

## *Elaeagnus umbellata*, Autumn Olive

In the 1950s, Autumn Olive was promoted throughout the US as a way to control erosion and provide wildlife with food in disturbed habitats. This plant is native to China, Japan, and Korea. Autumn Olive is an invasive plant that outcompetes and displaces many native plants. It grows to form dense patches, blocking the sun from the plants underneath. This plant also has nitrogen fixing root nodules that allow it to grow in a variety of unfavorable conditions. This plant is a problem due to high seed production, high germination rates, and the general hardiness of the shrub.

**Description:** Autumn Olive can grow up to 20 feet tall and 30 feet wide. The stems are a brown with speckles, and often have thorns, especially at a young age. The elliptical leaves are greyish-green with scales on the bottom.

**Control:** One way to control Autumn Olive is by mechanically pulling the plant from the ground before fruiting. Larger plants may be removed with herbicides, applying herbicides to the cut stump.

**Look-alikes:** You can distinguish the Autumn Olive from other similar looking plants by the silvery scales on the lower leaf surface. The Silverberry (*Elaeagnus commutate*) is one related plant that resembles the Autumn Olive.

**Flower Time:** The flowers bloom in the early spring (April-June). Flowers appear in clusters with small cream/pale-yellow petals that are bell-shaped. The fruits are small brown berries that turn a speckled red over time.

