

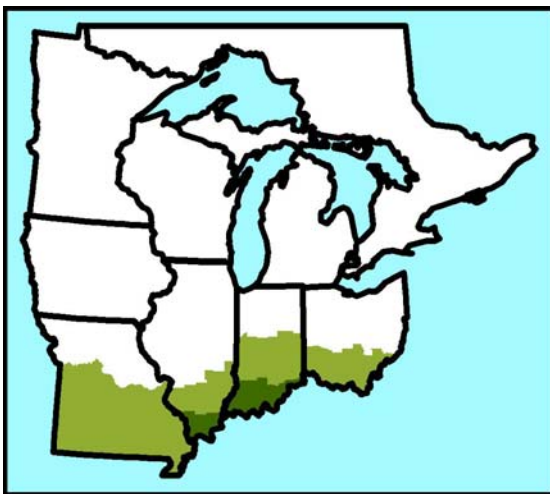
JAPANESE STILT GRASS

Microstegium vimineum

Description: Japanese Stilt Grass is an annual sprawling grass that grows to around 12-24 inches tall and resembles miniature bamboo. The leaves are wide, alternate, pale green, lance-shaped and 2-3 inches long. There is a pale silvery stripe of reflective hairs along the midrib of the upper surface. Flowers are spikes of 1-3 inches long and bloom in late summer to early fall with prolific seed production.



Native range: Japan, Korea, China, Malaysia, India (<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/mivi1.htm>)



Ecological threat: This plant threatens river and stream corridors, floodplains, moist woodlands and forested wetlands. Japanese stilt grass is especially well adapted to low light conditions. Stilt grass spreads to form extensive patches, displacing native species that are not able to compete with it. Where white-tail deer are over-abundant, they may facilitate its invasion by feeding on native plant species and avoiding stilt grass.

Current North American Range: Stilt Grass is currently reported in central and southern Missouri and Indiana, and southern Illinois and Ohio.

Current Midwest general distribution, including southern Ontario Not Known Isolated Locally Abundant Widespread

Early Detection and Rapid Response Can Help Stop the Spread!

JAPANESE STILT GRASS, *Microstegium vimineum*

MANAGEMENT OPTIONS (<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/mivi1.htm>)

A variety of control methods are available for stilt grass, depending on the extent of the infestation, the type of habitat, and the availability of labor and other resources. Preventing the introduction of stilt grass into non-infested areas and out of infested areas should be a priority. Early control of new infestations will also reduce the likelihood of establishment.

Manual

Stilt grass is a shallow-rooted annual that can be pulled by hand throughout the growing season, especially when the soil is moist and entire plants with roots can be removed. Pulling is easier and probably more effective in mid-to-late summer when the plants are much taller and more branched. At this stage, entire plants can be easily removed by grabbing the basal portion of a plant and pulling firmly. In short time, a fair amount of stilt grass can be pulled and piled up to dehydrate on site. If plants are already in the fruiting stage, they should be bagged and disposed of offsite to prevent dispersal of seed. Also, try to avoid pulling native grasses like Virginia cutgrass (*Leersia virginia*) that often grow intermingled with stilt grass and may be difficult to distinguish from it. Because hand pulling plants disturbs the soil and may expose stilt grass seed from previous seasons, late season pulling will avoid the likelihood of seed germination. Hand pulling of plants will need to be repeated and continued for many seasons until the seed bank is exhausted.

Mechanical

Stilt grass can be mowed in late summer (i.e., August through September) when the plants are flowering but preferably before seed is produced. This can be done using a lawn mower or "Weed Whacker" type machine or a scythe. Because stilt grass is primarily an annual plant, cutting late in the season before the plants would die back naturally avoids the possibility of regrowth. Recent information suggests that stilt grass plants cut early in the summer respond by regrowing and flowering soon after cutting, much earlier than they would normally flower. Another reason to cut late in late summer to fall.

Chemical

For extensive stilt grass infestations, use of a systemic herbicide such as glyphosate (e.g., Roundup®) is a more practical and effective method. If applying glyphosate to stilt grass in wetland sites, use the formulation labeled for wetland areas (e.g., Rodeo®). Apply a 2% solution mixed with water (8 oz. per 3 gals. mix) and a surfactant in late summer. Be careful to avoid application to non-target plants because glyphosate is a non-specific herbicide that will kill or damage most plant species it contacts.

Biological

No biological controls are currently available for this plant.

For more information on control and management of this species, please visit the following Web sites: www.usda.plants.gov, www.nps.gov/plants/alien/factmain.htm, tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/control.html, dnr.wi.gov/invasives/plants.htm, www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/plants/main.shtml, <http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/pope1.htm>

Early Detection and Rapid Response Can Help Stop the Spread!

