**Black Swallowwort**

Bulletin #2523

**Threats to Native Habitats**

Black swallowwort is particularly troublesome in open areas and along edges and banks where it grows over other vegetation, blocking light and creating tangled thickets. It alters and degrades natural habitat by crowding out native plants and is a threat to rare species in some locations in New England.

**Control**

Mechanical Control: Digging up the root crowns is effective but relatively destructive and the whole crown must be removed. Pulling the plants by hand generally leads to resprouting but can prevent seed production, especially if repeated during the growing season. A less effective method is pod picking, which also limits seed production, but does little damage to the existing population. Mowing is best for preventing seed production. Mow frequently (one to two visits per season) just as the pods are beginning to form.

Chemical Control: Apply a one-percent solution of a triclopyr-based herbicide at an application rate of 2.25–19 L/ha (one to eight quarts per acre). The use of a triclopyr-based herbicide is especially desirable in grassy areas. Repeated herbicide applications will most likely be necessary in vigorous stands. It is best to spray early in the season before viable seeds are produced (before mid-July). Cut-stem applications are recommended for small infestations or if nearby desirable vegetation will be adversely affected. Burning and grazing do not appear to be effective. Use herbicides responsibly and follow manufacturer’s directions. Contact the Maine Department of Agriculture for information on restrictions that apply to the use of herbicides. Consult a licensed herbicide applicator before applying herbicides over large areas.