

# CENTRAL JERSEY INVASIVE SPECIES STRIKE TEAM

## *Invasive Plant Fact Sheet*

### Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*)



**Family name:** Barberry family (Berberidaceae)

**Native range:** Asia

**General:** Deciduous shrub from 2 to 8 feet tall. Branches are grooved and covered in thin, straight, spines.

**Leaves:** Alternate, teardrop-shaped, ranging in color from slightly bluish-green to green to dark reddish purple.

**Flowers:** Small, fragrant, cream-colored flowers borne on clusters along the stem. Flowers appear in April and May.

**Fruit:** Bright red, 0.25 inch cylinders, ranging in color from red to pink. Ripening in August and persisting through winter.

**Look-alikes:** European barberry (*Berberis vulgaris*) is a non-native shrub with finely toothed leaves. Otherwise, it is very similar to Japanese barberry. All newly emerging occurrences of European barberry should be eradicated.

**Habitat:** Roadsides, forest edges, open woods, ornamental plantings. Japanese barberry prefers part shade to shade but can tolerate full sun.

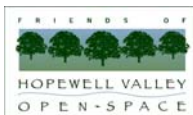
**Threats to native habitats:** Japanese barberry can form large thickets that displace native plants and prevent growth of native trees, shrubs, and herbs.

**NJ Status:** Japanese barberry is widespread. It is *highly threatening* to natural plant communities. All newly emerging occurrences should be eradicated.

**Commercial availability:** This invasive plant is widely planted for landscaping.



Sources: Forestry Images: Forest Health, Natural Resources & Silviculture  
Images: <http://www.forestryimages.org>  
<http://nbii-nin.ciesin.columbia.edu/ipane/icat/browse.do?specieId=26>  
Rhoads, A.F. and T. Block. 2007. *Plants of Pennsylvania*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA. p. 408-9.



**Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team (CJISST)** is a regional cooperative effort to detect, map, and manage emerging populations of invasive species. This initiative is a partnership of state, county, and municipal agencies, conservation groups, and private citizens. To learn more, please contact us: **Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space**, (609) 730-1560, [www.fohvos.org](http://www.fohvos.org) or **Upper Raritan Watershed Association**, (908) 234-1852, [www.urwa.org](http://www.urwa.org).

