

Japanese Barberry

Berberis thunbergii



Deciduous thorny shrub.

Widespread in New Castle County, locally common in Kent and Sussex Counties.

Small one and one-half inch, oval or spatula-shaped leaves are arranged in tight

clusters close to branches. Pale yellow, flowers borne singly or in clusters of 2 – 4 in April. Half-inch long oval fruits ripen from green to bright red in autumn and may persist throughout the winter. Interior of cut stem is yellow.

Highly shade tolerant. Alters soil chemistry. Occurs in a variety of habitats including closed canopy forests, open woodlands, wetlands, pastures, meadows and disturbed areas.

Deer do not eat this plant. Fruit are eaten by birds and small mammals.

Japanese Barberry - Control Methods

Hand Pulling – Effective for seedlings and young plants. Care must be taken to remove the entire root system to prevent resprouting.

Mar - Nov; or anytime identification is possible.

Cut Stump – Cut stem 2 - 3 inches above the ground and apply a pre-mixed 50% solution of a water-soluble triclopyr amine with water to the stump immediately following cutting. Avoid run-off onto the soil.

Mar – Nov; best following full leaf expansion in spring.

Foliar Spray – A 2% solution of triclopyr in a 0.5% non-ionic surfactant is effective when applied in an even coat to all foliage. Spray until wet but before it begins to drip off the leaves.

Early Summer through Fall