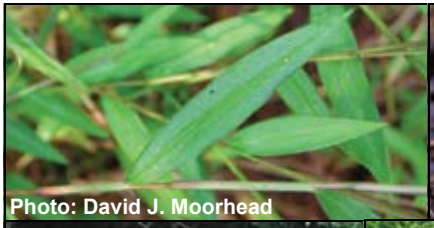
Photo: David J. Moorhead

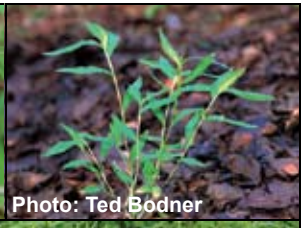
Photo: Ted Bodner


Photo: Chris Evans


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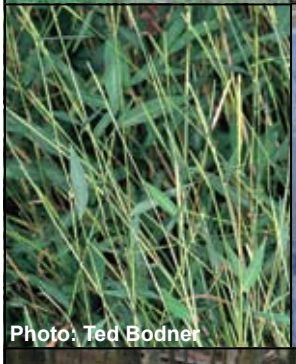
Photo: Ted Bodner


Photo: Nancy Loewenstein


Photo: Jil M. Swearingen, NPS


Photo: Nancy Loewenstein

UGA1378046

Japanese Stilt Grass

Microstegium vimineum

Habit: Annual grass growing up to 1 m (3 ft) tall; roots at the nodes, giving rise to reclining stems up to 1.6 m (5 ft) long, with upright branches at intervals; fibrous roots.
Leaves: Alternate, lance-shaped, thin, 5.0-7.5 cm (2-3 in) long and up to 1.5 cm (0.6 in) wide, slightly hairy on both surfaces with a line of silver hairs down the center on the upper surface; tapers at both ends, pale green turning slightly purplish in the fall.
Stems: Smooth nodes, stems more or less reclining, up to 1.6 m (5 ft) long.
Flowers: Inflorescences spikelike, terminal or arising from leaf axils; paired flowers with one sessile and one stalked flower; spikelets hairy; blooms mid-September.
Fruits/seeds: Seed is a yellowish-red, oval grain ripening in September-October; produces seed in deep shade; one plant can produce up to 1,000 seeds per plant, seeds viable for 3-5 years.
Habitat: Extremely shade tolerant; found in both moist areas including floodplain forest, wet meadow, streambanks and ditches as well as drier sites such as ridgetops, blowdowns, clearcuts, disturbed areas and roadsides.
Reproduction: By seed and rooting nodes along the stem; seed frequently dispersed by deer, ATVs and hikers.
Similar species: Native white grass (*Leersia virginica*) has hairy stem nodes, while the nodes on stilt grass are not hairy; also, whitegrass has scaly, not fibrous roots. Deer-tongue grass (*Dichanthelium clandestinum*) leaves have short stiff hairs all over.
Comments: Native to southeast Asia. Unlike many exotic grasses, stiltgrass is a warm season grass and produces seed late in the season. This species is not yet recorded in Michigan.
Monitoring & rapid response: Monitor roadsides and trail edges, also along ditches and streams as seed may be dispersed by water. Hand pull new infestations but soil disturbance can increase germination where abundant seed is present. Mow in fall during flowering but before seed set. Timing is critical, as mowing too early can encourage regrowth and early flowering. Many herbicides do not kill this species—review options thoroughly before treatment. Follow-up required until seed bank is exhausted.