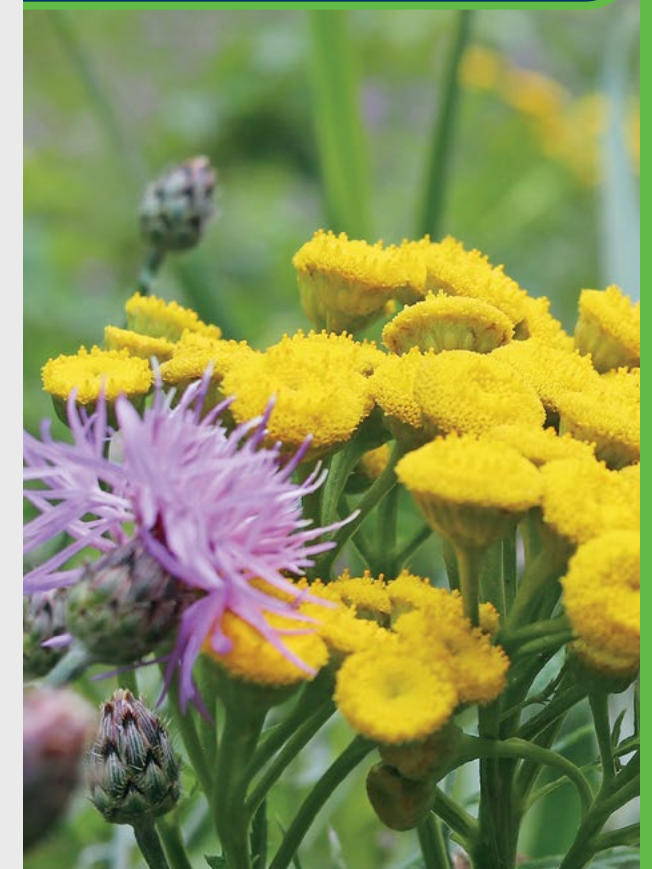


# INVASIVE PLANT GUIDE

*An introduction to terrestrial invasive plant identification*



Spotted knapweed and common tansy



STOP INVASIVE SPECIES IN YOUR TRACKS.  
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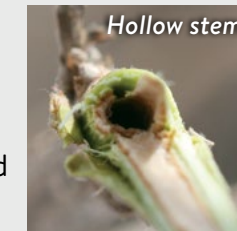
## Non-native bush honeysuckles

Tatarian honeysuckle (*Lonicera tatarica*), Morrow's honeysuckle (*L. morrowii*), Bell's honeysuckle (*L. x bella*), and Amur honeysuckle (*L. maackii*)

There are four species of non-native bush honeysuckle of concern to Minnesota. They can shade out native species. They all are upright deciduous shrubs that grow 5-20 feet tall.

### Leaves and Stem

The leaves of all four species are located in pairs opposite one another. Leaves are simple, oval, and untoothed. Leaf tip shape and leaf hairiness vary among species. The stems older than 2 years are hollow as opposed to native honeysuckles which have solid stems.



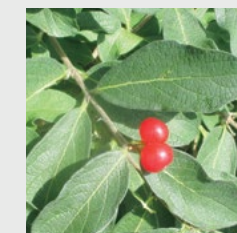
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### Flowers and Fruit

Flowers are tubular and bloom in May and June. Most often flowers are pink, occasionally white or red. Fruits are smooth red or orange-yellow berries, situated in pairs.



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## Glossy buckthorn

*Frangula alnus*

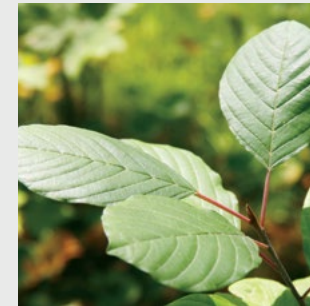
Glossy buckthorn is a tall understory shrub or small tree that grows up to 20 feet high. It has similar impacts on native ecosystems as common buckthorn, but tends to grow in wetter areas.

### Leaves and Stem

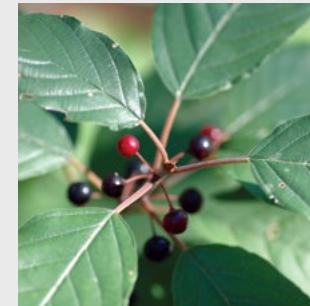
Leaves are oval with smooth edges. Each leaf has 8-9 pairs of veins. The smooth, dark glossy leaves stay green and remain on the tree late into fall.

### Flowers and Fruit

Small, yellow-green flowers with four petals are produced in May. Clusters of black ¼ inch fruit ripen on female plants in August and September.



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## Common buckthorn

*Rhamnus cathartica*



Common buckthorn is a tall understory shrub or small tree that grows up to 20 feet high. Common buckthorn can crowd out native plants and displace the native shrubs and small trees in the mid-layer of the forest where many species of birds nest.

### Leaves and Stem

Leaves are oval with finely toothed edges. Each leaf has 3-5 pairs of curved leaf veins. Leaves stay dark green and on the tree late into fall. Leaves are generally alternate (come off the stem one at a time at each leaf node), but sometimes two leaves are opposite one another.

### Flowers and Fruit

Small, yellow-green flowers with four petals are produced in May. Clusters of black ¼ inch fruit ripen on female plants in August and September.

Photos provided by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources unless otherwise credited.

