**Japanese Barberry**

Bulletin #2504

**Threats to Native Habitats**

Japanese barberry has escaped from cultivation and is progressively invading natural areas. It is a particular threat to open and second-growth forests. An established colony can eventually grow thick enough to crowd out native understory plants. Traversing through dense patches of barberry can be difficult and even painful. Birds eat the red berries, thereby spreading the shrub into new areas.

**Control**

Mechanical removal is recommended because it is effective and may cause the least disturbance. Japanese barberry is one of the first plants to leaf out in spring and is therefore easy to distinguish from other shrubs. Whole shrubs may be removed with a hoe or weed wrench. Use of thick or sturdy gloves is recommended to provide protection from the spines. Plants can resprout from roots, so remove as much of the roots as possible.

Regular mowing can prevent barberry from returning once it has been removed. In areas

where mechanical removal is not practical, such as rock piles or outcrops, a glyphosate herbicide can be used. Consult a licensed herbicide applicator before applying herbicides over large areas.