

Invasive, Non-native Plant Monitoring at George Washington Carver National Monument

[George Washington Carver National Monument](#)

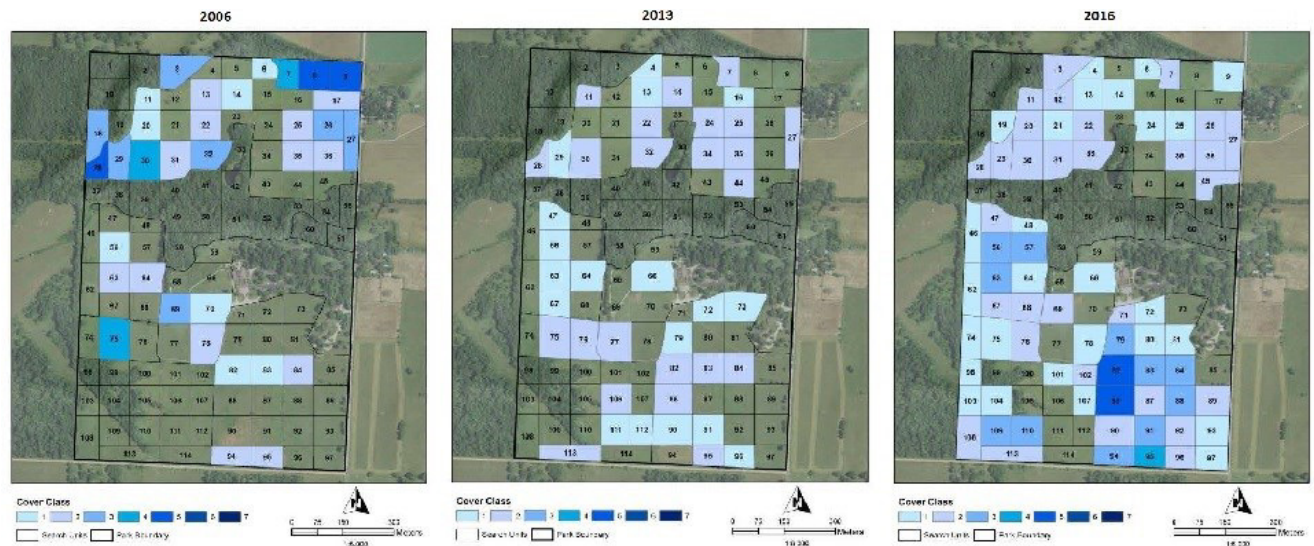


Lespedeza cuneata

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George Washington Carver National Monument celebrates the life of the scientist, botanist, and inventor who found many novel uses for plants. Today the park supports prairies and woodlands full of numerous plant species, many of which Carver may have known as a boy. After the monument was established, the prairies were planted on former farm fields. Among the plants now found in the park are a number of invasive, non-native plants that likely established after George Washington Carver had already left this farm in Missouri. Human activity brought these plants to the park from other locations, including other continents.

In this study, we found 44 invasive, non-native species over an eleven-year period. Most of these species were not very abundant in the monument. However, the non-native pasture grasses, tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass, were often found in the park's prairies. Sericea, a plant that was brought to the U.S. in 1890, was also widespread. Japanese honeysuckle, introduced to the U.S. in 1806, was common in the monument's forests. Sericea and Japanese honeysuckle appear to have spread within the monument between 2006 and 2016.



Maps of *Lespedeza cuneata* sightings at George Washington Carver National Monument.

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Park managers control many of the invasive, non-native plants in the prairies. Fire is typically applied every 2 to 5 years and is known to control Kentucky bluegrass. Following a fire, a team will walk through the prairie and apply a small amount of herbicide to invasive, non-native plants. This action helps to support the native plants found in this relatively small prairie in George Washington Carver National Monument.

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Data in this report were collected and analyzed using methods based on established, peer-reviewed protocols and were analyzed and interpreted within the guidelines of the protocols.