

# Invasive Species Alert

## Common Buckthorn

Also European Buckthorn  
(*Rhamnus cathartica*)

\*Established in Michigan\*

### Identification:

- Deciduous small tree or shrub – can reach 25 feet tall
- Leaves are dark- green, oval and slightly toothed
- In spring, small, yellow-green, 4-petaled flowers grow in clusters of 2-6 at the base of leaves
- Small, purple to black fruits ripen in the fall
- Twigs often have a single, sharp thorn at their tip
- Distinctive orange inner bark



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**Native Range:** Europe and Asia

**U. S. Distribution:** East Coast and Midwest, also in limited areas of California and Oregon.

**Local Concern:** This invasive plant spreads quickly through seeds distributed by birds and wildlife and crowds out native shrubs and understory plants. It is a host for alfalfa mosaic virus and crown fungus, and may be a possible host for the soybean aphid.



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