## Wild parsnip

*Pastinaca sativa*

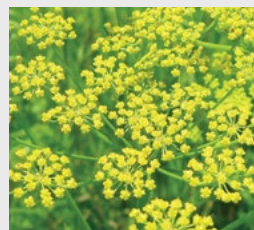
Wild parsnip spends one or more years as a clump of low-lying leaves with no vertical stem. Then, it grows a flowering stalk up to four feet tall, blooms, and dies. Wild parsnip can form dense cover in open places such as roadsides, pastures, and disturbed areas.



**Caution:** Avoid skin contact with the toxic sap of this plant by wearing gloves, long sleeves and long pants. When the juice of wild parsnip comes in contact with skin in the presence of sunlight, it can cause a chemical burn with blistering of the skin.

### Leaves and Stem

Alternate leaves are made up of 5-15 egg-shaped leaflets. Leaflets have variously-sized lobes and coarse teeth along their edges. The stems are stout and hollow, with distinctive grooves.



### Flowers

Second-year plants produce a stalk topped with flat-topped broad flower clusters 2-6 inches wide, with numerous five-petaled yellow flowers. Wild parsnip blooms from June to late summer.

## Why should I care about invasive plants?

Invasive plants can harm Minnesota's native plants and animals and damage the natural heritage of our wetlands, prairies, forests, lakes, and rivers by harming Minnesota's native plants and animals. Invasive plants, if left unchecked, limit how we can use land now and for future generations.

## What can I do?

- Use this guide to start learning how to identify invasive plants found on land (terrestrial invasive plants).
- Visit the DNR webpage for more information and to learn about other invasive plants.
- Report invasive plants at [EDDMapS.org](https://www.eddmap.org)



[mndnr.gov/invasive-plants](https://www.mndnr.gov/invasive-plants)

## How can I prevent the spread of invasive species?

- **REMOVE** plants, animals, and mud from boots, gear, pets, and vehicles.
- **CLEAN** your gear before entering and leaving the recreation site.
- **STAY** on designated roads and trails.
- **USE CERTIFIED** or local firewood and hay.

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## Common tansy

*Tanacetum vulgare*



Common tansy is a perennial plant with distinctive yellow button-like flowers. It can form dense cover and degrade pastures, impede reforestation efforts, and outcompete native plants. It can grow 3-5 feet tall.

### Leaves and Stem

Common tansy leaves come off the stem in an alternating pattern. The leaves themselves are deeply divided, irregularly lobed, have serrated edges and have leaflets arranged on both sides of a common stalk (pinnately compound). Leaves become smaller towards the top of the stalk, and are strongly aromatic when crushed.

### Flowers

Flowers are bright yellow discs up to a half an inch wide. The flowers look somewhat like daisies that are missing their white petals and bloom from July through October.



## Garlic mustard

*Alliaria petiolata*

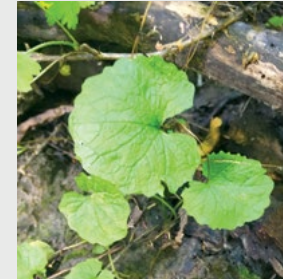
Garlic mustard forms thick mats that shade and outcompete native plant species. It can impede natural forest regeneration by producing chemicals that reduce growth of other plants.

### Leaves and Stem

The leaves are kidney-shaped, scallop-edged, dark green, and not noticeably fuzzy or hairy. In its first year, plants are rosettes of leaves. The plant sends up a stalk in its second year. Second year plants have leaves arranged alternate to each other along the stem. Leaves are more triangular higher up the stem.

### Flowers

Flowers are white, small, and numerous, with four separate petals. Second year plants can have one or multiple flowering stems. Plants bloom from May through June.



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## Leafy spurge

*Euphorbia esula*



Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Leafy spurge is an herbaceous plant that can grow up to 4 feet tall. It can cover open grassy areas, decrease native plant species, and reduce forage for grazing animals. The plant's stems, flowers, and leaves emit a white milky sap when broken.

*Caution: Leafy spurge sap can cause skin irritation in humans and can be toxic to livestock. Wear gloves and cover skin when working with this plant.*

### Leaves and Stem

Leafy spurge leaves have smooth edges, can be up to 3 inches long, and come off the stem one at a time at each leaf node (an alternate pattern). Leaves are shorter and scale-like on the lower part of the stem. Plants have smooth stems.

### Flowers

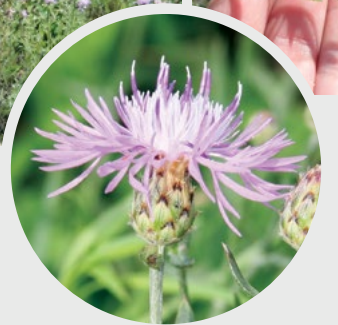
Instead of petals, the small flowers have showy yellow-green bracts that look like modified leaves. Flowers open in late May and bloom from June into fall.

## Spotted knapweed

*Centaurea stoebe* subspecies *micranthos*



Minnesota Department of Agriculture



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Spotted knapweed is a biennial or short-lived perennial herbaceous plant that grows 2-3 feet tall. It can form dense cover in prairies, pastures, and open habitats. Livestock avoid eating it so it can cause large reductions in available food for grazing animals.

*Caution: Cover your skin by wearing gloves and long sleeves when working with this plant as it can be a skin irritant for some people.*

### Leaves and Stem

In the first year, it forms a clump of low-lying leaves close to the ground (called a rosette). In the second year, the plant sends up a wiry stem with alternate, grayish leaves that are deeply incised.

### Flowers

Thistle-like pink to purple flowers sit at the tips of the stems and bloom from July through September.