

New Invaders Watch Program

Early Detection and Rapid Response Network

COMMON NAME: **BLACK SWALLOW-WORT**

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Cynanchum louiseae*

FAMILY: *Asclepiadaceae*

ORIGIN: France, Italy, Portugal, and Spain

US INTRODUCTION: The first collection of black swallow-wort in North America was from Massachusetts in 1854. It is believed to have arrived to North America as a ornamental garden plant.

MAJOR PATHWAYS OF SPREAD:

- Wind

IDENTIFICATION CHARACTERISTICS:

- Herbaceous, perennial vines twine 3 - 8 feet high, spreads by seed and vegetatively
- Leaves dark green, shiny, opposite, toothless, narrowly to broadly oval-shaped with pointed tips
- Flowers tiny, dark purple with 5, pointed, downy (hairy), triangular petals that are as long as wide
- Seed pods milkweed-like, slender and tapered; seed on silky filaments
- Threatens prairies, woodlands, and savannas

NATIVE LOOK-ALIKES:

None

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Natural Resource Conservation Service.
<http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/MN/797SwallowWort..pdf>

Black Swallow-wort Fact Sheet – Plant Conservation Alliance.
<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/cylo1.htm>



D. Eagan

Vine



D. Eagan
Flower



D. Eagan

Seed Pod



D. Maurer

Collection of plant



D. Maurer

Flower and leaves



D. Eagan

Population in Wisconsin



D. Maurer

Fibrous roots and rhizomes