



## Invasive Species of the Month for October 2018

### Amur Honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*)

**Origin:** Central and Eastern Asia

**Interesting Fact:** Amur Honeysuckle is one of the worst invasive species in the state. It was first introduced to North America in the late 1800s, and in the 1960s to the mid 80s, Amur Honeysuckle was promoted by the then Soil Conservation Service (SCS), which is now the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Since then, it has spread across 33 states in the US and up to Canada. Amur Honeysuckle has been reported in almost every county in Indiana and is one of the worst invaders in Knox County, specifically.

**Description:** Amur Honeysuckle is a large, perennial woody shrub that can grow up to 20 ft. tall. It has opposite leaves, white axillary flowers, and red berries.

#### Defining characteristics:

- Round, opposite leaves that taper to a point
- Axillary, white flowers that develop into red berries
- Gray, scaly bark with an arching habit
- Twigs have a hollow pith

#### Botanical Terminology:

*Allelopathy* – the biochemical inhibition of a species by another

*Axillary* – occurring where the leaf meets the stem

*Pith* – the tissue in the center of vascular plant stems



Left Image: A cluster of Amur Honeysuckle stems

Center Image: The axillary flowers of Amur Honeysuckle, blooming in late Spring

Right Image: The bright red berries, which mature in Fall



**Habitat:** Roadsides, old fields, open areas, forest edges, interior forest and other disturbed areas



Above Image: A dense stand of Amur Honeysuckle at Pyramid Mound in early spring.

**Ecological threat:** Amur Honeysuckle produces many berries, which are spread readily by birds and small mammals. Besides high productive potential and dispersal, Amur Honeysuckle can tolerate a wide variety of environmental conditions, ranging from low light to full sun and moist to dry soil conditions. Amur Honeysuckle also tends to grow quite tall and has a multi-stem, arching growth habit. This plus its early leaf out and late leaf fall allows Amur Honeysuckle to shade out native species. In addition to shading out native vegetation, Amur Honeysuckle has been shown to have allelopathic chemicals that can further inhibit other plants' germination and flowering/seed production.

**Control Methods:**

- Manual: Pulling up young individuals is quite effective since they have shallow root systems. Larger individuals up to a 2-3 in. diameter stem can be removed with a leverage pulling tool, like the Pullerbear™.
- Chemical: A foliar application of glyphosate\* is generally effective. The addition of a conditioning adjuvant like AMS -Supreme can increase efficacy. Cut stump applications of glyphosate\* are also very effective on larger shrubs. Lastly, shrubs can be cut back in spring, and the regrowth can be treated a couple weeks later with a foliar application of glyphosate\*.

\*Always follow herbicide label instructions.





## References

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