

Cynanchum rossicum, Pale Swallow-wort

Pale Swallow-wort is native to Ukraine and south-eastern Russia. This plant is an invasive vine that spreads via wind dispersal, creating new infestations. These plants can inhibit the growth of native species. Similar to Black Swallow-wort, this plant can inhabit a wide range of habitats, from sunny fields to densely shaded areas. The two Swallow-worts have been shown to have a negative effect on Monarch Butterfly populations as they lay their eggs on this toxic plant instead of Milkweed.

Description: Pale Swallow-wort has long, oval leaves that are arranged oppositely. The leaves of Pale Swallow-wort are a slightly lighter shade of green than Black Swallow-wort.

Control: Swallow-wort has a deep root system, making it hard to mechanically remove. If dug up, for small areas, the seed pods may be collected in plastic bags as long as they are disposed of properly. Collecting seed pods will aid in preventing the spread, but it is not a permanent solution. Chemical herbicides (glyphosate or triclopyr) may also be used to control swallow-wort. Biological controls for this species are currently being investigated, including a Ukrainian moth, *Hypena opulenta*.

Look-alikes: Pale and Black Swallow-wort are very similar, with different color flowers. The Honeyvine (*Cynanchum laeve*) also has similar leaves, but small white flowers instead.

Flower Time and Description: Swallow-wort flower in the early summer, producing the seed pods in late July - early August. The flowers are small, star-like, with a pink-maroon color. The petals have a narrower base, and are not hairy. The seed pods are 1.5-3 inches long.

