



Japanese Barberry



Japanese Barberry is a shade tolerant deciduous shrub that can grow 2-8 feet tall and was originally introduced to the United States in the 1864 as a landscape shrub. It is still commonly used for landscape purposes, but is also becoming more widely outlawed to be sold by certain states.

Japanese Barberry has thin grooved branches with 1/2 inch spines. The leaves are found in clusters and are paddle shaped. Bright red berries, 1/4 inch long are a popular food for birds which leads to its rapid spread.



Japanese Barberry is common in shaded forest areas and can form thick stands and outcompete native species. It also is common in wetlands and open fields. The plant can spread through rhizomes which produce above ground sprouts surrounding the parent plant. In large infestations it can change the soil chemistry because of chemicals produced by the plant, making the soil more basic.

Japanese Barberry can be controlled by hand pulling the plants when possible. It is best to complete this prior to flowering or berry production in the summer. Chemical control is also an effective management strategy.

