

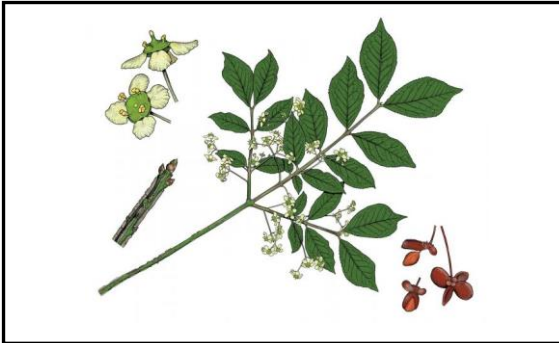


Burning Bush

BVGC INVASIVE SPECIES FACT SHEET

Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*) was once an extremely popular landscape shrub because of its bright red fall foliage, but is now banned in many parts of the United States – including Massachusetts – because of its invasive qualities. Introduced in the 1860's as an ornamental, the “winged euonymous” was planted by landscapers because of its eye-catching color. Easily spread through seed dispersal by birds and aggressive regrowth of an extensive root network.

Description: A deciduous shrub that can grow up to 15' high. Football shaped, oppositely arranged, finely toothed leaves are between 1 - 2 inches long. Slight, greenish flowers emerge in early spring. In the fall, the leaves turn brilliant crimson and red berries appear. This species gets its name from the woody “wings” that appear on many of its twigs.



Missouri Department of Conservation

BURNING BUSH



winged euonymous

Ecological Threat:

Invades fields and forests and displaces native plants.

Alternatives:

Homeowners can be reluctant to remove these shrubs, as they are often centerpieces of their yards. However, the best way to prevent burning bush invasions into natural areas is to remove the closest seed source. There are many native alternatives for those looking to capture vibrant fall colors that the burning bush offers—for example, native viburnum has both attractive spring flowers and glossy fall foliage, and shrubby dogwood species, including silky (*Cornus amomum*), gray (*Cornus racemosa*), and red stem (*Cornus sericea*), have similarly vibrant fall coloration. Both viburnum and dogwood shrubs provide valuable food and shelter for wildlife in addition to aesthetically beautiful foliage and flowers.

Extermination / Disposal:

Pulling young plants and mowing is an effective way of dealing with juvenile growth. Herbicides can be effective on stumps of mature plants. Burn the remains or bag for safe disposal.