

Weed of the Month for September 2016

Sweet Autumn Clematis (*Clematis terniflora*)

Origin: Japan/China

Interesting Fact: Sweet Autumn Clematis is still widely sold as a landscaping plant. Even though there are several similar native clematises (with toothed leaves, instead of entire), they are difficult to find at plant nurseries; and even when found, both the invasive and natives are often labeled the same, "Sweet Autumn Clematis."

Description: Sweet Autumn Clematis is a perennial, semi-evergreen vine that can grow up to 30 ft. tall and has clusters of 4-petaled white flowers with an intoxicatingly sweet smell.

Defining characteristics:

- Opposite, compound leaves with 3-5 entire (not toothed) leaflets
- Large clusters of white flowers during late summer/early fall



(Left image) Sweet Autumn Clematis' clusters of 4-petaled white flowers

(Center image) A bramble of Sweet Autumn Clematis' leaves

(Right image) An individual 5 leaflet leaf of Sweet Autumn Clematis

Habitat: Found along right-of-ways, forest edges, urban/suburban areas.

A roadside infestation of Sweet Autumn Clematis along Main Street in Vincennes.



Ecological threat: Sweet Autumn Clematis can climb up to 30 feet, overtopping other vegetation. Its vigorous growth shades out the vegetation underneath.

Control Methods:

- Manual: Repeated cutting or pulling small individuals can be effective.
- Chemical: Applying foliar glyphosate or triclopyr to the leaves when the plant is flowering. For larger individuals, the vine can be cut near the ground, and then a cut-stump concentration of glyphosate should be applied to the cut surface.

References

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