

GLOSSY BUCKTHORN

(FRANGULA ALNUS)

2019 Status in Maine:

Widespread. Severely invasive. Perennial deciduous shrub or small tree. Originates from Europe, North Africa, and Central Asia.

Identify

Leaves: Alternate, elliptical, and often glossy.

Flowers: Small, 5-petaled, white to yellow. Occur in clusters where leaves meet stem. Bloom in June or later.

Fruit: Fruit is round and matures from green to red to glossy black in late summer. Fruits mature at different times so plants may contain fruits at all stages of maturity.

Bark: Mature bark is dark with raised, lighter colored horizontal lenticels. Roots are red.

Location

This plant is moderately shade tolerant, but is more productive in sun. It tolerates wet to moist soils. Can be found in forests, forest edges, and wetlands.

Parks of concern: Hinckley Park, Wainwright.

Problem

Can grow in dense thickets that shade out native plants. Seeds can be spread long distances by animals. It also has a long growing season and rapid growth rates that allow it to out-compete native plants. Glossy buckthorn serves as a host to other invasive pests such as Japanese beetle.

How it spreads: Fruits are eaten by birds and small mammals. Seeds are viable at least two years.

Management

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

