AUTUMN OLIVE
Elaeagnus umbellata

Mature Height  20 Feet  Soil Type  Well Drained, Sandy, Low fertility
Mature Spread  20 to 25 feet  Flower Color  Creamy White
Mature Form  Rounded  Foliage Color  Green to Silver
Growth Rate  Fairly Rapid  Fall Color  Green - Silver till leaf drop
Sun Exposure  Prefers full
Soil Moisture  Well Drained

Autumn Olive is a deciduous shrub or small tree that is highly invasive in Indiana. From a distance it can be identified by its silvery appearance. The leaves are medium green on top and distinctly silver on the underside. It was planted extensively for highway beautification and wildlife food in the 50’s and early 60’s and is spreading rapidly. It crowds out many native plants and since it fixes nitrogen it improves soil fertility to the point that many plant communities that prefer low fertility soils cannot survive. It is often called “Autumnberry” and prized by some for its food value. The fruit is high in lycopene and other nutrients. It is being grown commercially in a few places for its food value, especially for making jams and jellies. It is considered an invasive plant in Indiana and should not be planted. Control is best achieved by cutting the plant and immediately treating the stump with a systemic herbicide such as glyphosate or triclopyr and a 20% concentration.

Photos by Hoosier Heartland RC & D