

KENTUCKY'S

LEAST WANTED!

P L A N T 2 0 0 6



ASIAN BITTERSWEET

Celastrus orbiculata

Asian bittersweet is an attractive but highly invasive deciduous, twining and climbing woody vine that can reach up to sixty feet or more in height and four inches in diameter. A native of eastern Asia, it has invaded woodlands of the eastern half of the U.S. since its introduction in the mid 1800s. Rounded leaves with shallow, rounded teeth are arranged

alternately on the vines. Plants produce prolific numbers of fruits in clusters along the leaf axils. When ripe, the fruit capsules split open to reveal three colorful bright red arils that enclose the seeds. Asian bittersweet fruits tend to shatter upon drying, making them less desirable for wreath-making.

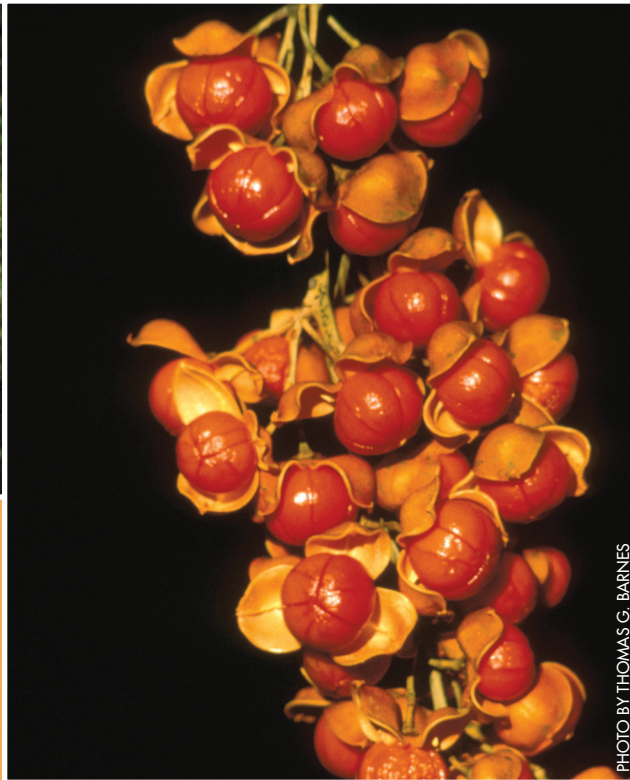
GOOD NATIVE ALTERNATIVES



(RED) TRUMPET HONEYSUCKLE

Lonicera sempervirens

This climbing or trailing deciduous woody vine grows in open woodlands, thickets and the edges of clearings. The leaves are rounded and arranged opposite each other on the stem. The last two leaves at the ends of new growth on the stem are fused at their bases, cup-like around the stem and showy flowers occur in terminal clusters just beyond. Tubular flowers are about 2 inches long and are either red or yellow outside with yellow inside. The flowers attract hummingbirds and butterflies all summer long. The leaves turn yellow in autumn. Let trumpet honeysuckle clamber over a fence or give it a trellis of its own.



AMERICAN BITTERSWEET

Celastrus scandens

The bright orange and red fruits of American bittersweet catch the eye along roadsides, fence rows and forest margins in the fall. For generations, this vine was used to create wreaths and other autumn decorations. Today it is much less common and is threatened with loss of habitat by its weedy relative, Asian bittersweet. The leaves of American bittersweet are long-elliptical with serrated margins and short pointed tips, alternately arranged on the stem. Persistent showy fruits are produced in clusters only at the ends of branches. When added to existing shrub plantings, this twining vine produces excellent wildlife cover and provides winter food for many species of birds.



CROSSVINE

Bignonia capreolata

Crossvine is a fast-growing, high-climbing, deciduous woody vine. It occurs widely in uplands, lowlands, forests and clearings. The leaves are opposite on the stem and compound, having two leaflets with a tendril between them. Flowers appear in May. They are trumpet-shaped, orange, to reddish orange to red borne in clusters of 2-5. Several cultivars are available with color variations. Plant at the base of pine trees, along a back fence, or provide a trellis. Keep the plant away from buildings as it will grow under vinyl or wooden siding and can loosen masonry joints.

To heighten awareness of invasive plants that threaten Kentucky's native biodiversity, a Least Wanted plant will be featured in the Spring of each year with suggested alternatives.

Kentucky's Least Wanted Program is sponsored by



Promoting alternatives to invasive landscape plants