

SPOTTING INVASIVE PLANTS ON OUR ROADSIDES #6

New Milford CT, 5/24/21

Invasive Honeysuckles



*Invasive Honeysuckle, South Kent Road
near Long Mountain Road, 5/19/21*

Connecticut lists five species of alien shrub honeysuckles, *Lonicera species*, as invasive. Don't worry about trying to tell them apart. They flower in May and June – look carefully now to see these ordinary shrubs covered with small white (or sometimes yellow, pink, or red) flowers. Birds that eat the berries (usually red) drop the indigestible seeds, spreading the plants to new locations.

Honeysuckles can be hard to recognize because they are so ordinary. They don't have spines, barbs, or "winged" stems. The leaves, in pairs along the stems, are just simple ovals. The plants leaf out early and hold their leaves late, making them easy to spot in very early spring or very late fall when native shrubs are dormant.

There are native honeysuckles. I've never seen one. Cut a honeysuckle stem – if it has a brown center rather than a solid white center, it is an alien honeysuckle.

The shrub layer along non-landscaped roadsides in our town is heavily infested with alien honeysuckles and other



invasives, often a mix of honeysuckles, barberry, multiflora rose, burning bush, and, in sunnier places, autumn olive. There is little room for native shrubs.

Spot honeysuckles in flower along most roads in New Milford this month.

For more information, see
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb1081648.pdf

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