

Japanese stiltgrass

Microstegium vimineum

Overview

Japanese stiltgrass is an invasive annual grass that is native to Asia and was introduced first to Tennessee around 1919. It is now spread broadly throughout the Southeast, mid-Atlantic, Midwest, and Northeastern US. Unlike some invasive plants, this one will invade undisturbed habitats as well as disturbed ones.



J. H. Miller & T. Bodner, SWSS, Bugwood.org

Appearance

Plant germinates in the spring and grows in a sprawling, drooping habit. Mature plant is 0.5-4 ft (0.1-1.2 m) tall, and can root at the nodes, creating large mats of foliage.

Foliage is pale green, alternate on the stem, and lance-shaped. Leaves are 1-3 in (2.5-7.6 cm) long and have a shiny, off-center midvein. They are slightly hairy on both sides of the leaf.

Inflorescence is a spike-like raceme, growing from leaf axils in September. Fruit occur in late September through October. Seeds are small and easily adhere to fur, tread, clothing, etc. Each plant can produce up to 1,000 seeds.

Fruit



Leslie J. Mehrhoff, UConn, Bugwood.org

Bristles (awns) on the seeds catch in fur, clothes, etc.



L. J. Mehrhoff, UConn, Bugwood.org

Rooting at the nodes

Where the stems touch the ground, roots will grow from the stem nodes into the ground.

Off-center midvein and alternate leaf arrangement



Leslie J. Mehrhoff, UConn, Bugwood.org

5483954

Infestation



Leslie J. Mehrhoff, UConn, Bugwood.org

UGA5271071

More Info

Roots are shallow and plants are easily pulled up when soil is loose or damp, making this species a good candidate for volunteer pull days.