



GOUTWEED

(*Aegopodium podagraria*)



Identification:

Goutweed has green tri-lobed leaves. There is a variegated form with white leaf edges that is also popular as a ground cover. White flat-topped flower clusters are produced on tall stems during mid summer.

History:

Also called Bishop's Weed or Snow-on-the-Mountain, goutweed was first introduced to the United States in the early 1800s from Europe and northern Asia as a low maintenance ground cover. It is a shade-tolerant herbaceous perennial. It is now illegal to sell Goutweed in many states.

Reproduction & spread:

It is an aggressive invasive that forms dense patches inhibiting other vegetation. It spreads primarily by an extensive rhizome root system that can branch and spread several feet. The rhizomes are white in color, and the plant easily re-sprouts from fragments of its rhizomes. Seed dispersal does occur but the primary spread to new areas is by humans through intentional planting or dumping of garden waste that contains fragments of rhizomes.

Control Methods:

It is virtually impossible to eradicate large patches without using systemic herbicides such as glyphosate. Simply pulling the plant will just increase its spread because of the underground rhizomes that break off the root system when the plant is pulled. Mowing and covering the patch with black plastic is problematic since the rhizomes can extend far beyond the patch. Small patches can be controlled by careful and persistent digging the entire patch and meticulously removing all pieces of the white rhizomes. All plant material should be placed in the sun to completely dry or in a black plastic bag to completely decay. Live plant material should not be placed in a landfill or compost. Replanting the area with native ground covers such as Canadian Anemone, Golden Alexander, Wild Sarsaparilla, or Dwarf Crested Iris is suggested.

