

How to beat BUCKTHORN

Buckthorn are invasive shrubs or small trees. Two species are found in Minnesota: Common Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) and Glossy Buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*). This handout focuses primarily on Common Buckthorn as it's most often encountered on suburban properties.



A THREAT TO FOREST ECOSYSTEMS

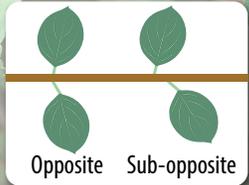
Brought from Europe for hedges, buckthorn spread, forming dense thickets in forests and elsewhere. This highly invasive plant displaces native shrubs and small trees, destroying habitat for songbirds and other wildlife.

HOW TO IDENTIFY COMMON BUCKTHORN

Common Buckthorn, *Rhamnus cathartica*

Leaf arrangement

Leaves are **opposite** or **sub-opposite** from each other.



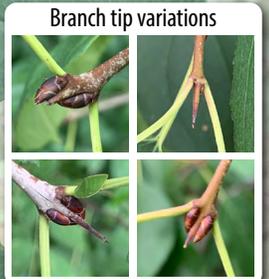
Leaf size varies, ranging ½ inch to almost 3 inches in length.

Leaf color is **dark green and glossy**. Leaves are some of the first to appear in spring and the last to drop in fall. Buckthorn leaves stay green into late fall.



Branch tip

Thorn may be long, short, or absent. **Buds** grow in pairs around thorn.



Leaf shape

Oval with pointed ends, similar to an egg or lemon.

Leaf veins

Lateral or side **veins** are **curved**, coming off the central vein like a wishbone.

Central vein

Leaf edge

Edge of leaf is **finely serrated** like a steak knife.

Fruit

Avg. size ¼ inch



Bark

