



Invasive Plants North Alabama

WildOnes & Land Trust of North Alabama

Mar 2025

Chinese Privet

- *Ligustrum sinense*
- **Leaves:** Opposite, evergreen
- **Flowers:** Terminal clusters of small white flowers
- **Fruit:** Terminal cluster of small, thin, purple fruits
- **Bark:** Smooth gray bark
- **Habitat:** Prefers stream banks, swamps and wet areas
- **Native lookalikes:**
 - Glade privet
 - Rusty blackhaw *Viburnum*



Chinese Privet

- **Bark:** Smooth gray bark, often mottled with white
- **Form:** Often single trunked
 - Grows into a small tree
- **Leaves:** Leaves often (not always) have a distinct dimple at the terminus
 - Entire margins (no teeth)



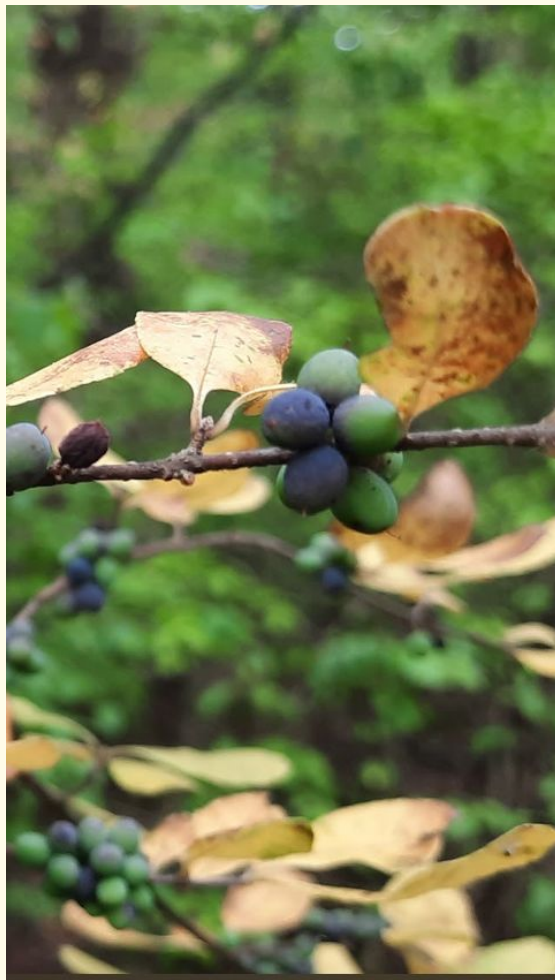
Native Glade Privet

- ***Forestiera ligustrina***
- **Leaves:** Light green leaves of variable size, oppositely arranged
 - Often leaves are missing along the branch
 - Leaves have toothy margins
- **Flowers:** Small yellowish axial flowers with prominent anthers appear in late summer



Native Glade Privet

- *Forestiera ligustrina*
- **Form:** Multi-stemmed deciduous shrub
- **Leaves:** Opposite, deciduous turn yellow or golden brown in Fall
- **Fruit:** Axially arranged small purple berries appear in late fall as leaves are turning
- **Bark:** Smooth gray bark looks very similar to Chinese privet, but stems typically smaller than Chinese privet
- **Other:** Tiny buds and fine terminal branches
- **Habitat:** Grows in upland limestone glades



Elaeagnus

- *Elaeagnus pungens*
- **Leaves:** evergreen, lanceolate with distinctive silvery undersides (spotted)
 - Leaf tips = acute
- **Flowers:** Small yellow flowers and elongated red fruits
- **Form:** Arching shrub with brown, thorny limbs often touching ground
- **Native lookalikes:**
 - Alabama croton (very uncommon)



Elaeagnus

- **Bark:** New growth is light, mottled brown with an almost metallic cast
 - Mature bark is warty gray to brown bark and often thorny
- **Branches:** Pliable branches and limbs, almost vine-like
- **Native lookalikes:**
 - Alabama croton



Alabama Croton

- **Croton alabamensis**
- **Leaves:** Alternate, punctate (spotted) leaves upper and undersides
 - Semi-evergreen
 - Leaf undersides silvery with prominent veins
 - Crinkled leaves with texture of sandpaper
 - Crushed leaves have a faint apple smell
- **Flowers:** small, yellow clustered flowers
- **Fruit:** round, brown capsules
- **Form:** Upright shrub with ascending branches (never arching)
- **Habitat:** Uncommon shrub in limestone glades in Central Alabama



Nandina

- **Nandina domestica**
- **Leaves:** Compound, evergreen leaves
- **Fruit:** Terminal clusters of red berries
- **Form:** Leggy, multi-stemmed shrub with no lateral branching
- **Native lookalikes:**
 - None



