

**Kudzu (*Pueraria montana var. lobata*)**

**Family name:** Pea (Fabaceae)

**Native range:** Asia

**NJ Status:** Emerging Stage 0 – Absent or very rare. It is *highly threatening* to natural plant communities. Eradicate all detected occurrences.

**General description:**

- Fast growing, climbing or trailing semi-woody perennial vine
- 32'-100' long
- Stems are up to 2" thick
- Fleshy tap root up to 7" wide and 9' deep, weighing 400 lbs.
- Once planted for erosion control, now listed as a federal noxious weed



**Habitat:**

- Forest edge, meadow, abandoned fields, roadside, dams



Kudzu seed pods are hairy



Millions of acres are covered by kudzu in the southeast

**Leaves:**

- Alternate, compound
- 3 oval leaflets up to 4" wide
- Untoothed
- Leaflet shape variable—can be tear drop shaped or lobed
- Leaf edges hairy



Leaflets can be deeply lobed

**Commercial availability:** Not found

**Look-alikes:**

There are numerous native climbing pea-like vines, but none are as vigorous or large as kudzu.

**Trailing wild bean (*Strophostyles helvola*)**

- Annual to 4' tall
- Flowers less showy, greenish-purple to pink
- Leaves oval, sometimes with concave edges, like kudzu
- Fruits bean-like, 1.5"-4" long
- Damp thickets and shores

**Flowers:**

- Fragrant, pea-like, purple
- Borne in long clusters
- Blooms August-early September

**Fruit:**

- Brown, hairy, flattened seed pods about 8" long
- Each pod contains 3 to 10 hard seeds.
- Ripening in September to October



Trailing wild bean, and other native pea-like species, grow less vigorously than kudzu

