

## *Microstegium vimineum*, Japanese Stiltgrass

Japanese Stiltgrass can be commonly found in floodplains, forest edges, stream banks, fields, trails, ditches, or lawns/gardens. This species greatly decreases biodiversity in areas of infestation due to a vigorous growth pattern. Grazers prefer other grasses, contributing to the plants ability to outpace native vegetation.

**Description:** Japanese Stiltgrass can grow up to 3.5 feet tall, with leaves being 1-3 inches long. The leaves are alternate, asymmetrical, and have an off-centered mid-rib. These leaves are lance-shaped with a silver stripe. It is named for its shallow, stiling roots and is generally easy to remove from the ground.

**Control:** Early detection of Japanese Stiltgrass infestations are important because hand pulling removals are most effective in small populations. The plant is best to pull in the late summer because of the seed bank conditions. Mowing the flowered plants before the seeds set may also be effective, but mowing too early will still allow the plants to seed. Chemical efforts may be used to control larger infestations. Another alternate strategy for control includes covering stiltgrass with 4-6 inches of mulch, preventing it from emerging and spreading.

**Look-alikes:** The Japanese Stiltgrass looks similar to some native plants, including the Virginia cutgrass (*Leersia virginica*) and Pennsylvania knotweed (*Polygonum persicaria*). The unique line of silver hairs on the Stiltgrass can be used to distinguish it.

**Flower Time and Description:** Stiltgrass blooms in late summer to early fall. The flowers grow on thin spikes at the end of the stem.

