

# COMMON BUCKTHORN

*Rhamnus cathartica*



## CONTROL

### Hand Pulling

Pull out plant by hand or with weed wrench in the spring or early summer.

### Cutting

Cutting down buckthorn in close proximity to another before flowering will disrupt the breeding system of the plant. Cutting on a monthly basis will additionally stunt the plant.

### Biological control

There are no known biological agents currently available for management.

### Grazing

N/A

### Herbicide

In July, August, or September as the root growth takes priority within the plant, herbicide is most useful. The cut/dab method is more effective for Common Buckthorn using a brush/sponge applicator. If cut early in season, allow to bloom before re-cutting the new spout to one inch above

Ideal Timing for Treatment Options		
Spring	Summer	Fall
Cutting		
Pulling		
Foliar Spray		Foliar Spray
Prescribed Burn		

the ground and apply with 100% concentration herbicide. The herbicide chart on the back lists approved controls for common buckthorn. Always consult product labels and read them carefully to ensure correct species/land management usage and chemical application.



## Common Buckthorn Life Cycle

Life Cycle	Root	Leaves	Stems	Flower	Seed/Fruit	Toxic
Perennial shrub or small tree	Taproot	Glossy, dark green with tiny teeth on the edges. Opposite to alternate arrangement on stem, egg-shaped ¾ to 2½ inches long. 3 to 5 pairs of lateral veins curve toward tip. Leaves stay green late into fall.	Plant 3 to 25 feet, brown or gray outer bark and orange to yellow inner bark. Twigs often tipped with small (less than ¼ inch) thorns. May form dense thickets.	Yellowish-green with 4 petals, not showy, borne in clusters where leaf meets the stem.	Round, shiny, berry-like fruit contains 4 seeds. Ripens from green to red to purple-black and is 1/3 inch diameter. Separate male and female plants means not all plants bear fruit.	Horses, cattle, humans

## Herbicides for Common Buckthorn, *Rhamnus cathartica*

Active Ingredient	Rate	Efficacy	Comments
2-4,D + Dicamba	50-100% solution	Spring/Fall, pre bud or post flower.	Dilute with equal parts water and apply according to instructions.
Glyphosate	50-100% solution	Fall (green leaves still present opposed to native)	Cut-stump method with sponge or low pressure sprayer. Autumn is preferred time to cut and stump treat. This is when most native vegetation is dormant, making it less likely for the herbicide to cause damage to desirable species.
Triclopyr	50% solution	Fall/winter is best to reduce drift potential.	Dilute with water. Selective translocative herbicide for cut stump. Cut stump method with sponge or low pressure sprayer. *Be sure to apply within minutes of cutting. Cut straight across plant.

Information on diagnostic identifying characteristics adapted from "Montana's Noxious Weeds" by Pokorny and Mangold, Montana State University Extension Bulletin EB0159.