

# Invasive Exotic Plant Factsheet

## Mile-a-minute (*Polygonum perfoliatum*)

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



Shenandoah National Park

### Overview

Mile-a-minute is a fast growing annual vine from Asia. Thriving in light shade to full sun, mile-a-minute can quickly overtop and smother herbs, small shrubs and tree seedlings. Typical habitats include forest edges, streambanks, and areas disturbed by fire, defoliating insects or logging activities.

Mile-a-minute is currently found in ten locations in Shenandoah National Park. This invasive species has the potential to become much more widespread in the Park and region.



Seedlings begin to germinate in late March and continue through much of June.



Plants may be a foot tall by June. Note the triangular leaves and the circular stipule surrounding the stem.

### Key Features for Identification

A prickly, weak stemmed annual vine that scrambles over small trees, shrubs and other plants.

Leaf blades are in the shape of a roughly equilateral triangle, 1 to 2 inches wide and are pale green. A modified leaf rings the stem at the base of the leaf stalk.

Pea-sized bright blue berries are produced at the end of stems as early as June in our area.



Clusters of blue berries appear at the branch tips as early as June.

### Preventing the spread of mile-a-minute

Because mile-a-minute does not thrive in deep shade, minimizing disturbance to vegetation, and re-vegetating disturbed areas promptly, can help to prevent its establishment.

If you travel through an area infested with mile-a-minute, be sure to clean shoe treads or anything else that may have picked up soil containing seed before leaving the vicinity.

### How can it be controlled?

Mile-a-minute is a weak rooted annual, making hand removal easy for small patches. Larger infestations can be controlled using glyphosate products. Repeatedly (at least every two weeks) cutting plants to the ground throughout the growing season (June through early October) may also be effective. A biological control agent (a beetle) has been released in some areas in an effort to control mile-a-minute.



Seeds are hard, black, shiny and are about 1/8 inch in diameter. Seeds may begin to mature as early as late June in our area.

Report sightings of mile-a-minute in Shenandoah National Park to the Park exotic plant management crew at 540-999-3500 ext. 3492 or [Jake\\_Hughes@nps.gov](mailto:Jake_Hughes@nps.gov).