

Japanese Barberry Sale Banned in Pennsylvania in 2023

What Changed? A shrub that's been a favorite of landscapers has been added to the Pennsylvania List of Noxious Weeds and its sale will be banned by the fall of 2023. Stock-reduction orders are already in place.

Why was it banned? Japanese Barberry is rapidly invading Pennsylvania forests and is a significant threat to native Pennsylvania forest plants. It crowds them out! Deer won't eat it! And the shrub harbors the exploding population of ticks (and the mice that host them) that carry Lyme disease.

Have other states banned the sale of Japanese Barberry? Many states, including New York, Maryland, and West Virginia, have already banned the sale of Japanese Barberry. Some did so as early as 2015.



Japanese Barberry



Berts Darts G'Festivus



Seward's Summer Wine

What should I do with the barberry that is now in my yard?

REMOVE IT! But remove it carefully! (See BACK for removal instructions.) Much of the Barberry damaging our forests migrated from residential properties.

What shrub can I use as a substitute? The following native shrubs are suggested as alternatives to Japanese barberry for landscape use: winterberry holly, inkberry holly, New Jersey tea, bayberry, wild hydrangea, ninebark (e.g. "Sewards Summer Wine" and "Berts Darts G'Festivus pictured above), silky dogwood, red chokeberry, black chokeberry. (Rhoads & Block, Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania.) **New Jersey tea** can really handle the sun and dry, sandy soils, though it's fine with a little less sun or more water. Its bright white clusters of flowers attract pollinators (even hummingbirds!), and it keeps a pleasantly dense, rounded shape without pruning, like barberry.

TIPS FOR REMOVING YOUR BARBERRY



Before you rush out to your yard to pull the barberry, please follow these steps to remove it correctly and properly.

How to Remove Japanese Barberry:

1. Properly identify Japanese barberry. Educate your neighbors about what you are doing and why.
2. Hand-pull what you physically are able before Japanese barberry produces berries (seeds); preferably before July.
3. Use a Weed Wrench on hard-to-pull plants; preferably before July.
4. Hire goats. They will eat barberry!
5. Plants that prove too difficult to remove by way of pulling or digging, you can cut to one-inch stumps and immediately apply a glyphosate herbicide to freshly cut stumps using a paint brush or sponge applicator. Stump application is very effective during July, August, and up to mid-September.
6. Bag the barberry that you remove, let it dry, and deposit it in a landfill.

If you cannot stump-apply during the summer months, then you can instead cut the plant six to 12 inches from the ground before it starts to produce berries (seeds) in July. After the taller stumps have re-sprouted, you cut them to one inch above the ground and immediately apply glyphosate herbicide to the freshly cut stumps. Allowing the stumps to re-sprout during the summer months draws carbohydrate and other growth compounds from the roots and depletes some of the root energy making herbicide kill more effective. (Use herbicide as directed by manufacturer.)

For more information see USDA [Natural Resources Conservation Science Invasive Plant Control - barberry](#) or [Penn State Extension- Japanese Barberry](#).



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