

# JAPANESE TREE LILAC (SYRINGA RETICULATA)



5446167  
COURTESY OF LESLIE J. MEHRHOFF, UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT,  
BUGWOOD.ORG.



PHOTO DISPLAYING BOTH YOUNG AND OLD BARK. COURTESY OF CHRIS TETER



PHOTO DISPLAYING LEAVES AND SHOWY FLOWERS.  
COURTESY OF CHRIS TETER.

Ever wonder how new invasive species are documented? Here is your opportunity to help! Japanese tree lilac (*Syringa reticulata*) is a small tree or large shrub that is native to Japan. This is the only lilac species that attains a tree form and it can grow to 30 feet in height.

Unfortunately, this popular ornamental street and yard tree can escape cultivation and invade natural areas, mostly in river corridors and floodplains. When Japanese tree lilac escapes, it often forms monocultures that exclude native trees and eliminate native plants in the understory. Its seeds can spread by both air and water and are able to easily spread along waterways.



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PHOTO DISPLAYING FRUIT. COURTESY OF LESLIE J. MEHRHOFF  
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## HOW TO IDENTIFY JAPANESE TREE LILAC?

**BARK** - REDDISH-BROWN CHERRY-LIKE BARK PEELING ON YOUNGER TREES  
THICKER LIGHT-COLORED LENTICELS. BARK TURNS GRAY WITH AGE.

**LEAVES** - OPPOSITE, SIMPLE, OVATE SHAPED LEAVES THAT HAVE A ROUNDED  
BASE AND A TAPERED TIP. DARK GREEN IN COLOR

**FLOWERS** - FLOWERS ARE SHOWY AND FRAGRANT, WHITE TO CREAM COLORED  
IN LONG PANICLES THAT ARE UP TO 12 INCHES IN LENGTH AND CAN BE FOUND  
AT THE END OF BRANCHES. APPEARING IN LATE SPRING OR EARLY SUMMER

**FRUIT** - FRUITS GROWS IN DRY, CURVED CAPSULES GROUPED TOGETHER  
TURNING FROM GREEN TO BROWN AND PERSISTING INTO WINTER.

So how can you help?

1. Help us find Japanese tree lilacs and report your findings to iMapInvasives or your  
local PRISM

2. Do not plant Japanese tree lilacs



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