

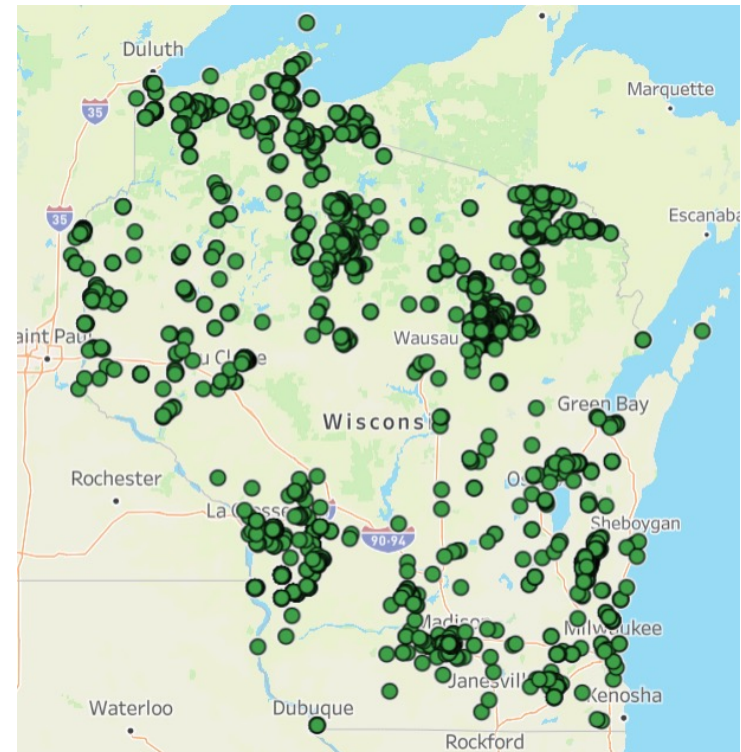
Common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*)



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- Large shrub or small tree with blackish bark and leaves that stay green into winter
- Habitats it invades:
 - Forests
 - Roadsides
- Status
 - Wisconsin: Restricted
 - Regulated in: MN, OH, IL





Common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*)

Leaves opposite, simple

- 1-2" long, egg-shaped
- Leaf margins with rounded teeth; veins arch toward the leaf tip
- Leaves sometimes sub-opposite or nearly alternate
- Branches usually tipped with a small thorn





Common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*)

Flower/fruit



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- Flowers are small, green, and borne in round clusters along the branches; May-June
- Male and female flowers are borne on separate plants
- Fruit is a black berry



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female
flowers



Buckthorn look alike

Common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) and glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*) may be confused with each other and with **native** *Prunus* (cherries, plums) and **native** *Alnus* (alder) species based on leaves and bark. Buckthorns can be most easily differentiated from *Prunus* and *Alnus* species based on flower/fruit characteristics.



COMMON BUCKTHORN (left) bark is shiny dark gray with dark lenticels. Leaves are egg-shaped with small teeth; veins curve towards tip of leaf.



GLOSSY BUCKTHORN (right) bark is tan with light-colored lenticels. Leaves are egg to oval shaped with no teeth; veins point towards edges of leaf.



PRUNUS species (left) like cherries and plums have variable bark color, but younger bark has noticeable lenticels. *Prunus* leaves are **toothed with an abrupt point at the tip**. Example shown is choke cherry (*P. virginiana*).



ALDERS (right) have light-colored lenticels. Leaves have a similar vein pattern to glossy buckthorn but are **toothed**. Example shown is speckled alder (*Alnus incana*).

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