Lonicera


Growth:

Invasive exotic shrub honeysuckles are ecologically invasive plants. They typically measure 1-2\text{\textbar}\text{\textbar}11/2 inches wide. Amur honeysuckle has darker, green leaves. Bell’s honeysuckle, a hybrid of Tatarian and Morrow’s honeysuckle, has larger, somewhat glossy leaves (2-3 inches long) that are oval or rounded forms. Amur honeysuckle has holly, gray-green leaves, while Tatarian honeysuckle has hairy, gray-green leaves, and Morrow’s honeysuckle has smooth, hairless, dull, bluish-green leaves.

Amur honeysuckle produces smooth flowers that are attractive to both insect and hummingbird pollinators. Nectar collects at the base of the flower tube (which is a “nectar spur”) and is attractive to both insect and hummingbird pollinators. Seeds are dispersed in the feces of birds or by wind. Barberry, another species of flowering plant that is native to Asia, has similar growth habits and is an invasive species in Wisconsin. Honeysuckles are often hollow, with light, grayish-brown, shaggy bark in long strips. Buds and leaves emerge at the same time, and the tree is mostly leafless during winter.

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Invasive exotic honeysuckles are native to Asia and southern Russia. They were introduced into North America as ornamentals in the mid-18th and 19th centuries, due to their showy flowers and fruit. They were also used for wildlife food and cover, and soil erosion control. Bell’s honeysuckle (L. x bellii), a hybrid of Tatarian honeysuckle (L. tatarica) and Morrow’s honeysuckle (L. morrowii), has quickly become as invasive as its parents. Unfortunately, some invasive exotic honeysuckles, especially the Tatarian honeysuckle cultivar ‘Arnold Red’ and ‘Zabelii’, as well as Freedom has quickly become as invasive as its parents.

**CONTROL METHODS**

Control of invasive exotic honeysuckles is best achieved with early identification, and removal of isolated plants before they begin to produce seed. Once established, honeysuckles can shade out native species and prevent establishment of the native understory. In large infestations of honeysuckle, larger, seed-producing plants should be removed.

**Hand pulling:** Honeysuckle plants with a stem diameter of 3⁄16 inch or less can be easily removed by hand pulling when soil is moist. Because honeysuckles have shallow roots, larger plants can be dug or pulled out using a rope or chain and continue to grow into late autumn, the best time for foliar sprays of glyphosate to treat honeysuckles. In mid to late autumn, honeysuckle shrubs are transporting many non-target plants are going dormant and herbicide treatments are not applied, vigorous regrowth occurs in spring. Spring cut-stump applications of triclopyr after budbreak, can effectively control honeysuckles.

Repetition of mechanical and chemical control methods may be necessary to control shrubs for five years in order to deplete honeysuckle plants and their seed bank. Replant areas that were infested with invasive species with native species tolerant to existing environmental conditions. This can help prevent reinvansion of invasive species.

**Biological Control:** This is necessary to control shrubs. Education: One of the best honeysuckle control methods is education. Tell your neighbors about invasive honeysuckles. A neighbors’ honeysuckle can produce several thousand seeds annually that can be disseminated into your backyard and the surrounding neighborhood by birds. Encourage your neighbors to remove their invasive honeysuckles before they become established.

**NOTE:** References to pesticide and other products in this publication are for your convenience and are not an endorsement or criticism of one product over similar products. You are responsible for using pesticides according to the manufacturer’s current label directions. Follow directions carefully to protect non-target organisms and people from pesticide exposure. Failure to do so violates the law.