

# Celastrus scandens

American Bittersweet  
Bittersweet

Upland  
Forests and Fields

### Leaves



Chris Evans, ForestryImages



Look for leaves with long tips. The leaves are rounded and finely toothed.

### Plant



Rob Routledge, ForestryImages



Look for a vine growing up on other structures such as telephone poles, trees or shrubs. Look for new growth with green stems and old growth with woody stems.

### Stem



Rob Routledge, ForestryImages



Look for woody stems that are yellowish-green to brown and wind around other vegetation. The stem can be 2-4 cm thick at the base, and it can be 9 m tall.

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

### Seasonal Change



VS user Waynflete4 / Chris Evans, ForestryImages



In late summer, look for green, hidden flowers. In late fall and through winter, look for orange berries. The berries and flowers will ONLY be on the tip of the vine.

### Similar Species

American bittersweet and Oriental bittersweet are very similar species. While berries and flowers are found all over the vine of Oriental bittersweet, they are clustered only at the tip of American bittersweet.

### Did You Know?

There are separate male and female varieties of the American bittersweet plant. Also, the berries are poisonous to humans but not to birds.