

Silverberry



Silverberry (*Elaeagnus commutata*)

General Description

A medium shrub, native from the east coast to the Northwest Territories, through North Dakota and south to Utah. Would be more popular, but it suckers profusely.

Leaves and Buds

Bud and Leaf Arrangement - Alternate.

Bud Color - Silvery-white to pale brown beneath.

Bud Size - 1/8 to 1/4 inch.

Leaf Type and Shape - Simple, ovate to narrowly-ovate.

Leaf Margins - Entire.

Leaf Surface - Silvery-white scaled, brown scales beneath.

Leaf Length - 1½ to 3½ inches.

Leaf Width - 3/4 to 1¼ inches.

Leaf Color - Silver-white.

Flowers and Fruits

Flower Type - Tubular, short-stalked, produced in great numbers in the leaf axils in May, fragrant.

Flower Color - Yellow with silvery outside of tubes.

Fruit Type - Egg-shaped drupe, 1/3 inch long, ripens in September to October.

Fruit Color - Silvery.

Form

Growth Habit - Narrow, upright.

Texture - Medium, summer; medium, winter.

Crown Height - 5 to 9 feet.

Crown Width - 3 to 6 feet.

Bark Color - Brown to gray.

Root System - Fibrous, spreading, profusely suckers.

Environmental Requirements

Soils

Soil Texture - Performs best on well drained, coarse-textured soils with moist subsoil.

Soil pH - 6.0 to 8.0. Adaptable to high pH and saline soils.

Windbreak Suitability Groups - 1, 1K, 3, 4, 4C, 5, 6D 6G, 9C, 9L.

Cold Hardiness

USDA Zone 2.

Water

Prefers subsoil moisture as opposed to water-logged or ponded sites. Drought tolerant.

Light

Full sun or light shade.

Uses

Conservation/Windbreaks

Small to medium shrub for farmstead and field windbreaks and riparian plantings. May become a serious weed in pastures.

Wildlife

Dense thickets provide cover to many wildlife species. Fruit used as food for song and game birds. Hoofed browsers may feed on leaves and twigs.

Agroforestry Products

Food - Not used.

Medicinal - In Japan, *E. multiflora* fruits are used in production of alcohols.

Urban/Recreational

Very attractive silvery-green foliage, tolerant to droughty and high pH sites. Suckers profusely which limits use in home landscapes. Could be massed for color accent on public grounds.

Cultivated Varieties

None.

Related Species

Russet Buffaloberry (*Shepherdia canadensis*)

Russian-olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*)

Sea-buckthorn (*Hippophae rhamnoides*)

Silver Buffaloberry (*S. argentea*)

Pests

Common diseases include branch cankers. Subject to damage by rabbits.