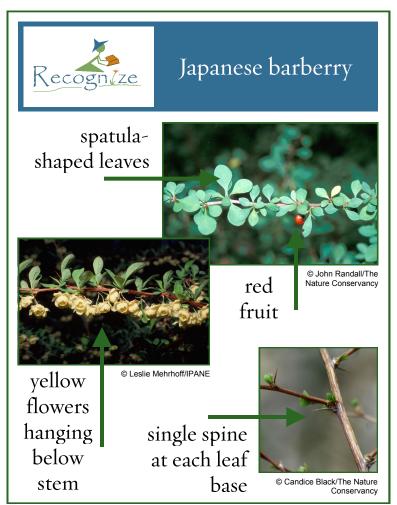
JAPANESE BARBERRY

invasive fact sheet





Japanese barberry invades Vermont's forests and fields. The plants are easy to see in the fall when their red berries are most colorful.

The Problem

- Japanese barberry can quickly colonize a forest. Birds and small mammals feast on the fruits and drop them, starting new populations. The plants also reproduce vegetatively. Individual stems reach toward the ground and 'layer,' developing new plants.
- It can grow so thickly in woodlands that few native shrub and tree seedlings or herbaceous plants survive.
- Barberry infestations can lead to increases in rates of Lyme disease. Ticks like to hang out on the tips of shrubs, waiting for mammals to pass by. Mice populations an alternate host for Lyme disease thrive in the thorny Barberry stands.
- Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) is sold in different ornamental varieties such as 'Aurea' with gold leaves or 'Crimson Pygmy' with purple leaves. Though these cultivars look different from the green-leaved Japanese barberry that is found in forests, studies show that these ornamental varieties are all capable of producing offspring with green leaves.



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