

Sericea lespedeza (*Lespedeza cuneata*)

Also called: Chinese bush clover

Family name: Pea (Fabaceae)

Native range: Eastern Asia

NJ Status: Emerging Stage 3. Common (may be regionally abundant). It is *highly threatening* to natural plant communities. Eradication of newly emerging occurrences only.

General description:

- Upright semi-woody perennial herb from 3'-6'
- Single to many stemmed
- Extensive root system



silvery hairs below

Leaves:

- Alternate, abundant, three-parted
- Leaflets wedge-shaped with short bristles at the tips
- Narrow, 0.5-1" long
- Covered in silvery hairs below



3-part, bristle-tipped

Flowers:

- Whitish to purplish
- Born in clusters of 2-4 in leaf axils
- Blooms July -October



Fruit:

- Small, oval, yellow to reddish brown
- Maturing late summer-fall



Habitat:

- Open woodlands, roadsides, fields, meadows, wetlands, Pine Barrens
- Planted for erosion control, mine reclamation and wildlife habitat



Commercial availability: Yes

Look-alikes:

Numerous species of native and non-native bush clovers (*Lespedeza* spp.) are found in NJ. Some species differ from *Lespedeza cuneata* in habit, flower arrangement and leaf shape.

Slender bush clover (*Lespedeza virginica*)

- Native, occasional in dry fields, stony banks and serpentine barrens
- 1'-3.5' tall
- Few branches
- Leaves 0.4"-1.4" long, lacking bristle tip
- Flowers purple in dense clusters in upper leaf axils
- Blooms August-September



Slender bush clover

Narrow-leaved bush clover (*Lespedeza angustifolia*)

- Native, rare in moist, open sandy soils
- 1.5'-4' tall
- Flowers yellowish, in dense clusters
- Leaves 1"-2.5" long
- Leaflets very narrow, lacking bristle tip

