



# Chocolate Vine *Akebia quinata* (Houtt.) Dcne.

**Common Names:** Chocolate vine, fiveleaf akebia

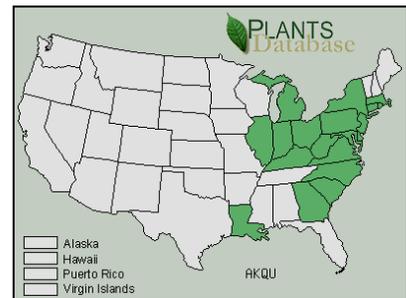
**Native Origin:** Central China to Korea and Japan; first introduced into the United States in 1845 as an ornamental.

**Description:** A deciduous to evergreen climbing or trailing vine in the Lardizabala family (*Lardizabalaceae*). This species is a vigorous groundcover having slender, rounded green stems when young and brown at maturity. The alternate, palmate compound leaves are divided into approximately five oval leaflets, 1½ to 3 inches long, with a purplish tinge that become blue-green at maturity. Fragrant, chocolate-purple colored flowers appear in late March to early April. Fruits are purple-violet, flattened sausage-like pods, 2 ¼ to 4 inches in length, ripening in late September to early October. Inside the pods have a whitish pulpy core with many tiny black seeds. It is deciduous in cooler climates but may remain evergreen in the warmer regions, such as Louisiana. It spreads primarily by vegetative means and is capable of growing twenty to forty feet in a single growing season.



**Habitat:** It is shade and drought tolerant and can invade many forest habitats. Its growth appears to be restricted only by the height of the object it is entangling.

**Distribution:** This species is reported from states shaded on Plants Database map. It is reported invasive in DC, MD, NJ, KY, PA, and VA.



**Ecological Impacts:** The dense mat of vines formed can displace native understory species. It can also climb into, smother, and kill small trees and shrubs. It grows so quickly that, if left unmanaged, it can kill off existing ground level vegetation, understory shrubs and trees, and even some canopy trees, by overtopping and smothering them. Once established, its dense growth prevents seed germination and seedling establishment of native plants.

### Control and Management:

- **Manual-** Cut to the ground; dig up; remove roots; repeated throughout the season
- **Chemical-** It can be effectively controlled using any of several readily available general use herbicides such as glyphosate or triclopyr. Follow label and state requirements.

### References:

www.nps.gov, www.invasive.org/browse/subject.cfm?sub=10090, <http://plants.usda.gov>