

REDWING AUTUMN OLIVE (Elaeagnus umbellata)
For Wildlife, Border Plantings and Farmstead Windbreaks
in the Midwest

Description: Redwing autumn olive (Elaeagnus umbellata) has been released by the Ecological Sciences Division of the Soil Conservation Service as an improved variety of autumn olive. Redwing attains a height and crown width of 10 to 15 feet. It was selected from its parent variety, Cardinal, for its early maturing, larger and definitely sweeter fruit. The fruit matures as many as 20 days earlier than other varieties. It also has larger, darker green leaves than either Cardinal or Elsberry autumn olive. Redwing produces pale yellow flowers from mid-May to early June. The fruit is retained until late winter.



Conservation Use: Redwing is ideal for screen or border plantings and wildlife food and cover. It may also be used in farmstead windbreaks or shelterbelts. Songbirds and upland game birds are attracted to the fruit from ripening time in September until late winter.

Site: Redwing autumn olive **grows** well on coarse textured, well drained soils. It usually fails on very shallow, poorly drained or excessively wet soils. A highly fertile soil is not required. pH may range from moderately acid to moderately alkaline. It is tolerant of some shade, but produces more fruit in full sun.

Site Preparation: Prepare site by plowing or disking if equipment can be used. Approved herbicides may also be used for perennial weed and grass control. Minimum soil preparation should consist of scalping sod off an area at least one foot across.

Date of Planting: Plant in early spring, as soon as the frost is out of the ground.

Planting Method: Plants may be planted by hand or with a tree planter. If planted in rows where equipment can be used, allow enough room to mow or cultivate for weed control. A 6 foot spacing is suggested for windbreaks and border plantings. An 8x10 to 10x10 foot spacing is recommended for clump plantings.

Management: Weed control is necessary for good establishment and uniform growth. Control weeds the first year by cultivation. Once Redwing is established, use approved herbicides for effective weed control. Whenever herbicides are used be sure to follow the manufacturer's directions carefully.

Nursery Propagation: Seedlings are easily grown from cleaned seed or freshly collected fruit sown in nursery beds in late October. There are about 22,000 seeds per pound which should produce about 5,000 useable plants. For seedling production follow normal nursery operating procedures.

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