



Invasive Plants in Pennsylvania

Linden Viburnum

Viburnum dilatatum



Photo: U.S. Forest Service

Background:

This native of eastern Asia was brought to the U.S. as an ornamental landscape plant. Many cultivars are still sold in the nursery trade including 'Catskill,' 'Erie,' 'Michael Dodge,' and 'Oneida.'

Range:

The range of this species in the U.S. is not yet widespread. It can be found in scattered portions of the Mid-Atlantic (including PA) and New England.

Habitat:

This plant can adapt to various soil types although it prefers moist, fertile soil with a slightly acidic or neutral pH. It will grow in full sun to light shade.

Description:

This shrub can grow up to 10 feet tall and equally as wide. The simple, two to five-inch long deciduous leaves vary in shape and are arranged oppositely along the branches.

Leaves are dark green until the fall, when they turn a red, bronze or burgundy color. Small creamy white flower clusters bloom from May to June. Small bright red clusters of fruit appear in the fall and persist through the winter, when they shrivel up like raisins.



Photo: Quert1234, <http://ja.wikipedia.org>

Biology and Spread:

Fruits grow in abundance along the length of the branches. Birds do love to eat the fruits, so they are a major vector for the spread of this species' seeds.



Photo: KENPEI, <http://commons.wikimedia.org>

Ecological Threat:

Little is known about the exact impacts this species has on the environment but it is assumed to have the ability to take over forest edges and disturbed areas, replacing native shrubs and understory trees. The U.S. Forest Service ranks it of "local concern", worth monitoring for possible invasive tendencies.

How to Control this Species:

Little research has specifically been aimed at controlling this species. However, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden suggests hand-pulling plants that are less than three feet tall.

Taller shrubs should be cut at ground level prior to fruiting, then apply a 20 percent solution of glyphosate herbicide to avoid re-sprouting.

Look-A-Likes:

Mapleleaf viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*) (top image) and possumhaw (*Viburnum nudum* L.) (bottom image) are native shrubs that could be confused with linden viburnum.



Photo: Elmer Verhasselt,
www.forestryimages.org



Photo: James Miller & Ted Bodner,
Southern Weed Science Society,
www.forestryimages.org

Native Alternatives:

There are a variety of native shrubs with attractive flowers, fall foliage and fruit for wildlife, including:

Common winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*)



Photo: Dow Gardens Archive,
www.forestryimages.org

American beautyberry (*Callicarpa Americana*)



Photo: John Byrd, Mississippi State U.,
www.forestryimages.org

Red chokeberry (*Photinia pyrifolia*)



Photo: Dow Gardens Archive,
www.forestryimages.org

References:

Invasive Exotic Plant Pest Tutorial for Land Managers:

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/invasivetutorial/viburnum.htm>

University of Connecticut Plant Database:

<http://www.hort.uconn.edu/plants/v/vibpli/vibpli1.html>

Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health:

<http://www.invasive.org>