

# **Sericea lespedeza**

*Lespedeza cuneata*

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**Aggressive, perennial, warm-season, tap rooted legume**

**Shrub habit, copiously branched plant with ascending stems**

**Distinguished from other lespedeza by:**

- Leaf shape
- Flower color
- Growth form

## **Habitat**

- Adapted to a wide range of conditions
- Roadsides
- Ditches
- Railroad tracks
- Abandoned fields
- Pasture
- Rangeland

## **Flowers**

- Chasmogamous or cleistogamous
- July through October
- White to whitish pink with darker blotches

## **Seeds**

- Do not germinate well unless scarified
- Temperature range for germination: 68°-86°
- Optimum seedling growth occurs at 79°(day)/71°(night), plus 13-15 hour photoperiod

## **Growth and reproduction**

- Crown buds produce new shoots each year
- New shoots are succulent until they reach 12"-14" height
- Individual plants can produce up to 30 stems in four years
- Stands can survive for 20 years
- Reproduction from crown buds and seeds

## **Management**

- Frequent mowing encourages herbaceous stem growth to increase herbicide absorption
- Mowing at flower bud stage reduces stand vigor and spread
- Burning increases germination and stem growth: burn in May, spray in June when new growth is 6-8"
- Herbicides: glyphosate, metsulfuron, triclopyr and triclopyr+fluroxypyr  
\* triclopyr in June, metsulfuron in September

## **Threats**

- Highly competitive for light, nutrients and water
- Tannins in mature stems make them unpalatable
- Highly allelopathic, forms dense monocultures

# ***SERICEA LESPEDEZA***

