

# PROTECT URBAN HABITAT— STOP THE SPREAD!

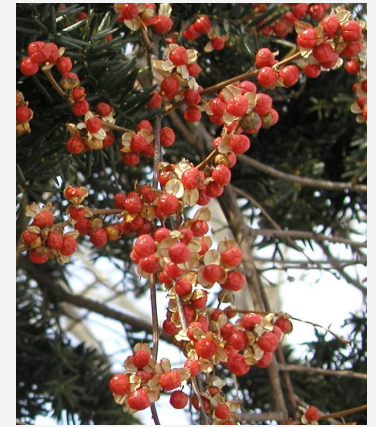
## Asian Bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*)

**The Problem:** Asian bittersweet is a fast-growing vine that can cover and smother trees and other vegetation. Vines can grow up to 50 feet in length. Large masses high in the trees makes trees top heavy, leading to uprooting during wind storms and breakage from snow loads. Vines wind around tree trunks, girdling and eventually killing the trees.

**Description:** Asian bittersweet is a woody perennial vine with glossy green, round leaves. Female plants produce small green fruit in July. In the fall, fruit turn bright red with yellow capsules. Bittersweet reproduces through seed dispersed by birds and vegetatively through root suckering. Cutting plants can stimulate suckering. The orange color of the roots helps to differentiate bittersweet from other vines.



Seedling



Fruit



Leaves and green fruit



Vines girdling tree



Orange colored root



Extensive infestation overtaking urban trees.

**Management for Homeowners:** Small plants can be hand-pulled, but care should be taken to remove the entire root to prevent re-sprouting. If roots can't be dug, pull the stems to weaken the plant over time. It will take repeated pulling or cutting to fully weaken and eradicate the plant. Roots and fruit should be bagged and disposed of as trash.

Large vines can be cut to prevent damage to host trees. Rooted portions can either be repeatedly cut back or treated with herbicide. Herbicide can be applied to stem tissue immediately after cutting, or applied later to any foliage that regrows. Be sure to read and follow all label directions. Professional application is recommended for large infestations.