

INVADER #3 of 4:
COMMON
BUCKTHORN

Rhamnus cathartica



HOW YOU CAN STOP BUCKTHORN

- 1 Get rid of it**
Hack back branches and dig up roots before buckthorn fruits. To prevent regrowth, treat or use baggies to cover remaining stumps. For large areas, you could even use prescribed fire or goats to get rid of young plants.
- 2 Stop the spread**
Industrial composters get hot enough to sterilize seedy berries; see if your city's facility accepts them. If you pull before it fruits, let buckthorn decay in place. And brush off boots after walking through areas with buckthorn.
- 3 Follow up (for up to five years!) and replant**
Pull seedlings and young growth each year. Diverse native plants, like chokecherry or American elderberry, can compete with buckthorn seedlings, so replanting for wildlife habitat has yet another benefit.

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HOW TO IDENTIFY BUCKTHORN

Look for it in woodlands + savannas + fields + roadsides (almost anywhere)



Buckthorn is named for the twig tip's two buds that often come together like the hooves of a deer. Between the buds, a short thorn grows.



This shrub can grow up to 25 feet! Its gray-brown bark has flakes or cork-like bumps. Nicking the bark will reveal an orange inner tissue.

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Buckthorn has glossy, egg-shaped leaves that stay green later in fall than other plants'. Leaf veins curve toward the tip. Leaf edges are toothed.



Dark, round berries develop between July and September. (Be careful not to spread any of those seedy berries! And don't eat them: They're toxic.)



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