

European spindletree

Euonymus europaeus

Description

Popular ornamental plant due to its bright pink or purple fruits and attractive autumn coloring. Fruit is poisonous but has been used medicinally.

Habit

Large deciduous shrub or small tree that can reach a height of 30 feet. Rounded in form with a fast growth rate.

Leaves

Opposite, simple, elliptical, 2.5-4 inches long, finely serrated, long pointed, green above and paler, and possibly pubescent below.

Stems

Thin, greenish-brown to reddish brown in color, shallow longitudinal splits; becoming irregularly shreddy-ridged with age. Twigs are slender, green turning brown with age, may be 4 sided, leaf scars are light brown and obvious against green twig; buds are green and sharp pointed.





Flowers

Perfect, inconspicuous (1/3 in. - 1/2 in. across), 4 greenish/yellow-white petals with purple anthers, appearing in late spring in multiple branched clusters.

Fruits and Seeds

Dry capsules that are lobed and 0.5 in. to 0.75 in. across. Showy pinkish/red/purple in color with red/orange seeds that mature in the fall.

Habitat

Native to Europe and western Asia. Can be found in man-made or disturbed habitats, floodplains, forest edges, shrublands or thickets.

Reproduction

By cuttings or by seed.

Similar

Winged burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*).

Credits

The information provided in this factsheet was gathered from the UCONN College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources Plant Database and Virginia Tech Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation (VT Dendrology). Individual species images that appear with a number in a black box are courtesy of the Bugwood.org network (<http://www.invasive.org>). Individual photo author credits may not be included due to the small display size of the images and subsequent difficulty of reading the provided text. All other images appear courtesy of Google (<http://images.google.com>).