

# INVASIVE PLANT ALERT

## EARLY DETECTION INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES OF VIRGINIA

### Wavyleaf Grass

(*Oplismenus undulatifolius*)

#### Threat

Wavyleaf grass has become a widespread and aggressive invasive species in Virginia. It is adapted to forest understory, where it creates dense continuous carpets, outcompetes other ground-layer species, and suppresses shrub and tree seedlings. In 2012, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service assessed wavyleaf and found it to rank as a High Risk (USDA-APHIS 2012). The public, especially citizen scientists, are encouraged to be on the lookout for wavyleaf and report any sightings. See contact information below. In Virginia, wavyleaf is listed as a Tier 2 noxious weed.

#### Report Sightings

If you believe you have found an occurrence of wavyleaf grass, there are several ways to report your discovery. Email the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (contact listed below). Use the online mapping tool [eddmappings.org](http://eddmappings.org), *Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System* (requires free registration). Smartphone users can download an app dedicated to making reports of invasive plants. In any case, it is extremely helpful to take close-up photographs. Images should focus on where the leaf meets the stem and any apparent inflorescence or seeds.

#### TO REPORT A SIGHTING:

Kevin Heffernan, *Stewardship Biologist*  
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation  
[kevin.heffernan@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:kevin.heffernan@dcr.virginia.gov)

Online mapping and reporting tool:  
<http://eddmappings.org>

Smartphone app:  
**iNaturalist, Wild Spotter**



#### Description

Wavyleaf grass, first identified in Virginia in 2003, is a low-lying, trailing perennial grass, branching and rooting at nodes along creeping stems called stolons. Leaf blades are about 0.5 to 1 inch wide, between 1.5 and 4 inches long, and deep green with rippling waves across the grass blades from base to tip. Leaf tips are elongated. Leaf sheaths and stems are noticeably hairy, although the hairs are short, approximately 0.25 inches. Wavyleaf blooms from mid-August into November. The flowering spikelets have glumes (lower bracts) with very long awns (extended, pointed tips). The awns produce a sticky substance that allows the grass seed to adhere to passing hikers or animals and readily disperse. Wavyleaf can be confused with invasive Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*), joint-head grass (*Arthraxon hispidus*) and native deertongue (*Dichanthelium clandestinum*).

#### Wavyleaf "Mimic" Plants

##### Japanese stiltgrass



##### Joint-head grass



