

PLANT: Autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata* ELUM), is a bushy, leafy shrub native to Asia.

IDENTIFICATION: A slow-growing deciduous shrub that produces fragrant silvery-white to yellow flowers from February to June, and many red berries from August to November. This shrub with scattered thorny branches can grow 3 to 20 feet tall. Twigs are slender, silvery, and scaly with some lateral twigs pointed like thorns. Branches and main stems are glossy and olive with many whitish dots, becoming light gray to gray brown with age. Eventually, the branches and main stems fissure to expose light brown inner bark. Leaves are alternate, elliptic, 2 to 3 inches long and 0.8 to 1.2 inches wide. Leaves are bright green to gray green above with a silver scaly midvein and beneath, they are silver and densely scaly. This shrub resembles the silverthorn or thorny olive (*Elaeagnus pungens*) and Russian olive (*E. angustifolia*).



ECOLOGY: It is often planted on reclamation sites and in wildlife areas to form dense stands. Autumn olive spreads easily by animal-dispersed seeds. It is found as scattered plants in forest openings and open forests. It is shade tolerant and prefers drier sites.

HERBICIDE CONTROL: Apply 42+% active ingredient of imazapyr herbicide (Arsenal AC, Vanquish, or Polaris AC) as a 1% solution (4 ounces per 3-gal. mix) in water with a surfactant (basal oil, methylated seed oil, or vegetable oil) at a 1% solution to thoroughly wet all leaves. If safety to surrounding vegetation is desired, use 44.4% active ingredient of triclopyr herbicide (Garlon 3A or Tahoe 3A) as a 2% solution (8 ounces per 3-gal. mix) in water with a surfactant. Spray during the months of April to October. For stems too tall for foliar sprays, apply 60+% active ingredient of triclopyr herbicide (Garlon 4, Remedy, or Tahoe 4E) at a 20% solution (5 pints per 3-gal. mix) in commercially labeled surfactant with a penetrant, or undiluted Pathfinder II to young bark as a basal spray (January to February or May to October). Or, cut large stems and immediately treat stumps with 42+% active ingredient of imazapyr herbicide (Arsenal AC, Vanquish, or Polaris AC) as a 5% solution (20 ounces per 3-gal. mix) or if safety to surrounding vegetation is desired, a 41% active ingredient of glyphosate herbicide (Accord, Razor, Roundup Original, or Buccaneer) as a 20% solution (5 pints per 3-gal. mix) in water with a surfactant at a 1% solution.

WARNING: Herbicides containing the active ingredient imazapyr (Arsenal AC, Vanquish, Polaris AC, etc.) will damage plants with roots in the treated area. Always read and follow label instructions carefully.

Photo and Text Credit: (A Field Guide for the Identification of, A Management Guide for) Invasive Plants in Southern Forests, James H. Miller, USDA Forest Service, 2010, www.forestryimages.org



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