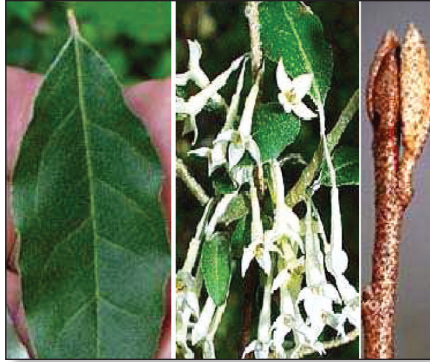


# Controlling Autumn-Olive

*A practical guide to invasive species removal*

Protecting and Preserving Southern Michigan



## What is Autumn-Olive?

Autumn-Olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*) is an invasive shrub or small tree that is typically found in disturbed areas, pastures, roadsides, and fallow fields. It is an excellent competitor and nitrogen fixer. Not only does autumn-olive out-compete native species for space and resources, but it can actually change the chemical makeup of the soil. Controlling Autumn-Olive protects the population of native plants on your land.

## History

Autumn-olive is native to East Asia. It was introduced to the U.S. in the 1830s to quickly revitalize natural areas decimated by mining and to prevent erosion on farms.

## Why is it such a successful invasive?

- Vigorous fruiting
- Fast-growing and maturing
- Seeds widely dispersed by birds
- Thrives in poor soil

## How do I identify Autumn-Olive?

- Long, lance-shaped, simple, alternate leaves covered in scales; underside covered in silvery scales
- Both young twigs and berries covered in golden scales
- Flowers are small, yellow-white, and bell-shaped
- Flowers in spring, fruits in late summer with red berry-like fruits, edible to both wild animals and humans. Berries are high in antioxidants.
- Bark is smooth and gray when young but matures into split and fissured bark

## Control Methods

### Mechanical

- Pull seedlings and sprouts by hand from moist soil, making sure root system is completely removed.
- Do not cut or burn larger plants; this will result in thicker, denser growth upon re-sprouting.

## Chemical

- Larger plants can be controlled with glyphosate chemical treatment. However, glyphosate will control native plants as well as autumn-olive, so the herbicide must be applied with caution.
- Applying glyphosate to freshly-cut stumps effectively controls the plant while minimizing the herbicide's impact on native neighboring plants.

## Preventing the Spread of Invasives

- When walking your property with friends, family, and pets, stick to trails and paths to minimize the spread of invasive seeds.
- When leaving a natural area inhabited by invasive species, check your shoes, clothing, and pets for stray plant seeds and fruits.



**LEGACY**  
Land Conservancy

1100 N. Main Street, Suite #203 · Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
734.302.5263 · [www.legacylandconservancy.org](http://www.legacylandconservancy.org)