Nandina

- **Leaves:** Leaf nodes red
 - Often red or maroon



Bush Honeysuckle

- **Lonicera maackii, Lonicera fragrantissima (others)**
- **Leaves:** Opposite, semi-evergreen leaves (thick and often hairy)
- **Bark:** Shredding bark at maturity
 - Vertical striations on bark
- **Form:** Multi-stemmed deciduous or semi-evergreen shrub
- **Habit:** Incredibly dense growth habit
- **Native lookalikes:**
 - Indian currant
 - Diervilla species
 - Wild honeysuckle



Bush Honeysuckle

- **Lonicera maackii**, **Lonicera fragrantissima**
- **Leaves:** Opposite, semi-evergreen or deciduous leaves (thick and often hairy)
- **Flowers:** yellow, white, sometimes pink and very fragrant
 - *Lonicera fragrantissima* blooms in January and February
- **Berries:** Red, axial and paired
- 2 species in Alabama with different flowering times and flower sizes
- **Bark:** Gray bark with vertical striations
 - Shredding bark at maturity
 - Vertical striations on bark
- **Native lookalikes:**
 - Indian currant
 - *Diervilla* species
 - *Lonicera dioica*



Diervilla

- *Diervilla spp*
- **Leaves:** Opposite, lance-shaped leaves
- **Flowers:** Terminal flowers and fruits
- **Fruits:** A dry capsule rather than a berry, located on the terminus of branches
- **Habitat:** Depends on species. Often grows in ravines



Wild Honeysuckle

- ***Lonicera dioica***
- **Form:** small shrub with vining tendencies
- **Leaves:** Opposite, ovate, deciduous
 - Terminally fused under flowering and fruiting shoots
 - Glaucous above and below with whitish undersides
 - Lack petioles (leaf stems)
- **Flowers:** Terminal, in pairs of 3
 - flowers can be yellow, pink or maroon, <1" long and assymetric/bilabiate
- **Fruits:** Terminally clustered red berries
- **Habitat:** Seepages, bogs, rocky woods



Blackhaw

Viburnum

- *Viburnum rufidulum & prunifolium*
- **Leaves:** Opposite, large, glossy, opposite leaves with toothy margins
 - Oval in shape
- **Flowers:** Creamy and occurring in dense terminal clusters
- **Buds:** Rust-colored, velvety buds
- **Fruits:** Drooping clusters of large, oblong, blue-purple drupes



Native Viburnum

- *Viburnum rufidulum*,
Viburnum prunifolium
- **Habit:** Single or multi-stemmed shrub or small tree
- **Arrangement:** Opposite leaves/branching
- **Bark:** Dogwood-like bark
- **Buds:** Rust-colored, velvety buds
- **Flowers:** Clusters of creamy, white, flowers on terminal branches



Japanese Honeysuckle

- *Lonicera japonica*
- **Form:** Vigorous climbing vine that tightly coils around stems that disfigures host plants
- **Leaves:** Oppositely arranged
 - New leaves can be pinnately lobed
- **Fruit:** Clustered black fruit in axils
- **Stems:** Stems can be very thick (>1" in diameter) and have shredding bark
- **Lookalikes:**
 - Coral honeysuckle
 - Other vining native honeysuckles (less common)



Japanese Honeysuckle

- *Lonicera japonica*
- **Flowers:** Flowers are large, yellow and white (sometimes pink) and very fragrant
- **Lookalikes:**
 - Coral honeysuckle



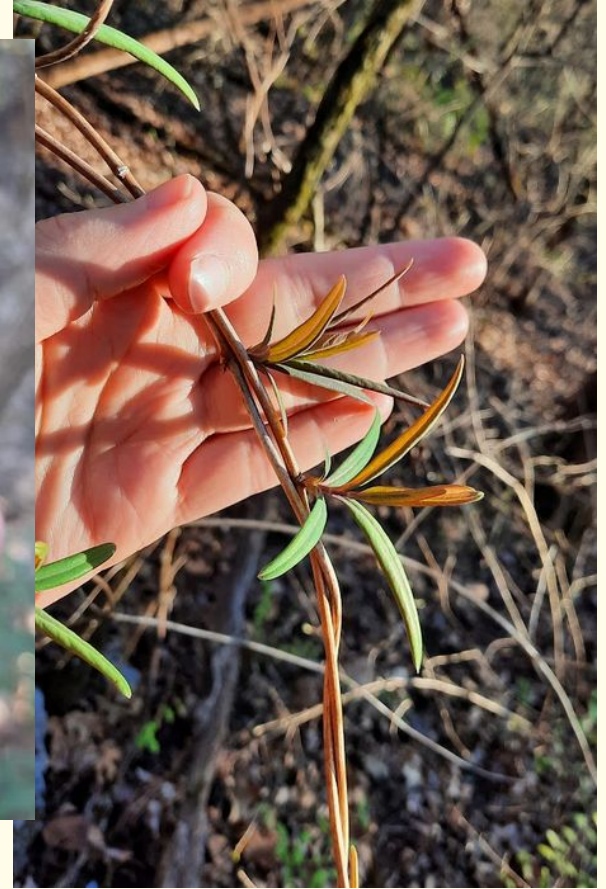
Japanese Honeysuckle

- **Leaves:** Long leaf petioles (leaf stems)
 - Often hairy leaves and petioles
 - Leaves are dense, somewhat papery in feel and often hairy (with sometimes hairy petioles)
- **Lookalikes:**
 - Coral honeysuckle



