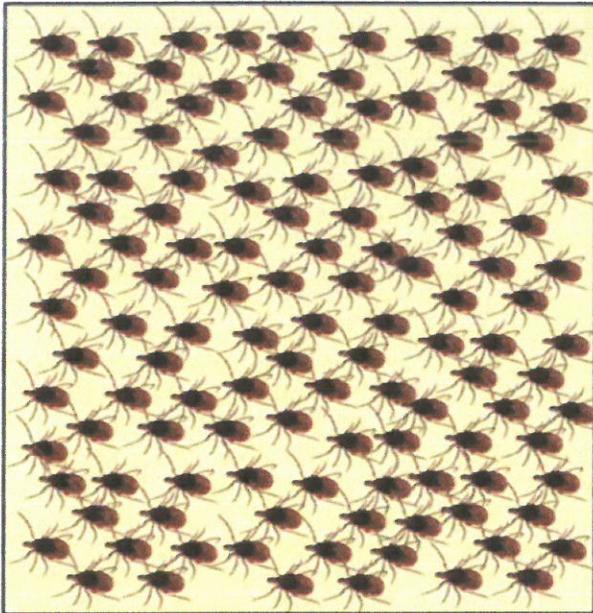
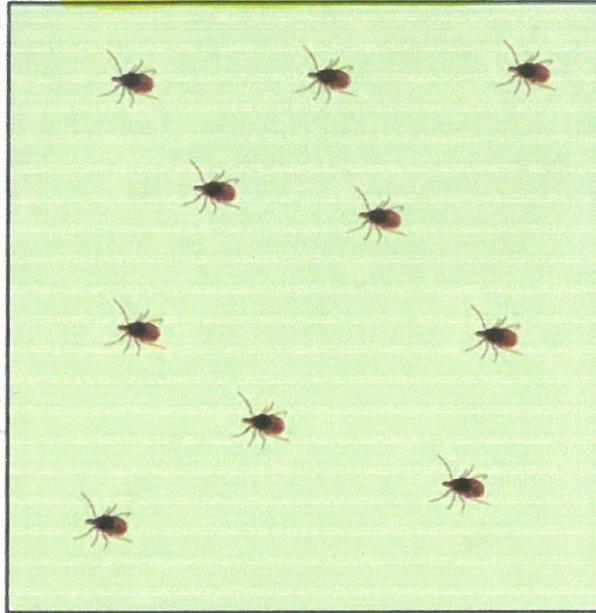


Density of ticks with *Borrelia burgdorferi* – the causal agent of Lyme disease



Barberry infested forest ~ 120 ticks per acre



Forest without barberry ~ 10 ticks per acre

Japanese barberry infestations are favorable habitat for blackleg ticks, providing a humid, buffered microclimate that increases tick survival. Ticks can transmit several diseases including Lyme disease *Borrelia burgdorferi*, anaplasmosis, and human babesiosis. The shrub also provides nesting areas for white-footed mice and other rodents, which are primary sources for larval ticks' first blood meal, and reservoirs for Lyme disease. The number of blackleg ticks averaged 120 per acre in barberry infested forests compared to 10 per acre in forests without barberry present. (Image from Ward et al. 2002)



JAPANESE BARBERRY

Berberis thunbergii

BASIC ID

This dense, deciduous, spiny shrub grows 2–8 ft. high. It has small oval, usually green leaves, and sharp spines at each node. Its flowers are pale yellow, bowl-shaped and bloom in mid-spring. The fruits mature during the late summer to oblong, bright red berries that persist through winter.

FACTS

Barberry is shade tolerant, drought resistant, and adaptable to a variety of open and wooded habitats, wetlands, and disturbed areas. Preferring to grow in full sun to part shade, though will flower and fruit even in heavy shade, it forms dense stands in natural habitats including forests, wetlands, and grasslands. Research shows infested forests have higher rates of Lyme disease carrying ticks. White-tailed deer avoid browsing barberry due to the spines, preferring to feed on native plants, giving it a competitive advantage over native species.

MANAGEMENT

- Do not plant.
- Remove all roots and watch for resprouts from root fragments.
- Combine herbicide and manual control with continued monitoring.

Photos: Elizabeth J. Czarapata
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