

How to prune euonymous

How do you prune *Euonymous alatus compacta* (burning bush) when used in a formal landscape—best time, worst time, promoting new bud growth and fall color?

—MICHIGAN

The burning bush (*Euonymous alatus compacta*) is a spring blooming plant. These shrubs, and small trees such as redbud, flowering or Kousa dogwood, forsythia, mountain laurel, privet, magnolia, crabapple, mock orange, rhododendron and lilac produce flowers on last year's wood. They produce flower buds late in the season, so if they are pruned during the dormant season in winter, they will not have flowers the following spring. Therefore, to maximize flowers and colorful berries, burning bush should be pruned after blooming.

However, winter pruning can help determine the architecture and shape of the plant. If there are any crossing branches, they are easy to notice and can be pruned off at this time.

Some of the burning bush plants may reach the size of a small tree. These small tree-type plants can be best trimmed during the dormant season. Recognizing branching structural defects and making proper collar cuts is easier without the leaves.

Another euonymous question

What would cause winged euonymous leaves to fold? Inside the

fold were egg masses and some leaves had extensive notching, similar to black vine weevil adult feeding damage. But we usually see black vine weevil damage later than this. We also found some weevils that looked different from black vine weevil.

—CONNECTICUT

Your problem may be the adult two-banded Japanese weevil, a pest on ornamental plants such as azalea, dogwood, euonymous, forsythia, holly, lilac, privet, rhododendron, rose, spirea and viburnum in several eastern states.

This weevil has a much-broadened abdomen and a short snout, is gray to dark-brown in color with two dark bands on the wing cover. They are about 1/5 to 1/3 inches in size. Their larvae are like the black vine weevil, but shorter, legless and 3/8 inch long.

The two-banded Japanese weevil can overwinter as eggs, larvae or adults in debris, and becomes active from April to July. During June, newly emerged adults (developing from immature overwintered adults) can be found along with old adults, which have duller markings. This weevil has one generation per year with overlapping stages of life.

These weevils become active two to four weeks earlier than black vine weevils. Around May, eggs are laid in leaves on the ground or on the plant. The adults use their legs to fold the leaf edges, then deposit one to nine eggs. Eggs hatch, larvae

crawl from the leaves, then burrow into the soil and develop on roots.

Unlike black vine weevil, the adult feeding of the two-banded Japanese weevil is reportedly greater than the larval damage. Adults feed by day and remain on the host at night. Black vine weevils feed at night, take shelter during day at the base of plant in debris and can be easily trapped. Since two-banded Japanese weevils stay on the plant, the trapping technique using boards, etc., will not be practical. However, at night you can place some paper or sheets on the ground and shake the plant to dislodge the insect.

It is also possible you may find both two-banded Japanese weevil and black vine weevils on the same plant and both will cause similar crescent-shaped feeding notching damage. The two-banded Japanese weevil often feeds in clusters and can defoliate the plants by late summer.

Mechanical removal may not be very effective because adults emerge over an extended period. To date, all the adults have been found to be female, which probably means females can produce viable eggs without mating. Insecticides used for black vine weevil management may also work for two-banded Japanese weevils, but the timing should be two to three weeks earlier than black vine weevil management. This needs further research to determine the product efficacy. **LM**



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