

The ENEMY: White Bryoni (*Bryonia alba*)

Strategy: Also known as the Kudzu of the West, this perennial climbing vine, with tendrils, can grow up twenty foot trees in a single season. So far we have not seen this in the area. An "A Classified" noxious weed, this invader was brought into the United States for medicinal purposes. It has large maple leaf-like leaves and produces green berries that turn dark purple in late summer that can become toxic to kids if eaten, but it is actually an expectorant which will cause one to throw up very quickly.

Attack: The plant grows each year from a large tuberous root (resembling a sugar beet) and is not selective what it climbs. Its seeds are a food source for birds which deposits the seeds under the trees and fences. The plants climb up fences, trees, and shrubs and will completely envelope them and smother them from valuable sunlight.

DEFENSE: This is a very difficult weed to control. I have been told that one can inject straight Roundup into the tuber for control. There are a number of other herbicides that work, but they will also kill the tree or shrub that the plant is climbing. So far the best tool that I have found is to simply dig it up; bearing in mind that each fibrous root-hair left behind will develop into a new tuber. When digging up the tuber root push the shovel into the ground near the green growth and pry-back slightly to loosen the soil. Do this on four sides of the plant and then go to your original hole and pull up on the plant at the same time you are prying the rest of the tuber out of the soil. Place the tuber into the garbage, for throwing onto the ground will allow the plant to re-root. As always do not hesitate to call your County Weed District Office for additional help.