



Michigan Invasive Plant Council

Michigan Plant Invasiveness Assessment System (MPIAS June 2008)

Lonicera tatarica, Tatarian honeysuckle

Summary and Recommendations for Michigan: *Lonicera tatarica*, Tatarian honeysuckle has been cultivated as an ornamental, windbreak, shelterbelt, or hedge species, especially in areas with extreme seasonal temperatures. *Lonicera tatarica* frequently escapes from cultivation, especially near larger cities. Throughout many areas of North America, Tatarian honeysuckle is considered invasive and a threat to native habitats and plant communities. Tatarica honeysuckle is a prolific seed producer and reproduces almost entirely by seed. Seeds are readily dispersed by birds and small mammals. *L. tatarica* fruits persist on the plants into the middle of the winter, increasing the duration of bird consumption.

Tatarian honeysuckle is relatively shade-intolerant and most often occurs in forest edges, abandoned fields, pastures, roadsides and other open, upland habitats. Woodlands, especially those that have been grazed or otherwise disturbed may also be invaded by Tatarian honeysuckle. *Lonicera tatarica* forms a dense layer that shades the ground, interfering with the growth of many native woody and herbaceous species. The ground under a Tatarian honeysuckle thicket is often void of other vegetation. In many studies, *L. tatarica* is not distinguished from *L. x bella*, and/or *L. morrowii*.

Invasiveness in Michigan: *Lonicera tatarica*, Tatarian Honeysuckle's potential invasiveness is considered high due to its seed reproduction and dispersal. Its invasiveness rank is considered high across natural and managed systems with the exception in Ag/Hort/Turf production systems. Regional importance varies between medium in the Upper and Northern Lower Peninsula ecological regions to high in the Southern Lower Peninsula. For more information consult the complete MPIAS assessment.

Value in Michigan: Recognized value is found in horticulture production, managed landscape systems, erosion control and wildlife habitat.

Responsible Use: As recently as the 1980's bush honeysuckles were promoted for their wildlife values, ornamental use, and soil stabilization. *Lonicera tatarica* is often considered the "best" of the honeysuckles because of the many cultivars. However it is also considered an outmoded plant in modern landscapes. *Lonicera tatarica* may still be sold but it is not recommended for use. Most future invasions will originate from naturalized populations of the shrubs.

Early detection/rapid response: Tatarian honeysuckle is identified by its leaf characteristics, flowers and fruit. Consult printed or on-line resources for pictorial descriptors of the plant.

Long term control/management: Grubbing or pulling seedlings and mature shrubs, repeated clipping of shrubs may eliminate existing plants and is effective in temporarily reducing seed production. Seedlings are easily pulled, especially when soils are moist. Application of herbicide to

cut stumps can provide effective control while minimizing risk of damage to associated species. Herbicide should be applied immediately after cutting, for best results. Recommendations suggest 2 cuts/applications per year, 1 in early spring followed by another in early autumn. Spraying herbicide on foliage may also be effective. While some sources indicate spraying just after flowering is most effective, early spring application has also been effective. Chemical applications should be performed in accordance with the manufacturer's label.

Restoration: Removal of *Lonicera tatarica* requires restoration to prevent or minimize invasion by other undesirable species. In such case, a competent restoration ecologist should be consulted for appropriate species and planting procedures.

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