

Bells honeysuckle

Lonicera xbella

Description

Hybrid cross between Tatarian and Morrow's honeysuckles. Common in urban areas and also occurs in rural areas where it was recommended for wildlife until its invasive traits became apparent; reduces tree and shrub regeneration, decreases overall plant diversity.

Habit

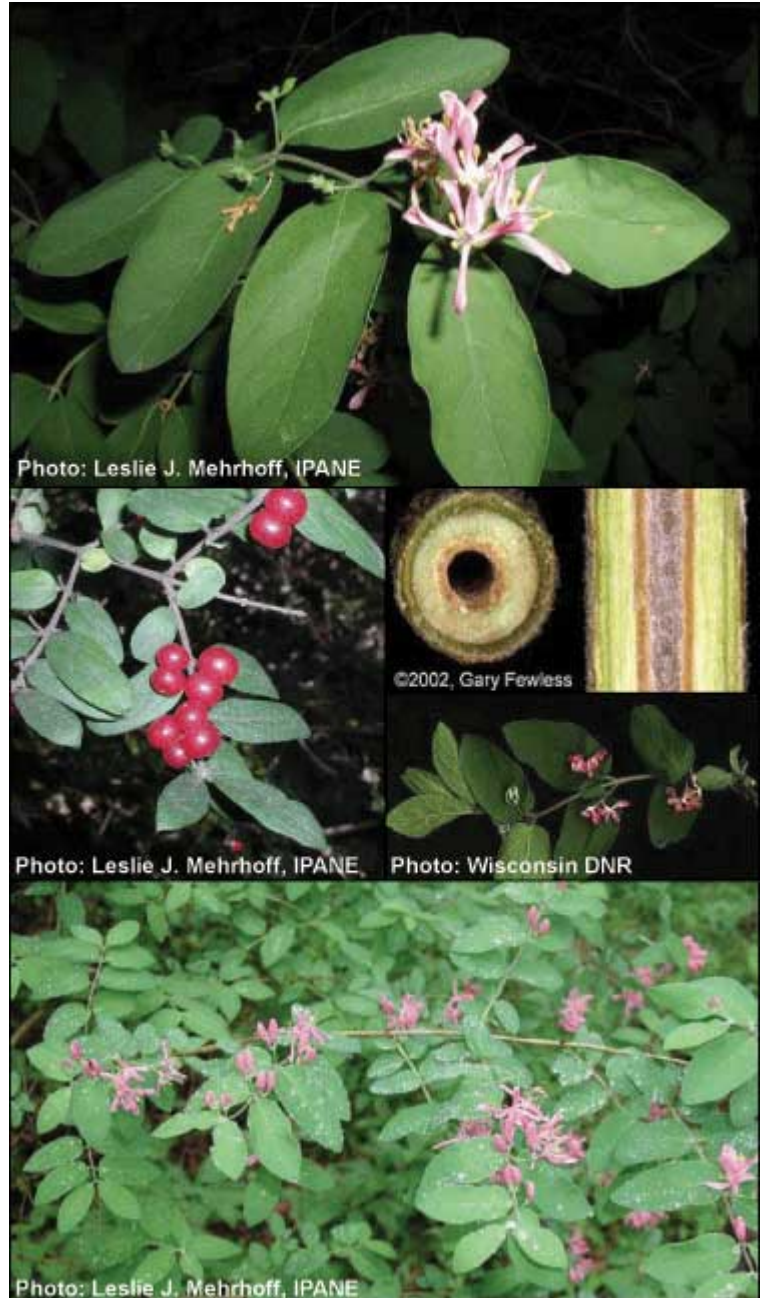
Deciduous upright to spreading shrub growing up to 3 m (10 ft) tall; shallow roots; forms dense thickets.

Leaves

Simple, opposite, elliptic to oval or oblong, slightly hairy beneath, 3-6 cm long; early leaf out, long growing season.

Stems

Multiple stems; arching branches; older branches hollow between nodes; pith brown; bark is gray or tan, shaggy.





Flowers

Small, pink in color, tubular, paired and fragrant, borne on stalks (0.5-1.5 cm long) arising from the leaf axils; bloom May through June.

Fruits and Seeds

Fruits are red and paired, dispersed by birds.

Habitat

Sun and shade tolerant; occurs in a variety of soil and moisture conditions; found along roadsides and on disturbed sites; invades forest, savannas and prairies.

Reproduction

By seed, dispersed by birds.

Similar

Natives Canadian fly honeysuckle (*L. canadensis*), Twinberry honeysuckle (*L. involucrate*), Swamp fly honeysuckle (*L. oblongifolia*) and Mountain fly honeysuckle (*L. villosa*) are comparatively short and sparse and lack hollow stems on older branches. Non-native privet species (*Ligustrum* spp.) have flowers and berries at the ends of their branches, not in the leaf axils.

Monitoring and Rapid Response

Monitor sunny, upland sites and open forests in spring as non-native honeysuckle leafs out before natives. Begin control efforts in highest quality areas; hand pull or dig small plants, removing all roots; target large, fruit-bearing plants for control/removal; foliar spray may be effective for large populations where few natives are present; treat cut stumps with herbicide; basal bark treatment is also effective, spray bottom 18 inches of all stems. Where fuel is present, prescribed fire may provide effective control of seedlings in fire adapted communities.

Credits

The Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) has partnered with MISIN to provide the information



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