



Michigan Invasive Plant Council

Michigan Plant Invasiveness Assessment System (MPIAS June 2008)

Euonymus fortunei, Wintercreeper, Wintercreeper Euonymus, Climbing Euonymus

Summary and Recommendations for Michigan: *Euonymus fortunei*, Wintercreeper is a ground cover or clinging vine in Michigan landscapes. The young stems are green, becoming light gray and corky with age. Flowers are inconspicuous, yellow-green, five petaled and develop in mid-summer. *Euonymus fortunei* behaves similar to *Hedera helix*; the juvenile form is non-flowering and of different morphology; adults form flowers and fruits. Plants usually only flower when climbing and almost never when trailing along the ground. Fruit is a pinkish-red capsule that opens to show orange seeds. Fruiting varies with cultivar selections.

Euonymus fortunei, Wintercreeper is considered a problem throughout the eastern United States. It can invade open forests, forest margins, and openings. The dense ground cover often resulting from an infestation can displace native understory species and restrict tree seedling establishment.

Invasiveness in Michigan: Is not considered problematic in Michigan. *Euonymus fortunei*'s reproductive ability and potential invasiveness is considered insignificant. Its invasiveness rank is considered insignificant across all natural and managed systems. Regional importance is consistently insignificant in natural and managed systems across the Upper and Lower Peninsula ecological regions. For more information consult the complete MPIAS assessment.

Value in Michigan: Recognized value found in horticulture, managed landscapes and erosion control.

Responsible Use: *Euonymus fortunei* is better known for its numerous cultivars selected for such traits as yellow and variegated foliage, winter color, and dwarfed growth habits. Fruiting varies with cultivar selection. However, to use it responsibly, one should limit its planting to parts of the landscape that do not border adjacent properties. *Euonymus fortunei* should not be discarded in natural areas or areas adjoining natural areas. Rather, plant parts and trimmings should be disposed of responsibly.

Early detection/rapid response: *Euonymus fortunei* is easily identified by its evergreen foliage. It may exist as a clinging vine or ground cover. Do not confuse the parent species with the numerous cultivars available in the marketplace. Consult printed or on-line resources for pictorial descriptors of the plant.

Long term control/management: *Euonymus fortunei* can be removed from unwanted areas by mechanical or chemical means. Mechanical removal may take two seasons to eliminate plants due to resprouting of stem fragments. Chemical applications should be performed in accordance with the manufacturer's label.

Restoration: Removal of *Euonymus fortunei* from any unwanted area may require restoration. In such case, a competent professional should be consulted for appropriate species and planting procedures

For complete information from the Michigan Plant Invasiveness Assessment System
Consult: <http://invasiveplantsmi.org>