Protection Report RX-PR 34 July 1999

Japanese Climbing Fern*
* *Lygodium japonicum*

**Plant:** Fern, climbing and twining perennial vine up to 7 m (22 ft) long, forming mats and infestations. **Rhizome** slender, widely creeping, black and wiry.

**Stem:** Trailing, twining, or climbing, wiry vine, slender but difficult to break. Green to straw-colored to reddish.

**Fronds** (leaves): Opposite on vine, light green and compound, once or twice divided, varying in appearance according to the number of divisions with highly dissected leaves appearing lacy. Generally triangular in shape, X-15 cm (3 1/8–6 in) long and S-8 cm (2–3 1/8 in) wide.

**Sporangia** (fern flowers): Fertile fronds on upper part of blade, usually with smaller segments having finger-like projections around the margins, bearing sporangia in double rows on the under margins.

**Fruit and Seeds:** Tiny spores that are wind dispersed.
**Range:** Texas to Florida to North Carolina being more common in the coastal plain and scattered in the Piedmont.

**Ecology:** Spreads along highways and rights-of-way (prefers under and around bridges) from where it invades open forests and stream margins. Scattered in occurrence, but can form infestation mats that can climb over shrubs and trees.

*Three similar species in Southeast with two being exotics.*

Authored and photos by Dr. James H. Miller, Southern Research Station. (Additional photo by Ted Bodner)