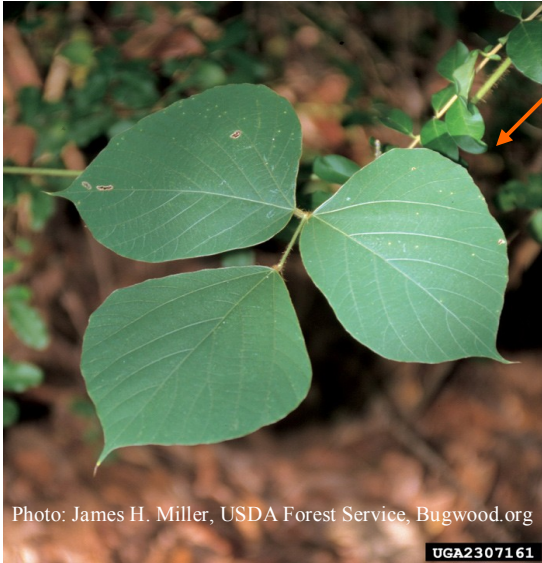


New Plant Invaders to Watch For

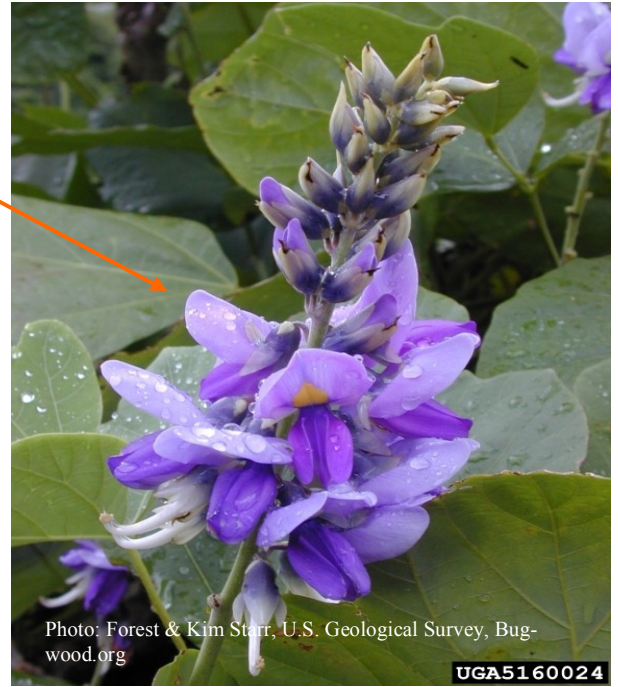
Kudzu (*Pueraria montana*)

The Threat: Kudzu is a fast-growing (up to one foot per day) perennial semi-woody vine that forms large masses of vegetation that can smother native plants. Although the above-ground portions of the plant die back during winter, kudzu forms large underground tubers that survive, allowing the plant to regrow in the spring. Kudzu is a serious problem in many southern states and has recently been found in several locations in Massachusetts. Projected climate warming could increase the likelihood of kudzu becoming a serious problem in Massachusetts in the future.



Kudzu has three-part compound leaves that are arranged alternately along the stem. A single compound leaf (shown here) is typically about 4 to 6 inches long and 4 inches wide. The undersides of the leaflets are hairy.

Flowers are grape scented and reddish purple with yellow at the base of the upper petal.



What to do : Learn to recognize the distinguishing features of kudzu shown in the images on this page. If found, report the finding to Lou Wagner, Mass Audubon Regional Scientist, at 978-927-1122 Extension 2705, or lwagner@massaudubon.org.



Fruits are flattened hairy brown pods, 1.5 to 2 inches long.



Kudzu forms dense mats of vegetation that climb over and smother other plants.