



Information & Photos courtesy of Missouri Botanical Garden [Missouri Botanical Garden](https://www.wildflower.org/) & Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center <https://www.wildflower.org/>

Amelanchier canadensis

Serviceberry

Rosaceae (Rose Family)

Amelanchier canadensis, commonly called shadblow serviceberry, is a deciduous, early-flowering, large shrub or small tree which typically grows 15-30' tall. Features showy, 5-petaled, slightly fragrant, white flowers in drooping clusters which appear before the leaves emerge in early spring. Finely toothed, elliptic, medium to dark green leaves (1-3" long) change to orange-red in autumn. Flowers give way to small, round, green berries which turn red and finally mature to a dark purplish-black in early summer. Edible berries resemble blueberries in size and color and are used in jams, jellies and pies.

Genus name comes from a French provincial name for *Amelanchier ovalis* a European plant in this genus.

Specific epithet means from Canada which is part of the native range of this plant. It is Very easy to grow and provides year-round interest.

Berries are edible and juicier than those of the similar *A. arborea*. Sensitive to drought. Serviceberries are subject to many disease and insect problems, but damage from these problems is usually cosmetic rather than life threatening. The sweet, juicy fruits are edible and rich in iron and copper. (Kershaw)

Plant Characteristics

Native Range: Eastern North America

Zone: 4 to 8

Height: 25.00 to 30.00 feet

Spread: 15.00 to 20.00 feet

Bloom Time: March to May

Bloom Description: White

Sun: Full sun to part shade

Water: Medium to Dry

Maintenance: Low

Suggested Use: Flowering Tree

Flower: Showy

Leaf: Good Fall

Attracts: Birds

Fruit: Showy, Edible

Tolerate: Clay Soil

Distribution

USA: AL , CT , DC , DE , GA , IA , IL , IN , KY , MA , MD , ME , MI , MN , NC , NH , NJ , NY , OH , PA , RI , SC , TN , VA , VT , WI , WV

Canada: NB , NL , NS , ON , PE , QC

Native Distribution: Nf. to s. Ont., s. to DE, KY & IA; also mts. to GA & TN

Native Habitat: Cool, rich woods; moist to drier thickets; swamp margins & clearings

Propagation

Description: This species can be rooted from early spring hardwood cuttings or softwood cutting taken in the summer. Sow untreated seeds in fall or cold-stratified seed in spring.

Seed Collection: Collect fruits as soon as they ripen (if you can beat the birds) and clean seeds immediately to prevent fermentation. Fertile seeds are dark brown with a leathery seed coat. Seed extraction is usually by macerating the **fruit** and washing them over screens. Air dry and store in sealed, refrigerated containers for up to five years.

Seed Treatment: Cold-moist stratification for 90-120 days.

Commercially Avail: yes

Use Wildlife: A food plant for birds and small mammals.

Use Food: The sweet, juicy fruits are edible and rich in iron and copper (Kershaw). Native peoples dried the small pomes like raisins or mashed and dried them in cakes. Often the dried fruits were mixed with meat and fat to form pemmican, a light-weight, high-energy food that could support winter travellers for long periods if the diet was supplemented with vitamin C to prevent scurvy. (Kershaw)

Conspicuous Flowers: yes

Fragrant Flowers: yes

Attracts: Birds

Value to Beneficial Insects

Special Value to Native Bees

This information was provided by the Pollinator Program at [The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation](#).

Lindtner values Amelanchier as 1 star for pollen and nectar source. Pollen pellets are yellow

Shadbush is the common name because its flowering coincides with the annual migration of shad in New England rivers.

Berries can stain sidewalk.