Controlling Wintercreeper (*Euonymus fortunei)*

Non-chemical methods:

Pulling wintercreeper

Start at the edge of the wintercreeper mat and pull the vines gently and slowly so the roots are pulled up with the vine. You can roll up the vines as you work, ending with a large ball of vines which should be enclosed in a tightly sealed bag that should either be disposed of in the garbage or solarized to thoroughly kill the vegetation before composting. Do not leave the pulled vines in contact with the ground; they will re-root and start growing again. Pulling is most effective when ground is not frozen and is somewhat moist, but can be done most times of year. There will be resprouting from underground stems; these resprouts will need to be pulled for multiple years to finally eradicate the plants.

Mulching wintercreeper

Place pieces of cardboard over the plants, making sure the cardboard extends at least 6" beyond the edge of the wintercreeper. Cover the cardboard with 3" to 5" of leaf or wood chip mulch. The mulch must stay in place for **at least two growing seasons** to kill the plants, and note that all other plants under the mulch will die as well. To increase effectiveness, continue to layer cardboard and mulch until the pile is 12" deep. Cutting the plants with a weed whacker before adding cardboard and mulch may also increase effectiveness.

Chemical methods:

Cut stem treatment

If you have large diameter (>1/4") vines climbing trees or walls, cut the vine with pruners or saw and treat the cut stem with glyphosate (sold as Roundup, Drexel Imitator Plus [available at Rural King], Glypro, and many other trade names). Refer to the product label for the dilution rate to use for cut stem treatment (for instance, Drexel Imitator Plus, which has 41% active ingredient, is to be used full strength or diluted 1:1 with water for cut stem treatments). No surfactant needs to be added for cut stem treatments. Stems can be treated whenever the temperature is above freezing other than in spring (April-May) when rising sap may prevent the uptake of herbicide through the cut. Check for resprouts from the base of the cut vine and pull them out or use a foliar herbicide spray (see below) until there are no more sprouts. Woody vine debris can be chipped or cut up for disposal in a landfill.

If your stems are small diameter (<1/4") and growing in a mat over the ground you can pull or mulch the plants or use a foliar herbicide spray.

Foliar herbicide spray

Wintercreeper leaves can be sprayed with a triclopyr solution (sold as Garlon 3a, Triclopyr 3, and many other trade names) which is generally more effective than glyphosate at foliar treatment of wintercreeper.

Refer to the product label for the dilution rate to use for foliar treatment; the recommended dilution rate is 3% (if you are using a full strength product like Triclopyr 3). Because of the waxy leaf cuticle, it is recommended to add 0.5% non-ionic surfactant and 1% methylated seed oil (or bean oil) to help the herbicide penetrate the leaf.

Spray on days when the high temperature exceeds 40 degrees F, winds are less than 5 mph, and leaves are dry. Spraying in late fall (mid-October to late November) or early spring (February to mid-March) when native plants are still dormant will minimize non-target damage. Spraying during times of drought may decrease the uptake of chemical and reduce effectiveness, and in sandy soils tree species can be affected.

Because wintercreeper can have multiple layers of leaves, the first foliar spray may not reach all of the leaves. One option is to use a weed whacker to cut the top layer of leaves off and expose the bottom layer, then spray that layer. A second option is to do another foliar spray a month or two after the initial treatment, once the top layer has died and exposed the bottom layer. The treated area should be checked for resprouts in the next two growing seasons and the spraying repeated until the infestation is gone.