Euonymus alatus - Burning Bush or Winged Euonymus
(Celastraceae)

Euonymus alatus is a tough but overutilized landscape shrub primarily found in mass plantings or as a formal hedge. Burning Bush is widely known for its brilliant red autumn display, and lesser known for the bold-textured corky stems that have winter appeal on the underutilized species form.

**FEATURES**

**Form**
- large-sized foliage shrub

**Culture**
- full sun to full shade

**Texture**
- medium texture in foliage, and medium (non-corky stemmed) to bold (corky stemmed) texture when bare

**Function**
- formal or informal hedge, group or mass planting, non-thorny barrier, deciduous screen, specimen, border, entranceway, foundation, or at water's edge

**Assets**
- brilliant flaming-red autumn color
- takes well to pruning and shearing
- urban stress tolerant

**Liabilities**
- whether pruned or unpruned, it often slowly grows beyond its intended boundaries or presumed mature height
- several biotic and abiotic stresses can be significant for this species, compounded by its being over-utilized in the landscape

**Habitat**
- Zones 4 to 8
- Native to Northeastern Asia and Central China

**SELECTIONS**

**Alternates**
- shrubs with good autumn color (Aronia arbutifolia 'Brilliantissima', Fothergilla gardenii, Hamamelis x intermedia, Viburnum rafidulun, Viburnum setigerum, etc.)
- shrubs that may serve as formal or informal hedges (Ligustrum obtusifolium, Ribes alpinum, Taxus x media, Thuja occidentalis 'Emerald' ('Smaragd'), Viburnum dentatum, Viburnum lantana, etc.)

**Cultivars – Variants**
- Related species
- all cultivars of Burning Bush are more compact than the species form, but they differ primarily in how compact they are, how corky or non-corky the stems are, cold hardiness, upright vs. rounded shape, and whether they branch to the ground vs. become leggy with age

- E. alatus 'Compactus' - a "compact" form maturing slowly at 8' x 8', with virtually no corky wings on its first-year, relatively thin, but more dense green stems, but only hardy to zone 5; the most popular cultivar by far and abundantly available

- E. alatus 'Nordine Strain' - heavily cork-barked, branching to the ground, to 10' x 10', hardy to zone 4; low availability

- E. alatus 'Rudy Haag' - similar in appearance but much smaller than 'Compacta', slowly growing to 5' x 5', hardy to zone 4; rare availability

and branching very low to the ground
- with advanced maturity, some shrubs (especially the species form) can be limbed up into multi-trunked tree form, or truly "specimen" shrub form