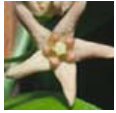




## Invasive Plant Atlas of New England

### Catalog of Species Search Results



[:: Catalog of Species Search](#)



## *Euonymus alata*

(Winged euonymus  
Burning bush  
Winged burning bush  
Winged wahoo  
Winged spindle-tree )

[Common Name\(s\)](#) | [Full Scientific Name](#) | [Family Name Common](#) | [Family Scientific Name](#) | [Images](#) | [Synonyms](#) | [Description](#) | [Similar Species](#) | [Reproductive/Dispersal Mechanisms](#) | [Distribution](#) | [History of Introduction in New England](#) | [Habitats in New England](#) | [Threats](#) | [Early Warning Notes](#) | [Management Links](#) | [Documentation Needs](#) | [Additional Information](#) | [References](#) | [Data Retrieval](#) | [Maps of New England Plant Distribution](#)

### COMMON NAME

Winged euonymus  
Burning bush  
Winged burning bush  
Winged wahoo  
Winged spindle-tree

### FULL SCIENTIFIC NAME

*Euonymus alata* (Thunb.) Siebold

### FAMILY NAME COMMON

Staff-tree family

### FAMILY SCIENTIFIC NAME

Celastraceae

### IMAGES



Fall color



Close-up of fruit

Close-up of  
flowers

Seedlings



Leaves with fruit

Close-up of stem  
showing wings

Habit



Incursion



Incursion

## NOMENCLATURE/SYNONYMS

**Synonyms:** *Celastrus alata* Thunb.

## DESCRIPTION

### Botanical Glossary

*Euonymus alata* is a deciduous shrub that can grow to 2.5 m (8.2 ft.) in height. The most distinguishing features of this plant are the 2-4 broad, corky wings along the branches. However, sometimes individuals may lack wings (as in the cultivar, 'Compactus'). The branches of *Euonymus alata* are gray-brown in color. The leaves are 2.4-7.2 cm (1-3 in.) long, 1.3-3.2 cm (0.5-1.25 in.) wide, taper at both ends, and are positioned opposite to sub-opposite along the branches. They have short petioles, are finely and sharply serrate at the margins. This plant is very conspicuous in the fall as the leaves turn from dark green to a bright red.

The inconspicuous flowers of *Euonymus alata* appear in late April to June. They usually have four greenish-yellow petals, and are arranged with 1-3 flowers in a cyme. The fruit appear from September to October and are 1.3 cm (0.5 in.) long. The ovary walls are red-purple, and split open to reveal up to 4 seeds with waxy red-orange arils.

Page References Gleason & Cronquist 329, Holmgren 308, Magee & Ahles 716. See reference section below for full citations.

## SIMILAR SPECIES

None.

## REPRODUCTIVE/DISPERSAL MECHANISMS

The fruits of *Euonymus alata* are usually dispersed by birds. They also drop just below the plant, creating a "seed shadow."

## DISTRIBUTION

*Euonymus alata* is native to northeastern Asia, Japan and central China. In the United States it is now found from New England to northern Florida, and west to Iowa and Missouri. It has also been reported from Montana. It is found in all of the New England States.

## HISTORY OF INTRODUCTION IN NEW ENGLAND

*Euonymus alata* was introduced as an ornamental shrub around 1860 and is planted in all types of landscaping - highways, malls, post offices, bridge abutments and private homes. It is through its use as a popular shrub that it was first introduced into this area.

## HABITATS IN NEW ENGLAND

Abandoned Field  
Early Successional Forest  
Edge  
Pasture  
Planted Forest  
Railroad Right-of-Way  
Roadside  
Utility Right-of-Way  
Vacant Lot  
Yard or Garden

*Euonymus alata* can be located in habitats ranging from full sun to full shade. It can also tolerate a variety of soil types and pH levels. It grows well in well-drained soils and does not tolerate water-logged soils as readily. It is found not only in open or disturbed areas but also in forests as understory plants.

## THREATS

Since the seeds of *Euonymus alata* are bird dispersed, it has spread extensively from plantings. *Euonymus alata* plants have been observed in dense thickets, threatening native plants by crowding and shading. Below the plant there is often a seed shadow where hundreds of seedlings can be found. It threatens a variety of habitats such as forests, coastal scrublands, fields and prairies. This plant continues to be used as an ornamental, thus continuing its spread in the region.

## MANAGEMENT LINKS

[The Nature Conservancy](#)

[The Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group Invasive Plant Management Guide](#)

Comprehensive management information.

## **DOCUMENTATION NEEDS**

[Documentation required](#): Photograph or snippet of branches.

[Best time for documentation](#): All seasons.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

[Integrated Taxonomic Information System](#)

Taxonomic information about the species

[The PLANTS Database](#)

General information and distribution map

[UConn Plant Database](#)

[VA Department of Conservation and Recreation, Virginia Native Plant Society](#)

General information including distribution and control

[Virginia Tech Dendrology](#)

Description and Photographs

## **REFERENCES**

Bailey, L. H. 1949. Manual of Cultivated Plants. Macmillan, New York.

Behnke, G. and J.E. Ebinger. 1989. Woody invasion of glacial drift hill prairies in east-central Illinois. Transactions of the Illinois Academy of Science. 82(1-2):1-4.

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Holmgren, N.H. 1998. Illustrated Companion to Gleason and Cronquist's Manual. New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, New York.

Magee, D.W and H.E. Ahles. 1999. Flora of the Northeast. University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst.

USDA, NRCS. 2001. The PLANTS Database, Version 3.1. (<http://plants.usda.gov>). National Plant Data Center, Baton Rouge, LA 70874-4490 USA.

## DATA RETRIEVAL

Select a task by clicking the radio button and then click "Submit Selection."

- Formatted display as table
- Export as comma-delimited text file

## MAPS OF PLANT DISTRIBUTION IN NEW ENGLAND

Select a study area by clicking the radio button and then click "Submit Selection."

- The whole New England area
- One or more states
- One or more counties
- One or more towns (county sub-divisions)

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