

# Bush Honeysuckles

Invasive  
SHRUBS



**Tatarian Honeysuckle, *L. tatarica* L.** LOTA Caprifoliaceae

**Amur Honeysuckle, *Lonicera maackii* (Rupr.) Herder** LOMA6

**Morrow's Honeysuckle, *L. morrowii* A. Gray** LOMO2

**Sweet-breath-of-spring, *L. fragrantissima* Lindl. & Paxton** LOFR

Other common names: winter and fragrant honeysuckle, January jasmine

**Bell's Honeysuckle, *L. x bella* Zabel** LOBE

(hybrid Morrow's and Tatarian)

**Plant.** Tardily deciduous, upright, arching-branched shrubs to small trees. Amur to 30 feet (9 m) in height and spindly in forests, Morrow's to 6.5 feet (2 m) in height, Tatarian and sweet-breath-of-spring to 10 feet (3 m) in height, and Bell's to 20 feet (6 m) in height. Much branched and arching in openings, multiple stemmed, dark-green opposite leaves, showy white to pink or yellow flowers, and abundant orange to red berries.

**Stem.** Opposite branched, light tan with braided-strand appearance. Bark often flaking. Older branches hollow.

**Leaves.** Opposite in 2 rows, ovate to oblong with rounded bases, 1.2 to 4 inches (3 to 10 cm) long. Persistent into winter. Margins entire. Amur tapering to a long slender tip; Bell's to a medium tapering tip; and others with short pointed tips. Morrow's with wrinkled upper surface and both Amur and Bell's soft-hairy lower surface, others with hairless leaves. Petioles 0.1 to 0.4 inch (2.5 to 10 mm) long.

**Flowers.** February to June. Axillary, bracted short-stemmed clusters, each with 1 to several white to yellow (some pink to red) flowers. Petals tubular flaring to 5 lobes in 2 lips (upper lip 4-lobed, lower lip single-lobed). Five extended stamens. Fragrant.

**Fruit and seeds.** June to March. Abundant spherical, glossy berries paired in leaf axils, each 0.2 to 0.5 inch (6 to 12 mm). Green becoming pink and ripening to red (sometimes yellow or orange). Usually persistent into winter and sometimes spring.

**Ecology.** Often forms dense thickets in open forests, forest edges, abandoned fields, pastures, roadsides, and other open upland habitats. Relatively shade tolerant. Colonize by root sprouts and spread by abundant bird- and other animal-dispersed seeds. Seeds long lived in the soil.

**Resemble** the woody vine, Japanese honeysuckle (*L. japonica* Thunb.) as far as leaves and flowers. **Also resemble** the native shrub American fly honeysuckle (*L. canadensis* Bartr. ex Marsh.), which has hairy-margined leaves, blue fruit, and is found at high elevation in mountains. **Also resemble** the native bush honeysuckles (*Diervilla* spp.), which have similar leaves but terminal flowers in cymes and capsules for fruit.

**History and use.** All introduced from Asia in the 1700s and 1800s, and used as ornamentals and wildlife plants. Some still sold.

**Distribution.** Found throughout the region with dense infestations in KY, TN, central VA, and north AR.

## Bush Honeysuckles

2105



Amur honeysuckle

November