UF IFAS Extension UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

ENH233

Amelanchier canadensis: Shadblow Serviceberry[1]

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Introduction

Downy serviceberry is an upright, twiggy, multi-stemmed large shrub, eventually reaching 20 to 25 feet in height with a spread of 15 to 20 feet. This North American native is usually the first to be noticed in the forest or garden at springtime, the pure white, glistening flowers some of the earliest to appear among the many other dull brown, leafless, and still-slumbering trees. The small white flowers are produced in dense, erect, two- to three-inch-long racemes, opening up to a delicate display before the attractive reddish-purple buds unfold into small, rounded leaves. These leaves are covered with a fine, soft grey fuzz when young, giving the plant its common name, but will mature into smooth, dark green leaves later. Following the blooms are many small, luscious, dark red/purple, sweet and juicy, apple-shaped fruits, often well hidden by the dark green leaves, and which would be popular with people were they not so quickly consumed by birds and other wildlife who seem to find their flavor irresistible.

General Information

Scientific name: *Amelanchier canadensis*
Pronunciation: am-meh-LANG-kee-er kan-uh-DEN-sis
Common name(s): Shadblow serviceberry
Family: *Rosaceae*
USDA hardiness zones: 4A through 7B (Fig. 2)
Origin: native to North America
Invasive potential: little invasive potential
Uses: specimen; deck or patio; container or planter
Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the tree



Figure 1. Young *Amelanchier canadensis*: Shadblow Serviceberry

Description

Height: 20 to 25 feet
Spread: 15 to 20 feet
Crown uniformity: symmetrical
Crown shape: upright/erect
Crown density: open
Growth rate: moderate
Texture: fine

1. This document is ENH233, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date November 1993. Revised December 2006. Reviewed February 2014. Visit the EDIS website at http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu.

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Figure 2. Range

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Fig. 3)
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: serrate
Leaf shape: elliptic (oval), oblong
Leaf venation: pinnate, brachidodrome
Leaf type and persistence: deciduous
Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches, 2 to 4 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: yellow, orange, red
Fall characteristic: showy

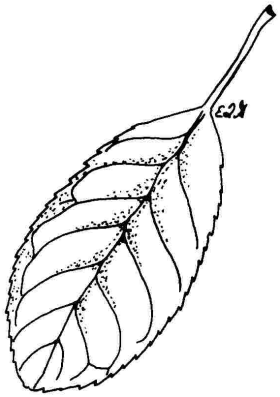


Figure 3. Foliage

Flower

Flower color: white/cream/gray
Flower characteristics: very showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: round
Fruit length: less than .5 inch
Fruit covering: fleshy
Fruit color: red, purple
Fruit characteristics: attracts birds; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: branches droop; not showy; typically multi-trunked; thorns
Pruning requirement: little required
Breakage: resistant
Current year twig color: brown
Current year twig thickness: thin
Wood specific gravity: unknown

Culture

Light requirement: full sun, partial sun or partial shade
Soil tolerances: clay; sand; loam; acidic; well-drained
Drought tolerance: moderate
Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate

Other

Roots: not a problem
Winter interest: no
Outstanding tree: no
Ozone sensitivity: unknown
Verticillium wilt susceptibility: unknown
Pest resistance: resistant to pests/diseases

Use and Management

When the shortened days of autumn arrive, downy serviceberry is alive with a variety of colorful hues, from yellow and gold, to orange and deep red. Downy serviceberry is ideal for planting in the naturalized garden where it can be allowed to spread by its naturally suckering habit, or is striking when placed in the mixed shrubbery border where its brilliant white blooms and fall color stand out nicely against a background of evergreen shrubs. The light shade cast by the open crown makes the tree well suited for planting as a specimen near the deck or patio.

With a native habitat of wet bogs and swamps, downy serviceberry should be grown in full sun or light shade on moist, well-drained, acid soil. Plants will rarely require any pruning or fertilizing, except if thinning of the multiple stems is desired to "clean up" the bottom of the plant.

Propagation is by seeds after cold-stratification.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.