Garden invaders: #1 in a series

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Porcelainberry Ampelopsis bevipedunculata

If you look around the landscape at this time of year, you are going to see the 1/4" turquoise berries and three-lobed leaves of porcelainberry. And if you keep your eyes open, you're going to see a lot of it. Often mistaken for the native grape, Porcelainberry is a deciduous vine of the grape family (Vitaceae). It has become an aggressive invader in our region, especially along streambanks, pond and lake edges, and in open "edge" areas like roadsides. The vine climbs by tendrils and can completely cover other plants. As it climbs, it attacks the shrub, sapling and sub-canopy levels of forest edges. It forms dense green mats as it out-competes our native species for light, water, and nutrients. To see these mats look at the vegetation along Rte 117. Or the Hudson side of Kingsland Point Park. Or perhaps in your next-door neighbor's yew hedge.



HOW DOES PORCELAINBERRY SPREAD? Seeds are distributed by birds who eat the berries

MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

Diligent cutting of vines near ground level and continual removal of ensuing sprouts have proven to be successful non-chemical control strategies. Chemical management involves using herbicide products applied to foliage or directly to stem after it has been cut. Do this immediately after flowering but before fruit production to minimize spread of seed.