

SHRUBBY HONEYSUCKLES

(LONICERA SPP.)

2019 Status in Maine:

Widespread. Severely invasive. Type of plant: Perennial deciduous shrub, usually with many branches. Originates in Asia.

Identify

Leaves: Simple, entire, and opposite, oval with a pointed tip. May be hairy on undersides.

Flowers: Tubular, fragrant, white, yellow or pink. Bilaterally symmetrical and paired where leaves meet branches. Bloom in May.

Fruit: Fruit matures from green to red (occasionally orange) round berries that are paired where leaves meet branches. Ripen by late summer. Most species are mildly poisonous and should not be ingested by humans.

Branches: Large twigs have hollow center when cut (pith), distinguishing them from native honeysuckles which are solid.

Location

Moderately shade tolerant but is most productive in full sun. Capable of invading forest understory. Tolerates nutrient-poor and dry to wet soils. Can be found in forests, forest edges, fields, and along roadsides.

Parks of concern: Bug Light Park, Hinckley Park, Trout Brook Nature Preserve, Greenbelt, Wainwright

Problem

They form dense thickets that prevent growth underneath. They also grow leaves earlier in the spring and keep them longer in the fall than many native plants, giving them a competitive edge. Seeds can be spread long distances by animal consumption.

Management

Small plants can be pulled when the soil is moist. Plants can also be cut but this must be repeated multiple times per growing season and for several years, as the plant can re-sprout. Care should be taken to dry or burn all plant parts before disposal.

