Winter Creeper

Winter creeper or climbing euonymus [*Euonymus fortunei* (Turcz.) Hand.-Maz.] is an evergreen shrub to 3 feet (1 m) in height and woody trailing vine to 40 to 70 feet (12 to 22 m) that forms a dense ground cover and climbs trees and rocks by clinging aerial roots along stems. It has leaves that are opposite, thick, and dark green or green-white variegated on green stems. Pinkish-to-red capsules split open in fall to expose orange fleshy-covered seeds. Species colonizes by trailing and climbing vines that root at nodes, and fleshy-coated seeds are spread by birds, other animals, and water. Still produced, sold, and planted as an ornamental with several cultivars.

**Management strategies:**
- Do not plant. Remove prior plantings, and control sprouts and seedlings. Bag and dispose of plants and fruit in a dumpster or burn.
- Treat when new plants are young to prevent seed formation.
- Pull, cut, and treat when fruit are not present.
- Repeated cutting to groundline commonly recommended for control.
- Injury of the leaves by a string trimmer immediately prior to herbicide spraying can improve control with those lacking soil activity.
- Cut all vertical climbing stems to prevent fruiting and spread of seed by birds.
- Burning treatments are suspected of having minimal effect.

**Recommended control procedures:**
- When nontarget damage is not a concern, thoroughly wet all leaves (until runoff) with one of the following herbicides in water with a surfactant (July to October for successive years): Tordon 101* ‡ as a 3-percent solution (12 ounces per 3-gallon mix) or Tordon K ‡ as a 2-percent solution (8 ounces per 3-gallon mix).
- When safety to surrounding vegetation is desired, apply Garlon 4 or a glyphosate herbicide as a 4-percent solution (1 pint per 3-gallon mix) in water with a surfactant, preferably in the fall a month before expected frost, and repeat in the spring to regrowth.
- For large vines, make stem injections using Arsenal AC*, Garlon 3A, or a glyphosate herbicide using dilutions and cut-spacings specified on the herbicide label (anytime except March and April).

* Nontarget plants may be killed or injured by root uptake.
‡ When using Tordon herbicides, rainfall must occur within 6 days after application for needed soil activation. Tordon herbicides are restricted use pesticides.