**INTRODUCTION**

Most often grown as a large multi-trunked shrub or small tree, Siebold Viburnum only reaches about 20 feet high (occasionally to 30 feet) and 10 to 12 feet wide, creating an upright silhouette with short, firm branches (Fig. 1). The two to six-inch-long by 1.5 to 3-inch-wide, dark green leaves give off a pungent odor when crushed, and have been known to give an occasional autumn display of red or purple color although typically there is no fall color. In late May, the plant is covered with three to six-inch-diameter clusters of off-white, tiny blossoms. These blooms are followed by small, half-inch, pinkish-red fruits which ripen to dark blue or black from August to October, and are held above the foliage, making them any easy target for the birds who find them a delectable treat. There are extremely showy for a period of about two weeks.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Scientific name:** *Viburnum sieboldii*  
**Pronunciation:** vye-BER-num see-BOLE-dee-eye  
**Common name(s):** Siebold Viburnum  
**Family:** Caprifoliaceae  
**USDA hardiness zones:** 4 through 7 (Fig. 2)  
**Origin:** not native to North America  
**Uses:** hedge; wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; near a deck or patio; narrow tree lawns (3-4 feet wide); specimen; sidewalk cutout (tree pit); residential street tree; no proven urban tolerance

**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

**DESCRIPTION**

**Height:** 20 to 30 feet  
**Spread:** 10 to 12 feet  
**Crown uniformity:** irregular outline or silhouette  
**Crown shape:** upright  
**Crown density:** moderate  
**Growth rate:** medium  
**Texture:** coarse

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1. This document is adapted from Fact Sheet ST-662, a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October 1994.
2. Edward F. Gilman, associate professor, Environmental Horticulture Department; Dennis G. Watson, associate professor, Agricultural Engineering Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611.
Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Foliage**

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite (Fig. 3)
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: crenate; serrate
Leaf shape: elliptic (oval); obovate
Leaf venation: bowed; banchidodrome; pinnate
Leaf type and persistence: broadleaf evergreen; evergreen; fragrant
Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches; 2 to 4 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: no fall color change
Fall characteristic: not showy

**Fruit characteristics:** attracts birds; no significant litter problem; showy

**Trunk and Branches**

Trunk/bark/branches: routinely grown with, or trainable to be grown with, multiple trunks; grow mostly upright and will not droop; showy trunk; no thorns

Pruning requirement: requires pruning to develop strong structure

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: gray
Current year twig thickness: thick

**Culture**

Light requirement: tree grows in part shade/part sun; tree grows in full sun

Soil tolerances: clay; loam; sand; slightly alkaline; acidic; well-drained

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate

Soil salt tolerance: poor

**Fruit**

Fruit shape: oval
Fruit length: < .5 inch
Fruit covering: fleshy
Fruit color: black; red
Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem
Winter interest: no special winter interest
Outstanding tree: tree has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more
Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time
Verticillium wilt susceptibility: susceptible
Pest resistance: no pests are normally seen on the tree

USE AND MANAGEMENT

Best used as a specimen or patio tree where there is plenty of soil space for root expansion. Provides nice scale to a small landscape but is also suited for planting in mass or on 15 to 25-foot centers along a boulevard or entrance road to a commercial landscape. The multi-trunks twist as they grow providing a nice formal Oriental effect.

Siebold Viburnum should be grown in full sun or partial shade on moist, well-drained soils, acid or alkaline. Leaves will show evidence of scorch if soil dries out, but this appears to be a drought avoidance mechanism causing little permanent damage.

The cultivar ‘Seneca’ has very firm fruits which are not eaten by birds and provide for a much longer fruit effect than the species. It is preferred over the species because of the extended fruiting effect.

Propagation is by cuttings which root easily.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.