

WANTED: INVASIVE ALIEN

Oriental Bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*)

Description: An Asian, woody, perennial vine this plant looks like the native American bittersweet (*Celastrus scandens*). However, Oriental bittersweet can be identified by its many small clusters of flowers and fruit which appear all along the stem. The bright orange/red fruits of this plant have made it popular for decorative use in the home.

Environmental Threat: Oriental bittersweet is a hardy vine that can grow along the ground or up and over trees, shrubs and tall buildings. It shades out native plants, girdles trees and has hybridized with the American bittersweet, displacing it in many areas. It is shade tolerant and grows quickly, reducing native plant diversity. One plant can produce many seeds.

Known Locations: Look for Oriental bittersweet in natural areas, empty lots, fence rows, and along roads. It has even been found growing in bushes outside a local restaurant.

What you can do: Do not purchase this plant for decorative use and discourage others from doing so. This is a difficult plant to control because of its seed production and root suckering. Pull and dig out small plants. Cut larger climbing vines and immediately apply herbicide to the rooted stem. Be sure to take great care when using chemicals. **READ AND FOLLOW THE LABEL!**



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