

Japanese Climbing Fern*

Lygodium japonicum



Japanese climbing fern—adult



Japanese climbing fern—fronds



Japanese climbing fern—seedling

Plant: Fern, climbing and twining perennial vine up to 7 m (22 ft) long, forming mats and infestations. *Rhizome* slender, widely creeping, black and wiry.

Stem: Trailing, twining, or climbing, wiry vine, slender but difficult to break. Green to straw-colored to reddish.

Fronds (leaves): Opposite on vine, light green and compound, once or twice divided, varying in appearance according to the number of divisions with highly dissected leaves appearing lacy. Generally triangular in shape, X-15 cm (3 1/8–6 in) long and S-8 cm (2–3 1/8 in) wide.

Sporangia (fern flowers): Fertile fronds on upper part of blade. usually with smaller segments having finger-like projections around the margins. bearing sporangia in double rows on the under margins.

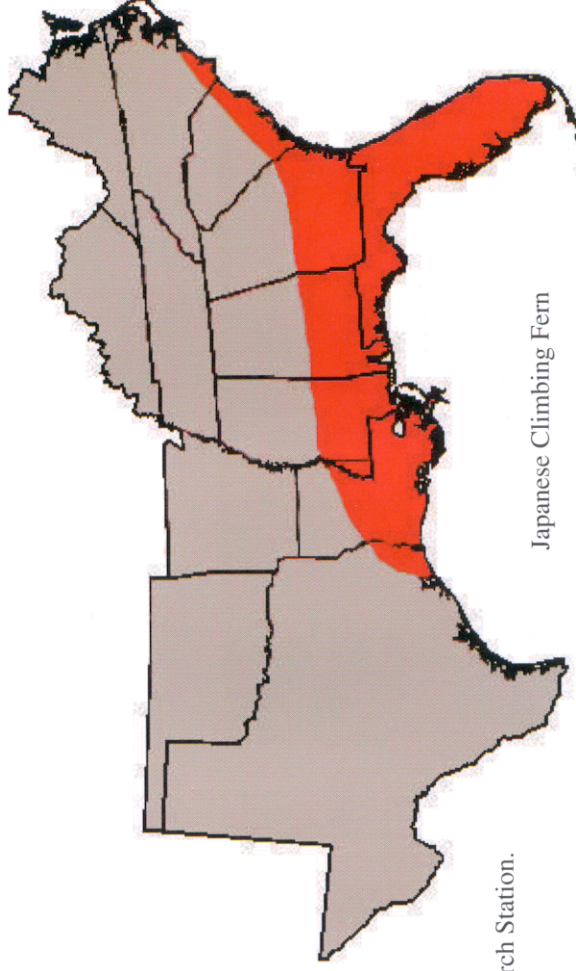
Fruit and Seeds: Tiny spores that are wind dispersed.

Range: Texas to Florida to North Carolina being more common in the coastal plain and scattered in the Piedmont.

Ecology: Spreads along highways and rights-of-way (prefers under and around bridges) from

where it invades open forests and stream margins. Scattered in occurrence, but can form infestation mats that can climb over shrubs and trees.

*Three similar species in Southeast with two being exotics.



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(Additional photo by Ted Bodner)

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