**Lonicera xylosteum**
(Dwarf honeysuckle
European fly honeysuckle)

**Common Name(s)**
Dwarf honeysuckle
European fly honeysuckle

**Full Scientific Name**
*Lonicera xylosteum* L.

**Family Name Common**
Honeysuckle family

**Family Scientific Name**
Caprifoliaceae

**Images**
- Immature Fruit
- Habit
- Mature fruit

**Nomenclature/Synonyms**

*Synonyms:* None
DESCRIPTION

Botanical Glossary

*Lonicera xylosteum* is a woody, perennial shrub that is 1-2 m (3-7 ft.) tall. The pubescent stems of this plant are hollow. The oppositely arranged, gray-green leaves are usually obovate in shape, but can be ovate or oval; they are broadest beyond the middle. The apex of the leaf is usually obtuse, but can be acute and the base of the leaf is subcordate to narrowed. The upper leaf surface is glabrous when mature while the lower leaf surface is pubescent. The leaves measure 2.5-7.5 cm (1-3 in.) in length.

The yellow-white flowers are borne in pairs on peduncles that are longer than the petioles. The corolla of the flower is pubescent and conspicuously 2-lipped. The flowers appear in late May to early June. The fruit are scarlet, spherical berries that are borne in pairs. They usually measure 6 mm (0.25 in.) in diameter and ripen in the late summer to early fall.


SIMILAR SPECIES

*Lonicera x bella* Zabel (Bell's honeysuckle)
*L. morrowii* Gray (Morrow's honeysuckle)
*L. tartarica* L. (Tartarian honeysuckle)
*L. maackii* (Rupr.) Herder (Amur honeysuckle)

Link to the key of exotic honeysuckles

The key above does not include the native bush honeysuckles. One way to differentiate between the invasive bush honeysuckles and the native ones is that the invasive honeysuckles all have hollow stems, while the stems of the native ones are solid.

REPRODUCTIVE/DISPERSAL MECHANISMS

The fruit of *Lonicera xylosteum*, similar to the other shrubby honeysuckles, is dispersed by birds.

DISTRIBUTION

The native range of *Lonicera xylosteum* is in Europe, east to Turkey and the European part of Russia. In the United States it has been reported from all the northeastern states, south to Virginia, and West to Missouri and Minnesota. It has also been reported in Oregon. *Lonicera xylosteum* has been reported from all of the New England states.

HISTORY OF INTRODUCTION IN NEW ENGLAND
*Lonicera xylosteum* has long been cultivated, and there is no known date for its first introduction into this country. It was most likely introduced for use as a horticultural plant, and spread via plantings and bird dispersal.

**HABITATS IN NEW ENGLAND**

- Abandoned Field
- Early Successional Forest
- Edge
- Floodplain Forest
- Open Disturbed Area
- Pasture
- Planted Forest
- Roadside
- Utility Right-of-Way
- Vacant Lot
- Yard or Garden

*Lonicera xylosteum* can be found along the edges of woods and in open canopy forests. Like the other shrubby honeysuckles, it is tolerant of a wide range of soil conditions, and is used in for landscaping in difficult spots. It prefers full sun, but can also tolerate low light conditions.

**THREATS**

*Lonicera xylosteum* has not yet become prominent on the New England landscape. However, it has the potential to form large thickets that would suppress the growth of native shrubs and herbaceous plants. More information is necessary to assess the status of this species in this region.

**MANAGEMENT LINKS**

- Virginia Native Plant Society
- Plant Conservation Alliance

**DOCUMENTATION NEEDS**

Documentation required: Herbarium specimen or mounted snippet of the branch with flowers.

Best time for documentation: Spring, summer

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Integrated Taxonomic Information System
Taxonomic information about the species
PLANTS Database
General information and map

Plant Conservation Alliance
Fact sheet on the bush honeysuckles

Virginia Native Plant Society
Fact sheet on the bush honeysuckles

University of Connecticut Plants Database
General information and many photographs

REFERENCES


DATA RETRIEVAL

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

Submit Selection