

Autumn Olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*)

Origin: Introduced from Eastern Asia.

Status in Park: Abundant.

Characteristics: Small, slender trees or shrubs up to 35 feet tall, 6 inches in diameter, branches have short thorns; bark grayish brown, fissured in larger individuals; flowers yellowish-white, bell-shaped, about $\frac{3}{4}$ inches long, very fragrant, May-June; fruit yellow to red to brown “berries”, mature in autumn.

Leaves: Alternate, simple, often seen in small clusters; blades 1-3 inches long, with smooth edges; dull green above, silvery below, leathery, with very short hairs.



Autumn Olive

Notes: Autumn olive is one of the park's most troublesome invasive species. It aggressively colonizes open areas, and it thrives in deep woods as well. It grows and spreads rapidly from seeds, disrupting the natural mixture of trees in the park and competing with native plants. Through the efforts of volunteers, the large individuals have been removed, but many small ones remain. Constant attention is required to rid the park of these pests. New ones continue to sprout, and it is necessary to revisit areas every few years to keep them under control.