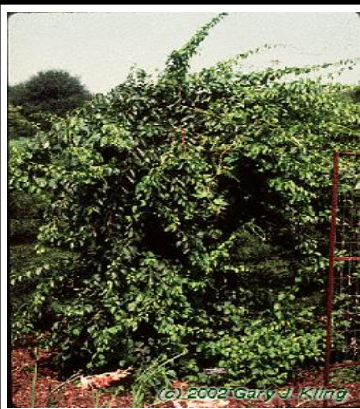


Vine
Deciduous

Native
Map #10

American Bittersweet
(*Celastrus scandens*)
Family: *Celastraceae*



Leaves: simple, oval coming to an abrupt point; finely serrated, shiny, smooth, lustrous dark green, greenish-yellow to yellow fall color.

Buds: alternate, small, round with 6 hard scales.

Stems: brown to tan, smooth, lenticels barely visible.

Bark: not important.

Flowers: can be male, female and perfect flowers on one plant or separate male and female plants; in clusters at the tips of the stems; not showy;

Fruits: very attractive, 3-lobed capsule that splits and curls backward; yellow-orange inside with crimson arils (seed coverings); ripens in Oct.; used for floral arrangements.

Habit: vigorous, twining vine that grows to 20' with support.

Culture: tolerates almost any soil including dry; pH adaptable; full sun for best fruiting. Can get crown gall and *Euonymus* scale like vining *Euonymus*.

Cultivars: Male and female plants not kept separated well in the trade but may find cultivars '*Indian Maiden*' and '*Indian Brave*'.

Related species:

Chinese Bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) has become a serious invasive species in the New England states; flowers are in axillary clusters instead of at the terminals.

Credits: **Photos from:** www.midwestlandscapeplants.org and various other .edu websites unless noted. **Text from:** "Manual of Woody Landscape Plants" by Michael Dirr; "Tree Identification Characteristics (abridged)" from the University of Illinois Extension; www.midwestlandscapeplants.org; and misc. other sources. This publication may not be sold except to cover the cost of reproduction when used as part of an educational program of the University of Wisconsin-Extension.