

MAPPING INVASIVE BUCKTHORN SPECIES IN THE NORTH CENTRAL REGION. Richard D. Dirks* and Kevin D. Gibson, Graduate Student and Assistant Professor, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN.

Common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) and glossy buckthorn (*R. frangula*) are non-native invasive shrubs that can form dense thickets in a variety of habitats. In addition to displacing native plant species, both species have been tentatively identified as overwinter hosts for the soybean aphid (*Aphis glycines*), an invasive pest of soybeans in the Midwest. It has been suggested that the spatial distribution of the soybean aphid may be related to the distribution of buckthorn species. While buckthorn species have been mapped in some states of the North Central region, relatively little is known about the spatial distribution of buckthorn species in Indiana, Iowa and Ohio. We conducted a survey of county extension agents, park superintendents, consulting and district foresters, herbarium curators and botanists in Indiana, Iowa and Ohio. Buckthorn species were identified in ten counties in Iowa, eight counties in Indiana and ten counties in Ohio. Response rates varied with state and occupation but were generally low. Maps compiled from our survey and other sources suggest that both species are widely distributed in the North Central region. However, ground surveys may be necessary to more accurately determine the spatial distribution of these invasive weeds.