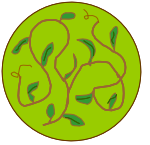




# FRIGHTENING FACTS

South Carolina and North Carolina Exotic Plant Pest Councils



**SCIENTIFIC NAME: *LYGODIUM JAPONICUM***  
**COMMON NAME: JAPANESE CLIMBING FERN**  
**\*KNOWN TO OCCUR IN SC AND NC\***

## WHAT IS JAPANESE CLIMBING FERN?

**Plant Type:** Perennial fern/vine

**Form/Size:** Twining vine, can climb to 90 ft.; Stem is thin, wiry, green, orange or black. Dies back in winter. Forms mats, old stems provide trellis for new growth.

**Leaves:** Fern fronds opposite, triangular, usually twice compound, deeply dissected, appear lacy, 3-6 in. long and 2-3 in. wide. Hairs on lower surface. Light green, turning tan in winter.

**Flowers:** none; sporangia on fertile fronds produce spores.

**Fruit:** none; large numbers of tiny spores produced

**Means of Spread:** Spores and rhizomes. Spores dispersed by wind, water, animals, humans, vehicles, equipment. Plants and spores moved around in pine straw bales. Self fertilization assists in long distance dispersal.

**Family:** Lygodiaceae

**Similar Species:** American Climbing Fern or Hartford Fern (*Lygodium palmatum*). Distinguished by palmately compound fronds with 5-7 finger-like lobes. Occurs in swamps, streambeds and ravines. *Also see Old World Climbing Fern factsheet.*



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*Lygodium palmatum (native)*

## WHERE DID JAPANESE CLIMBING FERN COME FROM?

**Origin:** Japan, Eastern Asia, tropical Australia

**Date of Introduction:** Introduced into Florida 1932

**Reason:** used as an ornamental, escaped from cultivation



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## WHERE AM I LIKELY TO FIND JAPANESE CLIMBING FERN?

**Habitat Type:** damp soils, sunny or shady areas, disturbed areas, roadsides, ditches, timbered land; hardwood, pine or mixed forests, floodplains, along rivers and streams, wet flatwoods, estuarine habitats.

**Distribution in SC:** all regions, multiple counties

**Distribution in NC:** limited, only known in Lee County

Early Detection & Rapid Response (EDRR) Species



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## WHY IS JAPANESE CLIMBING FERN A PROBLEM?



**Environment:** -Displaces and smothers native plants reducing diversity and altering wildlife habitat structure.

-Provides abundant ladder fuel for fire resulting in hot crown fires; alters natural fire ecology. Hot fires kill native plants and alter natural communities.

-Removal methods damage natural communities. Chemical methods can kill native plants. Use of heavy machinery will cause soil compaction.

**Economy:** -detrimental to timber industry by increasing fire intensity in timber stands.

-Detrimental to pine straw industry since spores are transported in pine straw bales.

-Control methods are expensive for landowners, timber companies, and government agencies.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I FIND JAPANESE CLIMBING FERN?

**Report:** take a photo, report the observation to EDDMapS: <http://www.se-eppc.org/> (location, size of infestation, etc.). *In SC:* Send digital photo to John Nelson at the USC Herbarium: [plantman@herbarium.org](mailto:plantman@herbarium.org) for verification.

**Control:** Repeated hand pulling in small infestations, pull aerial vines and treat with foliar herbicide, foliar herbicide treatments may be needed for larger infestations but native plants may be killed.

**Disposal:** Pulled material should be bagged prior to transport, and disposed of so as not to spread viable material.



## CURRENT LISTINGS:

SC-EPPC Ranking: Severe Threat/Vine

NC-EPPC/NCNPS: Significant Threat

GA-EPPC: Category 1, State Noxious Weed in FL

## LEARN MORE!

- Invasive.org (images): <http://www.invasive.org/species/subject.cfm?sub=3045>
- NatureServe: <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer/servlet/NatureServe?searchName=Lygodium%20japonicum>
- Invasive Plants of the Eastern United States: <http://www.invasive.org/eastern/srs/JCF.html>
- USDA Plants Database: <http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=lyja>
- University of Florida IFAS Extension: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/FR280>

Prepared by Sudie Daves Thomas for SC-EPPC and Early Detection & Rapid Response System

Early Detection & Rapid Response (EDRR) Species