


Tried and True Native Plants To Replace Invasive Plants

Best Bets: Plants
for Particular Uses
in the Mid-Atlantic

INVASIVE PLANT: Five-Leaved Akebia/Chocolate Vine (*Akebia quinata*)



Originally from eastern Asia, this vine was introduced in 1845 as an ornamental plant. It has now been found to be infesting forest habitats where it can grow from 20 to 40 feet in a season, smothering native understory plants. It is considered problematic in several Mid-Atlantic states, including Virginia, where both Arlington and Alexandria list it as invasive.

Problems	Five-Leaved Akebia
Forms impenetrable ground cover in forest habitat, displacing understory species	
Climbs, smothers, and kills shrubs and trees by twining	
Colonizes by prolific vine growth, crowding out native plants and reducing diversity	
Birds can disperse seeds when fruit is produced	
Shade- and drought-tolerant, semi-evergreen	
No benefit to native wildlife	
Desired Characteristics	
Vine with exotic flower with spicy, chocolate fragrance	
Native Alternatives	Passionflower
<i>Bignonia capreolata</i> (Cross-vine)	
<i>Gelsemium sempervirens</i> (Carolina Jessamine)	
<i>Isotrema macrophyllum</i> (Pipevine)	
<i>Lonicera sempervirens</i> (Trumpet Honeysuckle)	
<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i> (Virginia Creeper)	
<i>Passiflora incarnata</i> (Passionflower)	

developed by Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia, serving Arlington and Alexandria

Images by Mary Free (top) and Elaine Mills (bottom), Arlington, VA