Native Coral Honeysuckle

- ***Lonicera sempervirens***
- **Leaves:** Young leaves linear, in terminal clusters and often with red hues
- **Form:** Loose, climbing habit around tree/shrub trunks



Native Coral Honeysuckle

- **Lonicera sempervirens**
- **Leaves:** Opposite, thick, round leaves at maturity
 - Smooth, nearly glaucous leaves, new stems and petioles
 - Terminal leaves near inflorescences and fruit are typically fused
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- **Flowers:** Red, tubular flowers
- **Fruit:** Red fruit occurs in terminal whorls
- **Stems:** Often reddish colored stems on new growth



Multiflora rose

- **Leaves:** 5-9 leaflets
 - Fringed leaf stipules
- **Flowers:** Clusters of small, white roses
- **Fruits:** Small, red, rose hips in clusters like the flowers
- **Canes:** Olive green canes (year-round)
 - Large, recurved thorns
- **Habit:** Shrub or climbing vine
- **Lookalikes:**
 - Carolina rose



Carolina rose

- **Leaves:** 3-9 leaflets
 - Naked leaf stipules
- **Flowers:** Large, pink roses, never abundantly clustered
- **Fruits:** large, red to black, born usually singly
- **Canes:** Old canes are reddish-brown
 - Thin, needle-like thorns



Mahonia

- *Berberis bealei*
- **Form:** Evergreen holly-like shrub
- **Leaves:** Very leathery, prickly leaves
- **Fruit:** Grape like clusters spread by birds
- **Notes:** Intense yellow color when root or stem is damaged
- **Native lookalikes:**
 - Native hollies



Mahonia

- **Flowers:** Fragrant, yellow flowers occur in long joined inflorescences
- **Bark:** Bark is often knotted and twisted
- **Native lookalikes:**
 - Native hollies



Chinese Holly

- *Ilex cornuta*
- **Form:** Evergreen shrub holly (<15')
- **Leaves:** Evergreen, rectangular, very prickly leaves
 - “Bull horns” at the end of the leaf
- **Native lookalikes:**
 - American holly



English Ivy

- *Hedera helix*
- **Leaves:** Evergreen vine with thick, palmate leaves
- **Form:** Dense ground cover that fruits after growing up trees or vertical structures
- **Stems:** Hairy stems when climbing up trees
- **Notes:** Critical to remove vertical growth
- **Native lookalikes:**
 - None



Tree of Heaven

- ***Ailanthus altissima***
- **Form:** Tall deciduous tree with smooth bark
 - Tall (15-20'), suckering, unbranched trunks
 - Weak wooded
- **Leaves:** Large, compound leaves with many oppositely arranged leaflets
 - Crushed foliage has distinct smell of peanut butter or rancid peanut butter
 - Leaves have distinct lobe near the petiole (leaf stalk)
- **Stem:** Large, shield-shaped leaf scar
- **Bark:** Young bark has circular lenticels
- **Native Lookalikes:**
 - Black walnut
 - Suamcs



Callery Pear

- *Pyrus calleryana*
- **Form:** Medium (>20'), pear-shaped or narrow-crowned tree
 - Ascending branches
 - Often grow in dense, thickets
- **Leaves:** Thick leaves with crinkled margins
 - Brightly colored fall foliage (orange and red)
- **Fruit:** Small, round fruit with lenticels - often hard-fleshed until late in winter
- **Flowers:** White, offensive smelling flowers
- **Stems:** Often thorny
 - Round, white lenticels
- **Native lookalikes:**
 - Chickasaw plum



Callery Pear

- **Leaves:** ovate with wavy margins
- **Flowers:** Purple anthers on flowers
- **Stem:** Round, white lenticels



Chickasaw Plum

- *Prunus angustifolia*
- **Form:** Small thorny tree - <10' tall
- **Bark:** Very dark bark, almost black with long, horizontally oriented cream-colored lenticels
- **Flowers:** Small, white flowers with yellow anthers
- **Fruit:** small plums



Invasive removal

1. **Identify** the invasive plant
 - a. You will get good at this
2. **Lop** or saw the plant as close to the ground as possible



Invasive removal

3. **Immediately** after cutting (~30 s - 1 min), apply herbicide to the cut with the buckthorn blaster
4. **Remove** any fruits (if clustered) and place in a garbage bag



Invasive removal

5. **Cut** brush into manageable lengths (remove horizontal side branches)
6. **Pile** brush into localized piles



Acknowledgements

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