

Japanese Barberry & Backlegged Ticks: On the Thorns of a Dilemma

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<http://naturechange.org/2017/04/27/japanese-barberry-blacklegged-ticks-on-the-thorns-of-a-dilemma/>

Imported from Japan a long time ago, Japanese barberry was used for landscaping around homes and buildings for years. Plant nurseries liked this shrub because it's very hardy, drought tolerant and deer don't like. And its dense woody branches can sport dark green, yellow or purple leaves, as well as lots of thorns, and pretty, red berries in the fall.

But Japanese barberry is a dangerous plant. The Northwest Michigan Invasive Species Network says this is one of the nastiest invasive plants in our region. In the wild, Barberry is a real menace to both natural habitats and human health because it forms dense thickets that offer a perfect setting for mice and ticks that carry lyme disease.

Topics Covered

Invasive Species; Ecology; Stewardship

Next Generation Science Standards

- HS-LS2-7. Design, evaluate, and refine a solution for reducing the impacts of human activities on the environment and biodiversity.