

Common Invasive Shrubs of Lake Lansing Park North



Problems posed by woody invasive shrubs

- They leaf out earlier and go dormant later in the year. With no natural predators or diseases to limit their population they out-compete native plants for nutrients, water, and light
- As a result, they displace native habitat and food sources needed by nesting birds and other wildlife adapted to a specific niche
- Their heavy loads of berries spread to new sites via animal droppings
- Invasive shrubs often provide the wrong nutrients or bloom out of sync with the requirements of native insects and wildlife
- The spread of invasive plants often increases browse pressure on native plants by deer and rabbit populations, which favor native food sources that have existed in Michigan for thousands of years
- The product of these factors is a loss of natural biodiversity, altered forest composition and structure, and the interruption of natural processes such as forest succession



The red ovals designate areas of Lake Lansing Park North that have been heavily altered by humans. The disturbance of soils and removal of native vegetation favors the establishment and spread of invasive species. These areas now host large populations of invasive shrubs which are spreading into adjacent high quality natural areas. Ingham County Parks and the Mid-Michigan Stewardship Initiative are working together with the community to remove these invasive species and restore native plants that previously grew here.



Ways YOU can make a difference!

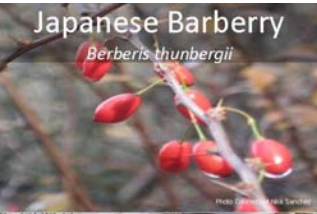
- Learn to identify the common woody invasive shrubs. If you have a question, feel free to contact midmich@stewardshipnetwork.org
- If you have invasive shrubs in your yard, replace them with beautiful native and non-invasive species, such as: ninebark, butterfly bush, shrubby cinquefoil, arrowwood viburnum, Russian sage, and elderberry
- Buy and plant natives from the Michigan Native Plant Producers' Association: <http://www.mnppa.org/>
- Ask your local plant source to stop carrying Japanese barberry, honeysuckle, and multiflora rose, which have become serious problems in southern Michigan's natural areas
- Learn about nature and help us clear Lake Lansing Park North of invasive shrubs. Participate in an upcoming restoration outing by contacting nsanchez@ingham.org or midmich@stewardshipnetwork.org

Habitat: Woodland edges, open woods, old fields. Once established, readily invades undisturbed sites.

How to identify: Small shrub. Spoon shaped leaves. Numerous spiny, zig-zagging stems.

Fruit: Small, bright red, egg-shaped berries that remain on stems into winter.

Similar Species: Can be mistaken for gooseberry when leaves are absent.

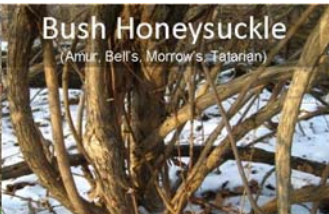


Habitat: Fields, roadsides, prairies, open woods.

How to identify: Each twig contains 5-7 small leaflets with toothed edges. Feathery stipules on leaf petioles. Multiple arching stems with many large curved thorns. Showy clusters of flowers.

Fruits: Round red berries (rosehips) remain on stems throughout winter.

Similar Species: Native roses; distinguish by feathery stipules on leaf petioles (photo at top left)



Habitat: Occurs in wet and dry sites. Shade tolerant.

How to identify: Multiple arching branches. Flaky bark. Brown pith; older branches often hollow. Sweet smell when cut, and very fragrant flowers.

Fruits: Small round red berries in pairs, which remain on stems into winter.

Similar Species: There are several native honeysuckle species, but they are less than 3' tall and do not have hollow stems.

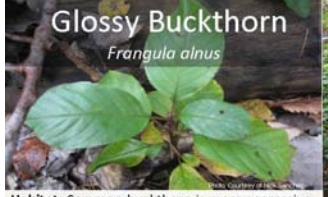


Habitat: Roadsides, open woods, prairies, pastures, sand dunes

How to identify: Leaves are wavy-edged and appear green on top and silver on bottom. Multiple stems. New growth appears copper with silver dot-like scales.

Fruit: Small, round, pink to red, with silver spots

Similar Species: Russian olive, also a non-native species



Habitat: Common buckthorn is more aggressive in dry soils, while glossy buckthorn is more aggressive in wet soils.

How to identify: Small tree/hedge. Veins curve toward leaf tips. Common has thorns that occur near the terminal bud and 3 pairs of veins per leaf; glossy has 7 pairs of veins.

Fruit: Small black or dark purple, pea sized berries clustered at stem.

Similar Species: Native dogwoods. Fold & tear leaf in half, perpendicular to the middle vein, and pull apart; if a silky string-like substance appears, it is a dogwood.



The Future Of Our Natural Areas Depends On Us

YOU can help!

Source: *Common Buckthorn: Invasive Plants of the Upper Midwest: An Illustrated Guide to their Identification and Control*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1st Edition (Page 3), 2005