
Multiflora Rose

Rosa multiflora

Identification:

Multiflora rose is a thorny perennial shrub with arching stems arising from clumps and arching out and toward the ground around the central clump. The arching main stems are covered with hard, curved, very sharp thorns. The alternately arranged leaves are pinnately compound with five or more leaflets with sharply toothed margins. The flowers are somewhat showy, fragrant, and are light pink to white in color. The seeds or "hips" are small, red in color, and remain on the plant throughout the winter. The arching stems often root where they touch the ground, giving rise to new plants.

Origin: Japan, Korea, and Eastern China

Habitat:

Highly tolerant of a variety of soil and light conditions. Multiflora rose can survive in quite shady conditions in dense woods, and grows very prolifically in riparian areas and old fields. It has the ability to climb trees in some places to reach for sunlight. Seeds have the ability to remain viable in the ground for up to twenty years. When a disturbance such as a blow down or logging occurs, these seeds germinate and begin growing in the new sunlight.

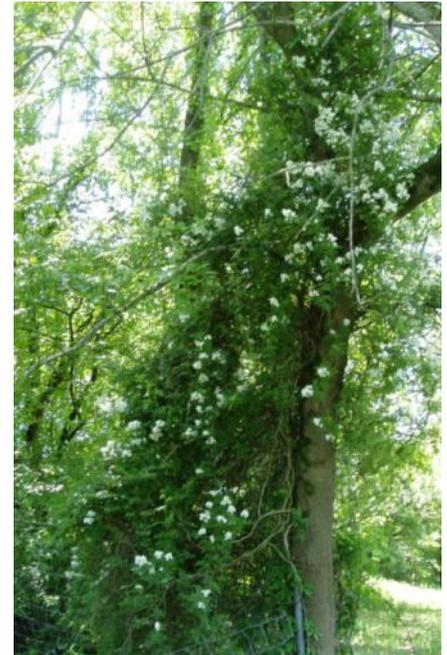
Ecological Threat:

Multiflora rose grows and spreads very quickly in good conditions, covering the ground and displacing native herbaceous species and shrubs. Trees in an infested area are in danger of damage from climbing stems weighing the tree down or breaking it down under the excessive weight. Although it was once considered a "conservation plant" and promoted for erosion control, living fences, and wildlife cover and food, it forms impassable thickets, stopping regeneration of native plants and trees and destroying native habitat for wildlife. The highly viable seeds are consumed by birds and spread great distances.

Multiflora rose is very hard to control once it has become established. It causes problems for farmers by invading crop and pastureland. It invades riparian areas and causes damage to native riparian buffer trees and shrubs, causing water quality concerns. Forestry practices are interrupted by it as well, because the multiflora rose covers the forest floor quickly after a disturbance such as logging and preventing tree regeneration.

Native alternatives:

Pasture rose (*Rosa carolina*)
Swamp rose (*Rosa palustris*)
Flowering raspberry (*Rubus odoratus*)



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