

# GOUTWEED

invasive  
fact sheet



© John Randall/The Nature Conservancy

Goutweed invades Vermont's fields, river edges and floodplain forests. It is **easy to see in July** when its white flowers are in bloom.



© Leslie Mehrhoff/ IPANE



goutweed



small white flowers found on tall stalks rising above leaves

© IPANE

variegated-leaf variety



© IPANE

leaf with 3 sets of 3 leaflets

## The Problem

- ◆ Goutweed, also called Bishop's Weed, (*Aegopodium podagraria*) spreads quickly by fast growing underground roots called rhizomes. Even a small piece of rhizome can re-sprout into a new plant, so take care to dispose of all plant material carefully and clean your clothing and shoes after going through or working with a patch of goutweed.
- ◆ Beautiful floodplain forests can easily become inundated with goutweed, impacting the populations of ostrich ferns, silver maple and other native plants.
- ◆ While the plant is illegal to sell, local plant sales still sell this plant and some gardeners think it makes a nice groundcover, inadvertently introducing a problem into their flower beds and nearby natural areas.


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### For new infestations:

 New infestations should be treated rapidly before an extensive root system is established. Hand pull and grub-up all stems, roots, and rhizomes. Bag all plant material and allow to sit for one week before disposing in a landfill. Re-check site each year.

### For large infestations:

 Cover the patch with thick black plastic in the spring as soon as new growth appears. Lay plastic on an area larger than the patch and secure edges with sandbags, bricks or ground staples. Leave for a full year.

 Goutweed may also be cut in late summer, after leaf-out, and then covered with plastic.

DO NOT COMPOST! DO NOT DISCARD IN WOODS OR FIELD!  
Plant fragments will re-sprout.



Non-invasive Alternatives

© Stefan Bloodworth/Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center



Christmas fern  
*Polystichum acrostichoides*

© Phyllis Weyand/Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center



bearberry  
*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*

lowbush  
blueberry

*Vaccinium  
angustifolium*



© Allan G. Austin/Canadian Museum of Nature

sweet  
fern

*Comptonia  
peregrina*



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Wise On Weeds!

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