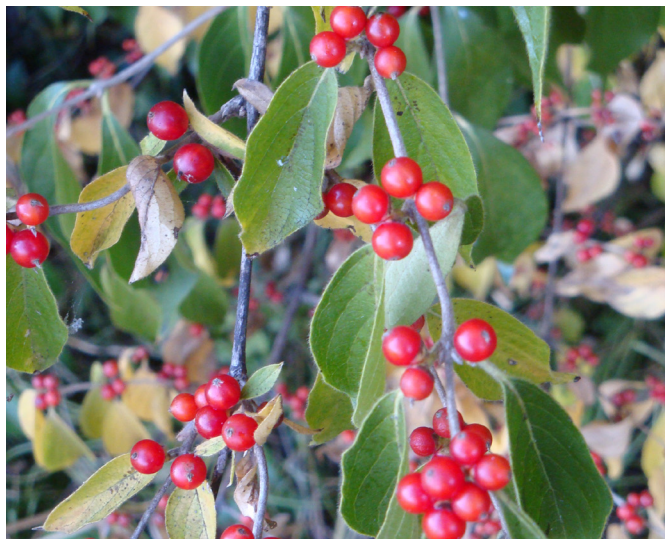


The Introduction, Spread, and Control of Non-Native, Invasive Species in Tennessee Forests: Bush Honeysuckle and Japanese Honeysuckle

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Fruit of bush honeysuckle. Photo Credit: Wayne Clatterbuck



Flowers of Japanese honeysuckle. Photo Credit: Rich Gardner, Bugwood.org

BUSH HONEYSUCKLE (*LONICERA MAACKII*) **JAPANESE HONEYSUCKLE (*LONICERA JAPONICA*)**

Both species of honeysuckle are highly invasive. Bush honeysuckle is a woody, erect, semi-evergreen shrub that can grow more than 10 feet tall. Japanese honeysuckle is a twining vine that retains its foliage into the winter. The primary source of spread is by birds that consume the fruit (drupe) and distribute the seeds. Bush honeysuckle has red drupes when mature while drupes of Japanese honeysuckle are black. Prescribed burning is often used to suppress the above-ground portion of the plants, but the roots readily resprout as well as runners from Japanese honeysuckle vines that can root at leaf nodes. Follow-up foliar herbicide treatments after burning are necessary to control plant sprouts with herbicide translocation to the roots.

Honeysuckles were imported from Asia in the mid-1800s for erosion control, wildlife food and cover, sweet-smelling flowers, and ornamental plantings. They usually occur in riparian and other moist areas growing in clumps, limiting sunlight penetration. Being allelopathic, honeysuckles inhibit native vegetation. Honeysuckles are mid- to shade-tolerant prospering in transitional areas and communities such as margins of roads, fencerows, rights-of-way, abandoned fields and pastures, woodlands, glades and prairies, and greenways that are not attended.

Controlling honeysuckles requires vigilance because of the vigorous spread of seeds and roots. Plants should be treated when populations are small before they escalate. Simple pulling, cutting, or mowing of plants can be effective if treatments are timed before seed maturity each year and repeated until root reserves are depleted. Non-selective foliar herbicides such as glyphosate and triclopyr (amine formulation) will control honeysuckles, but may also affect non-target, native ground vegetation.

Both honeysuckles retain their leaves remaining green during the fall and winter after most vegetation is dormant. Foliar herbicides should be applied in early spring or late fall before when leaves of other plants are not present and when temperatures are sufficient for honeysuckle to absorb and translocate the herbicide.

For stems of bush honeysuckle too tall for foliar sprays, basal spray of triclopyr (ester/oil) that completely encircles the stem to ensure herbicide penetration is recommended. Stems can also be cut, and stumps treated with glyphosate or triclopyr immediately after severing to control sprouting. Cut stump herbicide treatments can be conducted at most any time except during sap flow in the spring. The same process and herbicides can be applied to vines. For more specific information on control methods for bush and Japanese honeysuckle, refer to both weblinks below.

FURTHER REFERENCE WEBLINKS

University of Wisconsin Extension

https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprd3830307.pdf Bush Honeysuckle

<https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0145/8808/4272/files/A3924-10.pdf> Japanese Honeysuckle



Fruit of Japanese honeysuckle. Photo Credit: Chris Evans, Univ. of Illinois, Bugwood.org



Honeysuckle infestation. Photo Credit: Chuck Bargeron, Univ. of Georgia, Bugwood.org