

Weed of The Week

Japanese Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*)

Not commonly thought of as a weed but rather an invasive woody vine, this week's weed of the week features one of Ohio's major threat to woodlands. Japanese Honeysuckle brought to New York from Asia in 1806 as an ornamental vining plant. Common to species of this nature, the plant escaped into nature. Japanese Honeysuckle can be found throughout the eastern half of the United States, increasingly becoming a threat to woodlands. Unlike American Honeysuckle this vine has a very aggressive growth habit that allows it to overtake and smother other plants. The root system of this plant can reach 10 feet across and 3 feet deep in rich fertile soils. The stems of this plant grow vertically across the surface of the soils with fine hairs and becoming woody as the plant ages. The leaves have opposite branching, 3 inches in length and resemble an egg in shape. Most commonly Japanese Honeysuckle will be the first green plant you will see in the woods in late winter but with mild winter it is not uncommon to see this plant stay green throughout the winter season. Japanese Honeysuckle produces a 2 lipped flower with 5 petals in the form of a tube, young flowers are white and yellow as they mature. Producing a black or very deep dark red berry this invasive can be spread rapidly by birds. Some ways to control this invasive is mechanical removal (make sure to remove the hole root system), cultural practices such as the use of livestock like goats, and herbicide control such as cross bow, Glyphosate, and Garlon 3A have been proven effective on control but as always the key word is vigilance!

