



Michigan Invasive Plant Council

Michigan Plant Invasiveness Assessment System (MPIAS June 2008)

Lonicera japonica, Japanese Honeysuckle

Summary and Recommendations for Michigan: *Lonicera japonica* is a woody vine, long promoted as a horticulture and erosion controlling plant, and still sold for these purposes in many areas. It has been used as a fast-growing plant for rehabilitation of disturbed ground. Japanese honeysuckle becomes less invasive in northern portions of its eastern North American range due to a shorter growing season and frequent winter kill of accumulated stem growth. *Lonicera japonica* does not possess the same biological behavior in Michigan as it does in the eastern United States or in areas to the south. There is little potential for long-distance seed dispersal in Michigan.

In the Eastern and Middle Atlantic United States, *L. japonica* is a serious problem and primarily occurs in disturbed habitat, including successional fields, roadsides, forest edges, and fencerows. It is common in dry-mesic to wet-mesic upland forest, floodplain forest, and southern pine stands, and particularly common in forest openings created by disturbance, such as treefall, logging, or disease. Seeds may be eaten by birds and then dispersed. It can also be spread by dumping of garden waste. Although there are no published studies examining seed banks, indirect evidence suggests a low potential for formation of persistent seed banks. It reproduces almost entirely by vegetative means. Vegetative reproduction rate results in moderate increase in population size.

Invasiveness in Michigan: *Lonicera japonica*, Japanese honeysuckle's potential invasiveness and invasiveness rank is primarily influenced by data published in areas of similar climates outside Michigan. Its potential invasiveness is considered medium due to its seed reproduction and dispersal. Its invasiveness rank is medium across natural, forest and managed landscape systems and low in agriculture production and constructed habitats. Regional importance is listed as insignificant in the Upper and Northern Lower Peninsula ecological regions. Southern Lower Peninsula is medium for natural, forests, and managed landscapes. For more information consult the complete MPIAS assessment.

Value in Michigan: Recognized value found in horticulture, landscape, erosion control and wildlife .

Responsible Use: *Lonicera japonica* can be used as an effective ground cover for erosion control. There are several cultivars that are available in the marketplace. It may be used responsibly in parts of the landscape that do not border adjacent properties. Japanese honeysuckle should not be discarded in natural areas or areas adjoining natural areas. Rather, plant parts and trimmings should be disposed of responsibly.

Early detection/rapid response: Japanese honeysuckle is easily identified by its leaf characteristics and terminal buds on its stems. Consult printed or on-line resources for pictorial descriptors of the plant.

Long term control/management: Mechanical treatments can suppress unwanted Japanese honeysuckle, but plants will sprout in response to cambium damage. Mowing reduces the spread of vegetative stems but may not completely eradicate entire populations. Herbicides may control Japanese honeysuckle, especially when used in combination with other methods. Can be controlled by foliar application of herbicides in late fall after frost when other deciduous species have dropped their leaves. Chemical applications should be performed in accordance with the manufacturer's label. Gardeners may simply remove plants as encountered.

Restoration: Removal of *Lonicera japonica* may require restoration. In such case, a competent restoration ecologist should be consulted for appropriate species and planting procedures.

For complete information from the Michigan Plant Invasiveness Assessment System
Consult: <http://invasiveplantsmi.org>