

Perilla frutescens, Beefsteak Plant

This is another invasive species that is in the mint family, such as Yellow Arch-angel. It has culinary and medicinal uses in its native range of Eastern Asia. There are some toxicity questions with this plant and reported livestock issues that come with its consumption, however it is used for cooking through salads and soups.

Population Status: Confirmed- NY, MD, GA, IL and IN.

Description: Beefsteak plant grows between one and three feet tall and has dark burgundy stems. The upper part of the leaf is wrinkly. It blooms in the late summer in small purple flowers that come up from a central stalk, which is hairy. Beefsteak plant prefers full sun though soil type is not as much of a factor in where it takes root. In that direct sunlight, the foliage becomes dark burgundy, and the leaves have large serrated teeth. Some places that this plant can be present include spots that other plants would not choose to grow based on soil conditions such as railroad right-of-ways.

Control: No studied manual control but I believe you could manually pull this plant.

Look-alikes: Coleus cultivars (ornamental) are related to beefsteak plant and look similar in leaf shape.

Flower Time and Description: Flowers of this plant are nettle-like and two-lipped. They bloom at the tips of stems from August-October.

