

Common Buckthorn

Common Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) poses an issue to County and private forests as it takes hold wherever it can and begins to crowd out other species. It takes hold in the understory of forests, capturing all the light making it to the forest floor and preventing native species from continuing the natural forest succession. Over the long term this reduces biodiversity and makes management a larger (and more expensive) task. Catching and eliminating Common Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) early is key to protecting our County ecosystems and biodiversity.

Common Buckthorn or European Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) is an invasive plant from Europe that spreads and survives across the landscape. It is most observed in fields, forest edges, roadsides, and fence lines. It's tolerance to drought and shade allow it to slowly take over the areas that it grows. The spread of Common Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) reduces wildlife habitat and outgrows native species, reducing biodiversity.

Identification:

Leaves rounded with veins curling from base to tip. Leaves deep green.



Photo by Nature Conservancy of Canada

Bark greyish-brown with white lenticels present, under bark yellow-green, heartwood orange.



Photo by Ontario Invasive Plant Council

Thorns present on branches and dark berries hang in clusters.



Photo by North American Native Plant Society

More Information

[Ontario Common Buckthorn](#)

[Invading Species Awareness Program](#)

[Invasive Species Centre with Bulletins and Best Management Practices](#)