



Invasive Plant Alert¹

Linden Viburnum

Viburnum dilatatum Thunb.

Viburnum dilatatum is native to China and Japan and was introduced in the U.S. in the 1800s as an ornamental.



Figure 1 Linden Viburnum.
W.Baumgartner. Wikimedia Commons

Where to Look

Viburnum dilatatum occurs in scattered locations throughout the mid-Atlantic region from New York to Virginia and grows in disturbed forests and wetlands. It has been reported to be invasive in natural areas in Virginia, locally along the George Washington Memorial Parkway, and in Rock Creek National Park.

Identifying the Plant

Viburnum dilatatum is a multi-stemmed, deciduous shrub or small tree, with an overall upright to rounded shape, 8-10 ft tall and 6-10 ft wide.

Foliage can be dense to the ground. Leaves are opposite, dark green, with shallowly toothed margins. They can have highly variable shapes on the same plant from nearly round to strap-like. Leaves are 2-5 in.

long by 1-2½ in. wide, usually covered in soft hairs. Leaves redden and drop relatively late in the fall. 2 to 4 circular glands are best seen from the underside of the leaf.

Creamy white flowers are arranged in numerous flattened clusters. They bloom from May to early June. Flowers give way to ovoid bright red fruits about 1/3 in. wide that mature in late summer to early fall and persist into early winter. Berries are attractive to birds.

Viburnum dilatatum can be confused with *Viburnum dentatum* (Arrowwood), particularly as seedlings. Arrowwood's leaves are rounder and more deeply toothed, with rough hairs or no hairs, as opposed to the soft hairs of *V. dilatatum*. Arrowwood has round, dark purple fruits.



Figure 2 Fruit. Dr. Mark Brand, Univ. of Connecticut

Ecological threat

Shrubs can grow in high thickets that cast dense shade, suppressing natives. A dense cover of young plants produced from seed and vegetative re-growth blanket the ground in infested areas. *V. dilatatum* leaves

out earlier in the spring and keeps its leaves later into the fall than most natives, giving it a competitive advantage.



Figure 3 Flowers. Dr. Mark Brand, Univ. of Connecticut

How to get rid of it?

Do not plant *V. dilatatum*. Cutting should be avoided in spring because cut branches can reproduce by layering if left on the ground. Use of a systemic herbicide containing glyphosate or triclopyr will prevent resprouting. Seedlings can be pulled up by hand. Seed heads should be removed from mature plants to prevent seed dispersal and seedling establishment.

Resources

Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas, 4th ed. (2010). www.nps.gov/plants/alien/pubs/midatlantic/vidi.htm

UConn Plant Database
www.hort.uconn.edu

New Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team
www.njisst.org/files/PlantIDFactSheets.pdf

¹ This species has been identified as a potential or emerging threat to natural areas in the mid-Atlantic region