WEED of the MONTH

Buckthorns, *Rhamnus cathartica* & *Frangula alnus*

ODNR Division of Forestry
740-589-9910 or 614-265-6366
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Buckthorns are tall shrubs or small trees that grow up to 20 feet tall. The smooth, gray to brown bark is distinctively spotted. **Glossy buckthorn** has shiny leaves with smooth edges. It has solitary red to purple berry-like fruits. **European buckthorn** has black fruits and dull green smooth leaves. Both species are abundant seed producers.

Glossy Buckthorn

WHY SHOULD I BE CONCERNED?

Historically, it was widely planted as an ornamental for its spectacular red autumn foliage, fruits and for its tolerance to salt. It spreads from seed, is dispersed by wildlife and colonizes by root suckers. It thrives in the shade where it displaces spring wildflowers and other natives. It is a very adaptable plant and can thrive in a variety of sites.

European Buckthorn

HABITAT IN THE UNITED STATES

Glossy buckthorn usually occurs in wetlands, such as fens or bogs. **European buckthorn** generally occurs in upland habitats including forests, woodland edges, fencerows, prairies, and old fields. It is not uncommon to see both species sharing the same habitat. Buckthorns are most prevalent in central and northern Ohio.

MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

Buckthorns are very difficult to control due to vigorous re-sprouting and a large seedbank. Cutting the plant and immediately treating stumps with a systemic herbicide is the best method of control. Foliar spray can be effective, but requires increased amounts of herbicide and may put nearby non-target species at risk. Follow label and Federal and State requirements. Re-visit the site regularly to address sprouts.

USE PESTICIDES WISELY: ALWAYS READ THE ENTIRE PESTICIDE LABEL CAREFULLY, FOLLOW ALL MIXING AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND WEAR ALL RECOMMENDED PERSONAL PROTECTIVE GEAR AND CLOTHING. CONTACT YOUR STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR ANY ADDITIONAL PESTICIDE USE REQUIREMENTS, RESTRICTIONS OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

For information on how to identify and control buckthorns or how to better manage your trees, contact the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry at 614-265-6366.