

## Pale swallow-wort

### *Vincetoxicum rossicum*

#### Description

Grows rapidly over native vegetation; wind-dispersed seed travels long distances.

#### Habit

Herbaceous perennials, both range from 0.6-1.8 m (2-6 ft) tall.

#### Leaves

Simple, opposite, narrow, oblong to ovate with a pointed tip, dark green leaves with a smooth, waxy coating; emits a pungent herbal smell when crushed.

#### Stems

Twining; may climb or creep around adjacent plants.

#### Flowers

Small, five-petaled; clustered in leaf axils; slight



rotting odor; pale to dark maroon, purple or pink;

glabrous; peduncles 2-5 mm; blooms June

through August.

### **Fruits and Seeds**

Seed pod, resemble those of milkweed, pods split open in mid-summer to release wind-borne seeds.

### **Habitat**

Native to southern Europe. Found in hardwood forests, shaded woods, open prairies, fields, savannas, roadsides; can tolerate a range of light and soil conditions.

### **Reproduction**

By seed, vegetatively by rhizomes and shoots from root crown of parent plant.

### **Similar**

Native dogbanes (*Apocynum* spp.) have similar seedpods but are not vines.

### **Monitoring and Rapid Response**

Monitor disturbed sites and also edges and paths in undisturbed sites; populations most visible in late summer when the leaves turn golden and seedpods appear. Hand-pulling difficult as roots are fragile, digging preferred, remove roots from site. Foliar herbicide treatment provides effective control; cut-stem herbicide application provides slightly less effective control and is labor intensive. Prescribed fire is not effective when used alone and may improve conditions for increased germination; fire may be useful following herbicide application to control seedlings with less developed root systems. Remove and burn seedpods; multi-year monitoring and follow-up required. Please report sightings with GPS positions to Dr. DiTommaso at: [ad97@cornell.edu](mailto:ad97@cornell.edu).

### **Credits**

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