

BUCKTHORN

invasive
fact sheet



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Buckthorns invade Vermont's forests and fields. They are easy to see in the fall when their dark blue berries cover the trees' branches.



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common buckthorn
glossy buckthorn

common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*)



orange
tissue



opposite, toothed leaves with "u" vein

glossy buckthorn (*Rhamnus frangula*)

alternate
glossy
leaves



unripe
red
berries

Photos © John Randall/The Nature Conservancy

DID YOU KNOW?

Birds and mammals feed on buckthorn berries during the winter, aiding in the dispersal of seeds. While buckthorns may benefit from this behavior, the feeding animals do not. Buckthorn berries contain emodin, a natural laxative that prevents mammals, such as the Eastern chipmunk (*Tamias striatus*) from absorbing sugars found in the berries.

— *Canadian Journal of Entomology*, 1979

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For small plants:

 Hand pull plants. Let roots dry completely before composting.


For large plants:

 Girdle plants in the winter. Using a 2-3 centimeter saw cut through the bark and first tissue layer around the entire tree base. Cut another ring 6 inches above the previous cut.

For large plants (continued):

 Cut large trees at base with chainsaw or handsaw. Repeat cuts twice a year, in the spring and fall, will reduce plant vigor.

— or —

 Cut stumps can also be dabbed with a 20% glyphosate herbicide, such as Round-Up® or Rodeo®, solution. Glyphosate should not be applied to wetland areas.

Read herbicide label before using.



non-invasive alternatives



fragrant sumac
Rhus aromatica



white fringe tree
Chionanthus virginicus

American
hazelnut

*Corylus
americana*



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common
lilac

*Syringa
vulgaris*



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