

# COMMON BUCKTHORN

(RHAMNUS CATHARTICA)

## 2019 Status in Maine:

Widespread. Severely invasive. Perennial deciduous shrub or small tree. Originates from Europe and Asia.

## Identify

**Leaves:** Sub-opposite, elliptical or almost round, and toothed. Have arching veins and pointed tip.

**Flowers:** Small, 4 petaled, white to green. Occur in clusters where leaves meet stem. Bloom in June.

**Fruit:** Fruit is round and matures from green to glossy black in late summer.

**Bark:** Brownish gray. At the end of most twigs this plant has small spines.

## Location

This plant is shade tolerant and can tolerate moist to well-drained soils. Can be found in forests, forest edges and open fields.

**Parks of concern:** Hinckley Park, Wainwright, Greenbelt

## Problem

It can grow in dense thickets that shade out native plants. Seeds can spread long distances by animals. It also has a long growing season and rapid growth rates that allow it to out-compete native plants.

**How it spreads:** Fruits are eaten and deposited by birds, mice, and deer. Seeds remain viable for 2-6 years.

## Management

Small plants can be pulled when the soil is moist. Larger plants can be cut, but this must be done for several years as the plant can re-sprout. Care should be taken to dry or burn all plant parts before disposal.

