

Honeysuckle Control Methods

If you live near the edge of a woodland area, no doubt you will find amur honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*), an invasive shrub introduced to Ohio in the 1950s and now prevalent in most of the eastern United States.

Honeysuckle is easy to identify. It is one of first plants to green up in spring, last to lose foliage in the fall, and it easily takes over the woodland understory. By shading out good native species, it is a potential negative impact on migrating birds and their native food sources. The plants were introduced in the United States in mid 1800s from Europe as an ornamental and has become an aggressive invader. Amur honeysuckle can grow 15 to 20 feet tall with a similar spread. The bright red berries are eaten by birds then deposited in other areas which in turn become taken over. Amur honeysuckle has become a noxious weed and is listed on the Ohio invasive plant species list.

Control methods include mechanical, foliar spraying, basal spraying, and cut-stump herbicide treatment.

Cutting and mowing is the most effective **mechanical method** in early summer if plants are small. If digging is the method to be used, every root must be removed. Cutting the shrubs off at the base only causes more sprouting. For dense growth, tractors or other equipment may be used to pull the plants out.

Foliar spraying uses diluted herbicides sprayed directly onto leaves. Some herbicides can be used in the fall so as not to harm other species. Check with your local garden center for recommendations as to which chemical to use. Please remember to read its label thoroughly before application.

Basal spraying is a method using a labeled herbicide. These applications should be applied during a dormant season. The applications should be made to the lower 12 inches of stems. **The cut -stump treatment** requires cutting off close to the ground then applying an herbicide within minutes. This is a very effective method. Again, a garden center can recommend the safest yet most effective herbicide to use.

Herbicides are registered and approved for specific uses by the EPA. Methods of application are listed on the labels. Copies of most herbicide labels may be obtained online (cdms.net/Label-Database).

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<https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/F-68>

<https://agri.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/oda/divisions/plant-health/invasive-pests/invasive-plants>