

Weed of the Month for November 2016

Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*)

Origin: Asia

Interesting Fact: Burning Bush is heavily used by the landscaping industry because of the brilliant red fall leaf color. However, the native Eastern Wahoo shrub (*Euonymus atropurpureus*) and native small Sumac trees (*Rhus* species) produce the same color and are not invasive.

Description: Burning Bush is a perennial shrub that can grow up to 20 ft. tall and has small opposite leaves that turn bright red in the fall.

Defining characteristics:

- Small, opposite leaves that are mostly oval in shape with toothed edges
- Leaves turn bright red during fall
- Small green/white flowers in the spring
- Small red fruits that develop in fall
- Develops winged stems when exposed to plenty of light



(Left image) The red fruit of Burning Bush

(Center image) The opposite leaves of Burning Bush

(Right image) A close up of the winged stem

Habitat: Found in disturbed areas, woods, and floodplains.

A large Burning Bush individual in the interior woods.



Ecological threat: Burning Bush can form dense stands in interior woods, outcompeting native plants. Birds disperse seeds, leading to wide proliferation.

Control Methods:

- Manual: For small individuals, hand pulling is effective. A weed wrench can also be used to pull out larger individuals.
- Chemical: Cut stump treating large shrubs is very effective, or spraying groups of smaller individuals with a foliar application.

References

Kaufman, Sylvan R. and Wallace Kaufman. 2012. *Invasive Plants*. Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books. Print.

SICIM. *Invasive Species: Wanted Dead Not Alive!* Print.