

**Natural Area Preservation**  
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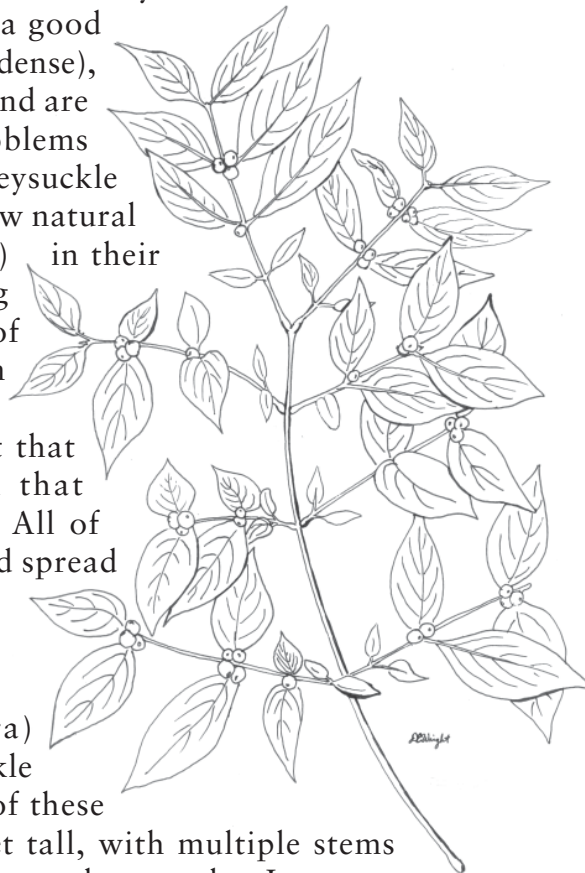
CITY OF ANN ARBOR  
**Natural Area  
 Preservation**

## INVASIVE PLANTS

### **Bush Honeysuckles** *Lonicera spp.*

#### **History**

Honeysuckle (*Lonicera spp.*) was introduced to the Americas in the early 1800's as ornamental and privacy shrubbery and for "wildlife habitat". Possessing the traits of a good shrub (hardiness, quick growth, and visually dense), they also quickly invaded our natural areas and are now posing one of the largest invasive problems our woodland parks have seen. Invasive honeysuckle species have the following characteristics: few natural predators (grazers, parasites, or diseases) in their non-native range; are spread easily and long distances by both birds and on the feet of animals; have a longer growing season than our native shrubs; and have a high tolerance to low light conditions. It is also thought that bush honeysuckles produce a chemical that inhibits the growth of surrounding flora. All of these characteristics contribute to their rapid spread at the expense of biodiversity.



#### **How Can I Identify It?**

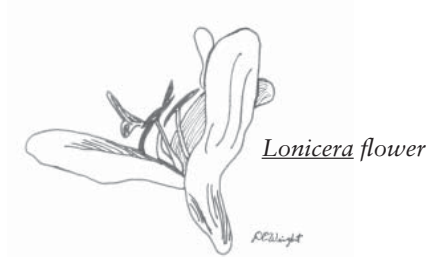
Several species of honeysuckle (*Lonicera*) inhabit our natural areas, the bush honeysuckle species being of most concern. The habit of these plants is distinct. They grow up to 20 feet tall, with multiple stems coming from the ground, each stem forming a long arch. Leaves are opposite, lance-shaped, appearing earlier in the spring and staying on later in the fall than most native species. This shrub blooms in May and June with sweet smelling blossoms. Flowers can be white, pink, or red. The wood of a honeysuckle smells like honey when cut. Fruit is red or orange in color and will hang on to the tree well into fall.

# FACT SHEET

BUSH HONEYSUCKLES *Lonicera spp.*

## How Can Honeysuckle Be Controlled?

- NAP's preferred method of control is hand-pulling for seedlings and cutting and applying herbicide directly to the cut stumps for more established plants.
- Prescribed burning is effective on seedling shrubs and repeated burns can kill younger shrubs as well.
- For more information on control methods visit The Nature Conservancy website at: <http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu>



## What Can I Do?

- If you see a small infestation of seedling plants, pull them. When pulling be sure to remove the root to prevent re-sprouting from root fragments. Pulled plants should be left on a rock or log so the roots are not in contact with soil.
- Stay on, and keep pets on, established roads and trails to prevent invasive seed dispersal.
- After visiting an area that has honeysuckle, or other invasives present, clean up before you leave the site! Make sure your clothes, shoes, vehicles, and pets are mud and/or seed free.
- Use plants native to southeastern Michigan in upcoming landscaping projects. NAP has a series of brochures to assist you in choosing native shrubs and trees.
- Participate in NAP-sponsored volunteer workdays to remove honeysuckle and other invasives from city natural areas.
- Learn to identify honeysuckle and other invasive shrubs and trees. Invasive woody plants to look out for are:

Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*)      buckthorn (*Rhamnus frangula* and *R. cathartica*)  
tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*)      black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*)  
autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*)      multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*)  
honeysuckle (*Lonicera spp.*)