

CENTRAL JERSEY INVASIVE SPECIES STRIKE TEAM

Invasive Plant Fact Sheet

Autumn olive (*Eleagnus umbellata*)



Family name: Oleaster family (*Elaeagnaceae*)

Native range: Asia

General: Deciduous shrub to 15 feet tall. The shrub has a wide, spreading form with angular branching pattern. Twigs are sometimes spiny. Widely planted as a “living fence” and windbreak along fields and roadways.

Leaves: Alternate, toothless, oval to lance-shaped. Underside covered with white to silvery scales or hairs.

Flowers: Small cream colored, fragrant clusters appearing in April and May.

Fruit: 0.25 inch round, juicy, ranging in color from red to pink and have scales on their surface.



Ripening from August through September.

Look-alikes: Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*) is also nonnative and invasive. All newly detected occurrences should be eradicated.

Habitat: Abandoned fields, farm fields, meadows roadsides, forest edges, open woods.



Threats to native habitats: Autumn olive can form large thickets that displace native plants and prevent successional growth of native trees and shrubs. The sugary fruits have limited value for migrating birds. Native shrubs of autumn produce high protein fruits that provide nutrition for migration.

NJ Status: Autumn olive is widespread. It is *highly threatening* to natural plant communities. All newly detected occurrences should be eradicated.

Commercial Availability: Autumn olive is planted in landscaping, gardens and roadsides.

Sources: Forestry Images: Forest Health, Natural Resources & Silviculture Images:

<http://www.forestryimages.org/>

<http://nbii-nin.ciesin.columbia.edu/ipane/icat/browse.do?specieId=15>

<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/alpe1.htm>

Rhoads, A.F. and T. Block. 2007. *Plants of Pennsylvania*. 2nd ed. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA. p. 655-6.



Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team (CJISST) is a regional cooperative effort to detect, map, and manage emerging populations of invasive species. This initiative is a partnership of state, county, and municipal agencies, conservation groups, and private citizens. To learn more, please contact us: **Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space**, (609) 730-1560, www.fohvos.org or **Upper Raritan Watershed Association**, (908) 234-1852, www.urwa.org.

