



# INVASIVE PLANT OF THE MONTH

OCTOBER



<http://www.invasive.org>

## BURNING BUSH

*Euonymus alatus*

### HISTORY & IDENTIFICATION

- Introduced to US from Asia around 1860 as an ornamental plant for landscaping
- Despite its invasive nature, it remains very popular and is still widely sold
- Attractive vibrant red fall leaf color and bright red berries,
- Seen mostly in woodland edges and forests expanding into dense thickets, out-competing many native shrubs and trees and is considered a "significant threat" by the PA DCNR.

### LIFE CYCLE & GROWTH HABIT

- Deciduous bush with arching corky winged stems covered in clusters of pointed leaves and grows to 6-15'
- From May to June, it has tiny greenish flowers that become bright red fleshy fruit ripening in the fall
- The main source of dispersal is by birds and mammals



*Penn State Extension*

### PREFERRED LOCATION

- Well drained soil, full sun and can tolerate deep shade

### MANAGEMENT & CONTROL

- Remove from your landscape and do not plant it!
- Small bushes and infestations can be pulled out effectively by hand or by mowing
- Shrubs can be repeatedly cut to the ground to control re-sprouting or cut and treat with a systemic herbicide

### ★ LOOK-ALIKES

There are 3 native euonymus species (*E. americanus*, *E. atropurpureus*, *E. obovatus*) that all lack the corky winged stems.

### ★ NATIVE ALTERNATIVES

Northern Bayberry  
*Morella pensylvanica*

Black Chokeberry  
*Aronia melanocarpa*

Highbush Blueberry  
*Vaccinium corymbosum*

Dogwood species  
including  
silky (*Cornus amomum*),  
gray (*Cornus racemosa*)  
& red stem (*Cornus sericea*)



[joshfecteau.com](http://joshfecteau.com)

### RESOURCES

<https://www.invasive.org/alien/pubs/midatlantic/eual.htm>

<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/euonymus-alatus/>

<https://extension.psu.edu/burning-bush>

<https://www.invasive.org/alien/pubs/midatlantic/control-shrubsandsubshrubs.htm>