

Wahoo *Euonymus atropurpureus*

Kingdom: Plantae

Phylum: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Celastrales

Family: Celastraceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

Wahoo is a shrub or small tree that grows to 25 feet tall. Its bark is gray, although young branches are green with gray stripes. Leaves are opposite, ovate and finely toothed. A leaf may reach four and one-half inches long and two inches wide. Leaves turn red or yellow in fall. Flowers are composed of four red-purple petals and four purple-green sepals. Each flower is about one-third of an inch wide. Flowers are produced in small clusters. Fruits are four-lobed capsules that mature in fall and open to reveal four, red fruits. Each fruit has two seeds.

BEHAVIORS

Wahoo grows statewide in Illinois. It is generally found in upland deciduous forests but may also grow on riverbanks, in forest edges and in thickets. Flowers are produced from May through July. Pollinators are attracted to the flowers. The fruits are eaten by a few bird species.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

edge

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