

Honeysuckle shrubs

Lonicera spp.

Fact Sheet



















NH Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food, Division of Plant Industry, 29 Hazen Dr, Concord, NH 03301
(603) 271-3488

Common Name: Honeysuckles

Latin Name: *Lonicera spp.*

New Hampshire Invasive Species Status: Prohibited (Agr 3800)

Native to: Eurasia

Bell's honeysuckle <i>Lonicera x bella</i>	Morrow's honeysuckle <i>Lonicera morrowii</i>	Tatarian honeysuckle <i>Lonicera tatarica</i>
 <p>Flowering –whitish to pink fading to yellow with <u>slightly pubescent flower stalks</u></p>	 <p>Flowering –whitish to pink with <u>long pubescent flower stalks</u></p>	 <p>Flowering – pink to almost red with <u>long glabrous flower stalks</u></p>
 <p>Leaves are bluish green, <u>slightly pubescent beneath</u></p>	 <p>Leaves elliptic to ovate, <u>soft pubescent beneath, petiole 1/12 to 1/8" long</u></p>	 <p>Leaves bluish-green, petiole 1/12 to 1/4" long, <u>hairless on underside</u></p>
 <p>Stem/bark, sparsely pubescent</p>	 <p>Stem light brown turning gray</p>	 <p>Stems green turning brown, glabrous</p>
 <p>Buds & leaf scar</p>	 <p>Leaf buds</p>	 <p>Leaf buds-flattened, glabrous</p>
 <p>Hollow stem</p>	 <p>Hollow stem</p>	 <p>Hollow stem</p>
 <p>Fruits are red or yellow 1/4" diameter <u>on short peduncles that are longer than the petioles</u></p>	 <p>Ripe fruit is blood red, 1/4" diameter <u>on long peduncles, which are very hairy</u></p>	 <p>1/4" red to orange berry</p>

Bell's honeysuckle <i>Lonicerax bella</i>	Morrow's honeysuckle <i>Lonicerax morrowii</i>	Tatarian honeysuckle <i>Lonicerax tatarica</i>
<p>Description: Shrub reaching 20' in height and width. Stems: Greenish to tan with corky wings. Leaves: Oppositely arranged, simple and elliptic, 1-3" long by half as wide, light green. Flowers: Yellow, white or pink, May to early June. Fruit: Fleshy red, forming in pairs in leaf axis. Zone: 4-8. Habitat: Prefers dry upland soils, full sun to heavy shade, pH adaptable. Spread: Seeds are dispersed by birds. Comments: <i>L. x bella</i> is a cross between <i>L. tatarica</i> & <i>L. morrowii</i>. Spreads into natural areas forming dense stands, which displace native species. Controls: Hand or mechanical removal, continuous cutting, girdling, and herbicide treatment.</p>	<p>Description: Shrub reaching 6-8' tall. Stems: Smooth, glabrous, Tannish, hollow. Leaves: Ovate, simple, entire, opposite, pubescent beneath, 1-2 1/2" long. Flowers: Tubular, white, turning yellow with age, May to June. Fruits: Berry turning red. Zone: 3-8. Habitat: Moist to wet shaded floodplains, forests, roadsides, fields, waste places. Spread: Seeds are dispersed by wildlife and humans. Comments: Rapidly invades sites, forming a dense vegetative layer that outcompetes native flora and fauna species. Controls: Hand control is effective for small plants, while mechanical removal and repetitive cutting also work well. Herbicide treatment is better for areas with greater infestations.</p>	<p>Description: Upright deciduous shrub reaching 6-15' tall. Stems: Smooth, glabrous, tan, hollow. Leaves: Ovate, smooth, bluish-green, opposite, 1-2 1/2" long. Flowers: Tubular, pink or white, April to May. Fruit: Berry with two seeds, turning red in fall. Zone: 3-8. Habitat: Under story species in woodland sites, also invades open spaces. Thrives in moist soils. Spread: Seeds dispersed by wildlife and humans. Comments: Rapidly invades forests, fields, roadsides and floodplains. Outcompetes native species. Controls: Hand control is effective for small plants while mechanical removal, cutting and chemical applications are better for larger stands.</p>

<i>Lonicerax spp.</i> Shrub honeysuckles	
Plant Type	Shrub
Habitat Type	Forests, fields, roadsides, wetlands
USDA Hardiness Zone	3-8
Rooting Structure	Fibrous shallow
Environmental Impacts	Dense shade outcompetes and displaces native understory plants thus reducing the availability of food for wildlife. These plants are also allelopathic lending to their ability to create monotypic shrub layers.
Wildlife Impacts	Loss of valuable habitat
Leaf arrangement	Opposite
NWI Ranking	FACU
Soil Type	
Soil pH Range	6.5-8
Light Requirements	Prefers partial to full sun, shade
Growing Season	
Growth Rate	1-ft per year
Mature Height	7-10 ft. (2.13 -3 m)
Life Span	20 -35 years
Reproductive Age	3 years
Flowering Period	April to June
Flower Type	Monoecious
Pollination	Insects
Seed Set	September
Seed Per Plant	>20,000
Scarification Required	Yes
Cold Stratification	3-4 °C for 90-120 days
Seed Longevity	2 or more years
Seed Germination Rate	80%
Seedling Density	459,000 plants/acre
Other Propagules	Suckering, layering
Dispersal Vectors	Birds and mammals

General Considerations

Bush honeysuckles are large deciduous shrubs originating from Eurasia. Bell's honeysuckle grows to an average height of 9', Morrow's is generally less than 7' tall and Tatarian rarely exceeds 10'. Stems of all of these are hollow, whereas native honeysuckles have solid pith. Flowers are tubular and occur from April to June. Birds widely disseminate seeds after eating the fleshy fruits. Seedlings emerge throughout the growing season. It is also one of the earliest plants to leaf out in the spring and one of the latest to drop its leaves in the fall. Their early development and dense canopy allows them to displace native plants. This effectively leaves the forest floor barren and subject to erosion as well as diminishing the availability of food for wildlife. These invasive honeysuckles have also been shown to be allelopathic, which prevents and/or inhibits native species regeneration.

Control Options

See the following control guides: [Integrated Pest Management \(IPM\) for Woody Plants](#); or the [Control of Invasive Species by Numbers](#)

Berries may be mildly poisonous if eaten. Sensitivity to a toxin varies with a person's age, weight, physical condition, and individual susceptibility. Children are most vulnerable because of their curiosity and small size. Toxicity can vary in a plant according to season, the plant's different parts, and its stage of growth

Sources

Mehrhoff, L., 2001. Invasive Plant Atlas of New England: http://www.eddmaps.org/ipane/ipanespecies/shrubs/Lonicera_tatarica.htm
 Ohio State University: <http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/weedguide/singlerecord.asp?id=840>
 Illinois Dept of Natural Resources: <http://dnr.state.il.us/inpc/pdf/VMG%20Bush%20honeysuckle%20revised%202007.pdf>