

Five-leaf akebia (*Akebia quinata*)

Also called: Chocolate vine

Family name: Lardizabala (Lardizabalaceae)

Native range: Asia

NJ Status: Emerging Stage 2- Uncommon (may be regionally common). It is *highly threatening* to natural plant communities. All detected occurrences should be eradicated.

General description:

- Deciduous (evergreen in warmer climates)
- Twining woody-stemmed vine or groundcover
- Grows 20-40' in one year

Leaves:

- Alternate, smooth edges
- Palmately compound leaves
- 5 (occasionally fewer) oval stalked leaflets



Flowers:

- Purplish-brown flowers
- Emerge from leaf axils in clusters
- 1" across
- May smell of sweet chocolate
- Blooms in May



Fruit:

- Large, soft
- Sausage-shaped pods 2"-4" in length
- Pulp is whitish with many tiny black seeds
- Ripens in September



Habitat:

- Forest, forest edge, garden
- Prefers moist, fertile, well-drained soils
- Tolerates many soil types
- Full sun to partial shade

Commercial Availability: Yes

Look-alikes:

Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)

- Native to northeastern US
- Deciduous vine with tendrils
- Palmately compound leaves, 3-5 leaflets
- Toothed leaf edges
- Bluish berries
- Greenish white flowers



Virginia creeper has toothed leaf edges while five-leaf akebia does not.