

# Native Shrubs & Small Trees for Gardens & Natural Areas

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(Incomplete notes started for you; space provided for you to finish!)

## SHRUBS

(Dwarf) Bush Honeysuckle *Diervilla lonicera*

- Native, but not a true honeysuckle
- Others in nursery trade are true honeysuckles, but are exotic invasives

Wild Rose *Rosa spp.*

- 4 species are wild in MN
- Flowers: pink, single
- Fruit: rose hips
- Fall color: orange to red

Meadowsweet *Spirea alba*

- 2 species of native spirea in MN
- Competes with reed canary grass on wet sites!

(Downy) Arrowwood *Viburnum rafinesqianum*

- Native to N. MN
- Different from Eastern Arrowwood *V. dentatum*

Bladdernut *Stapylea trifoliata*

- Uncommon, unique understory shrub
- Slowly forms thicket

Red-osier Dogwood *Cornus serisia* (formerly *C. stolonifera*)

- Excellent winter interest for 6 months
- Needs some sun, (best in more sun w/ moist soil)
- 'Isanti' cultivar is shortest, approx. 5' tall
- Never shear this plant! Instead, remove older stems

Gray Dogwood *Cornus foemina* (formerly *C. racemosa*)

- White flowers in June in sunny spot; flowers uncommon in shade
- Fruit ripens white in fall, in time for fall songbird migration
- Eventually thicket-forming—good bird habitat

Serviceberry/Juneberry/Saskatoonberry/Shadblow/Shadbush *Amelanchier spp.*

- Some are shrubs; some are small trees
- 8 native species grow wild in MN (now very uncommon in metro woods)
- White flowers in May bloom 1 week
- Fruit excellent for outdoor eating; excellent for songbirds & wildlife
- Orange red fall color
- See Outback Nursery Catalog for greatest species selection

American High Bush Cranberry *Viburnum trilobum*

- Don't plant *V. opulus*, European cranberry is invasive
- Red fruit hangs on all winter
- Easy to plant from seed
- Likes moist soil

American Hazel *Corylus americana*

- NOT Thicket-forming
- Orange fall color
- Less common in the wild than Beaked

Beaked Hazel *Corylus cornuta*

- Very common in N. MN
- Yellow fall color
- IS thicket-forming

### Red-berried Elder *Sambucus racemosa* (formerly *S. pubens*)

- Very tolerant of shade
- Blooms late April to early May
- Scarlet red fruit in summer is food for summer songbirds; seeds spread by birds
- Habit: tall shrub with fast growth
- Indeterminate growth; some dead wood pruning necessary each spring

### American Elder *Sambucus nigra* L. subsp. *canadensis*

- Blooms mid to late summer
- Purple to black fruit in fall; edible, collected for wine & jam
- High wildlife value
- White pith (vs. salmon pith of red-berried elder)

### Nannyberry *Viburnum lentago*

- Thicket-forming
- Large shrub; excellent replacement for buckthorn
- Best to plant on woodland edge (gets powdery mildew in shade)

### Pussy Willow *Salix discolor*

- Fantastic showy catkins in March on male plants
- Huge shrub, can be pruned into small tree if desired
- Grows fast & needs diligent formative pruning each year when young
- Needs some sun

### Speckled Alder *Alnus rugosa*

- Tolerant of clay soil;
- Tolerant of moist to wet soil
- Perfect replacement plant for glossy buckthorn in wet areas

## **SMALL TREES**

### Pagoda Dogwood/Alternate-leaved Dogwood *Cornus alternifolia*

- Shade-tolerant understory tree (most shade tolerant of all MN dogwoods)
- Very ornamental: tiered structure provides winter interest
- Flowers:
- Fruit: blue; bird favorite, especially thrushes
- Fall color: fabulous burgundy

### Choke Cherry *Prunus virginiana*

- Grows up to 25' tall
- Tall shrub to small tree (tree-size specimens in Twin cities are now very uncommon; smaller remnants exist)
- Suckers from the root system aggressively; best grown as a thicket for songbirds
- Flowers:
- Fruit:
- Fall color:

### Canada Red Cherry *Prunus virginiana* 'Schubert'

- A cultivated variety of choke cherry originally found wild in Canada
- Foliage emerges green and turns reddish-purple; great accent plant
- Red cultivars will cross-pollinate with wild choke cherry and produce red choke cherry plants in the wild
- All cherries are susceptible to cherry black knot disease; learn how to manually control

### American Plum *Prunus americana*

- Fragrant spring flowers bloom for one week; very late April or very early May
- Very important species for spring pollinator insects
- Routinely mistaken for buckthorn and cut down because bark and twigs look so similar

### Blue Beech *Carpinus carolineana*

- Can grow in deep shade
- Uncommon understory tree
- Slow growing
- Unique ridged trunk looks like "muscle-wood"
- Fall color: wine red

### Redbud *Cercis canadensis*

- Native to SE quadrant of U.S.; S. Iowa to nearly the Gulf of Mexico
- To plant in MN, buy Northern U of MN Arboretum seed source
- Clump or small tree form