

Frangula alnus

Invasive to Maine

Glossy or Alder Buckthorn
Smooth Buckthorn

Upland
Forests, Fields, Waters edge, Developed Areas

Leaves



Leslie J. Mehrhoff



Look for small (3 to 6 cm) glossy, oval leaves that are alternate (sometimes opposite!). Dark green leaves have wavy edges and are hairy underneath.

Plant



Leslie J. Mehrhoff



Look for a shrub that grows up to 9 m tall. Branches grow at a nearly horizontal angle.













Stem



James H. Miller



Look for bark that is gray-brown and thin with raised white lenticles (pores).

LEAF ARRANGEMENT	LEAF TYPE	LEAF/LEAFLET SHAPE	LEAF/LEAFLET EDGE
 ALTERNATE	 SIMPLE	 PALMATE	 SMOOTH
 OPPOSITE	 COMPOUND-PALMATE	 OVAL	 TOOTHED
 WHORLED	 COMPOUND-PINNATE	 BLADE	 WAVY

Seasonal Change



Gil Wojciech



In late spring look for flowers that are very small, yellow-green, and fragrant. In late summer look for berries changing from green to red to black.

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Similar Species

The leaves of Glossy buckthorn look a lot like Common buckthorn. Common buckthorn usually has a spine at the end of each branch.

Fun Fact

Glossy buckthorn is native to Europe. It was brought to the United States in the mid 1800s as an ornamental plant. In Maine, it grows fast and makes a lot of seeds. It is able to quickly shade out native plants, shrubs, and tree seedlings.