



Burning bush is an easy species to spot in the early spring, as its leaves are among the first to emerge. It can grow under a wide range of conditions on all but the wettest sites, and can be found in Norwich in these locations:

- The Milt Frye Nature Area
- Powerline rights-of-way
- Roadsides
- Several ornamental examples are also planted downtown!



Burning Bush or Winged Euonymous (*Euonymus alatus*)

Burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*) is a flowering, deciduous shrub that was imported to the United States in the late 1800s. The shrub, native to Asia, was prized for its ornamental properties, particularly the brilliant red autumn color that inspired its common name. It quickly escaped its cultivated environment and rapidly established itself in the understory of New England's forests, where it can grow up to 20 feet in height.

Burning bush is designated a Class B noxious weed in Vermont, where its movement, distribution, and sale is prohibited. It has a similar designation in New Hampshire.



DISPERSAL & REPRODUCTION

Burning bush is spread by birds and wildlife, which consume its fruit and disperse seeds in their scat. It is also capable of reproducing and spreading via cuttings and resprouting from cut branches.

Burning bush is capable of growing in both highly-disturbed environments — such as abandoned fields, powerline rights-of-way, and roadsides — and also undisturbed interior forest. Because it is a monoecious species (containing both male and female parts within the same flower), a single shrub can self-fertilize and produce a large colony of plants. These dense colonies rapidly outcompete native understory species, and if left unchecked a monoculture of burning bush will eventually result.

IDENTIFICATION: among the first species to leaf-out in spring; when mature, leaves are 1-3 inches long with a finely-serrated edge, a pointed tip, and are typically narrower at the base than in the midsection (obovate); leaves turn a brilliant red alongside small, red, capsule-shaped fruit. Burning bush has a corky bark with highly distinctive wings that can also aid in identification.

CONTROL: mechanical pulling of stems and roots (by hand or with a weed wrench); hang or burn dead plants (do not compost); larger plants can be cut and stump painted with an herbicide.

