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## Japanese Honeysuckle

*Lonicera japonica*

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### **Identification:**

Climbing or running perennial vine. Leaves are arranged oppositely on vines and are oblong to oval, sometimes being lobed. The older growth vines are somewhat brittle with a thin, cream colored, peeling bark. The flowers are tubular with five fused petals, occurring in summer and being white or pink, turning yellow with age. The fruit is small and dark in color and contains two to three seeds. It is evergreen in all but the coldest climates. Japanese Honeysuckle climbs shrubs, trees, and other vertical surfaces in order to reach sunlight. Lacking tendrils, it accomplishes this by wrapping its vines around vertical surfaces.



**Origin:** Japan and Korea

### **Habitat:**

Grows well in a variety of conditions. Seems to do best in full or part sun but it can handle partial shade. When located in shade, it climbs aggressively to reach sunlight.



### **Ecological Threat:**

Japanese honeysuckle is a very serious invasive plant. It very aggressively competes with all other plant life in the areas that it infests, and usually quickly becomes dominant. Its aggressive climbing nature causes heavy damage to nearby trees and shrubs, and mortality of the tree or shrub usually soon follows. Some trees are girdled by honeysuckle vines by squeezing and cutting off the water supply of the plant. It has the advantage of being semi-evergreen as well, and if located in at least part sun, it will out-compete even the hardiest native species. It also out-competes other invasive plants.



### **Native alternatives:**

Trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*), pictured left  
Trumpet creeper (*Campsis radicans*)  
Crossvine (*Bignonia capreolata*)

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Hiwassee River Watershed Coalition  
90 Tennessee Street, Ste. D  
P.O. Box 889  
Murphy, NC 28906  
828-837-5414  
[www.hrwc.net](http://www.hrwc.net)

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