

The sharp thorns can gash skin and even puncture tires on farm equipment!

Because Multiflora Rose tolerates a wide range of soil and light conditions, it infests many types of habitat. It smothers vegetation in fields, pastures, and roadsides, as well as in woodland edges and successional forests. In mature forests, it can clamber high into tree tops by using its thorns to “climb.” This thorny beast is a serious pest up and down the East Coast, throughout the Midwest, and in the Pacific Northwest. Many states declare it a noxious weed and require its control. Replacing it with a native alternative, such as our lovely Virginia Rose (*Rosa Virginiana*), is highly recommended.

Once established, Multiflora Rose is VERY hard to get rid of. Best to not let it get established in the first place. But don't despair — eradicating it is important, especially because birds eat the fruit and scatter the seeds. Combining several control methods and repeating them for two to three or more years work best. You'll find instructions [here](#):

DO NOT compost this plant!

Multiflora Rose is classified as HIGH invasive risk on the Virginia Invasive Species Plant List from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. More information:

<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/invspinfo>

<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/document/nh-invasive-plant-list-2014.pdf>

<https://blueridgeprism.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Multiflora-Rose-Factsheet-5-27-17-VDOF-w-Box-FINAL.pdf>

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sites/parks/files/assets/documents/naturalcultural/non-native-invasive-id-control-booklet.pdf>



Figure 1: Multiflora rose in a farmer's field



Figure 2: Multiflora berries in winter



Figure 3: Multiflora rose in bloom



Figure 4: Multiflora rose forms a dense thicket



Figure 5: Multiflora rose overtakes its environment



Figure 6: Multiflora rose stems and blossoms