



Amelanchier canadensis Shadblow Serviceberry¹

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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 (Fig. 1). 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, Downy Serviceberry

Family: *Rosaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 4 through 7 (Fig. 2)

Origin: native to North America

Uses: container or above-ground planter; near a deck or patio; specimen

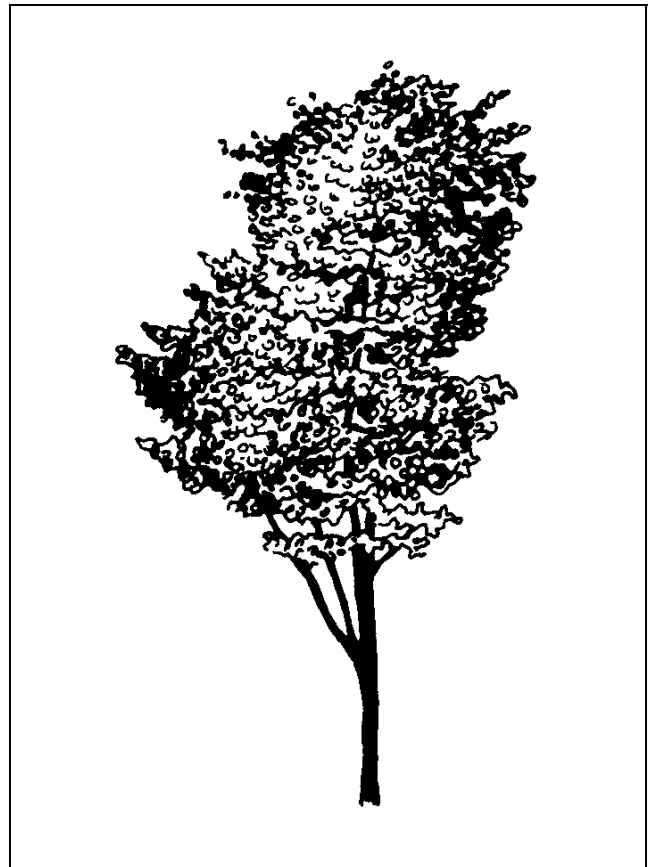


Figure 1. Young Shadblow Serviceberry.

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the tree

1. This document is adapted from Fact Sheet ST-74, a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: November 1993.
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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

DESCRIPTION

Height: 20 to 25 feet
Spread: 15 to 20 feet
Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms
Crown shape: upright
Crown density: open
Growth rate: medium
Texture: fine

Foliage

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

Flower

Flower color: white
Flower characteristics: spring flowering; very showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: round
Fruit length: < .5 inch
Fruit covering: fleshy
Fruit color: purple; red
Fruit characteristics: attracts birds; attracts squirrels and other mammals; suited for human consumption; no significant litter problem; showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: bark is thin and easily damaged from mechanical impact; droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; routinely grown with, or trainable to be grown with, multiple trunks; not particularly showy; tree wants to grow with several trunks but can be trained to grow with a single trunk; no thorns

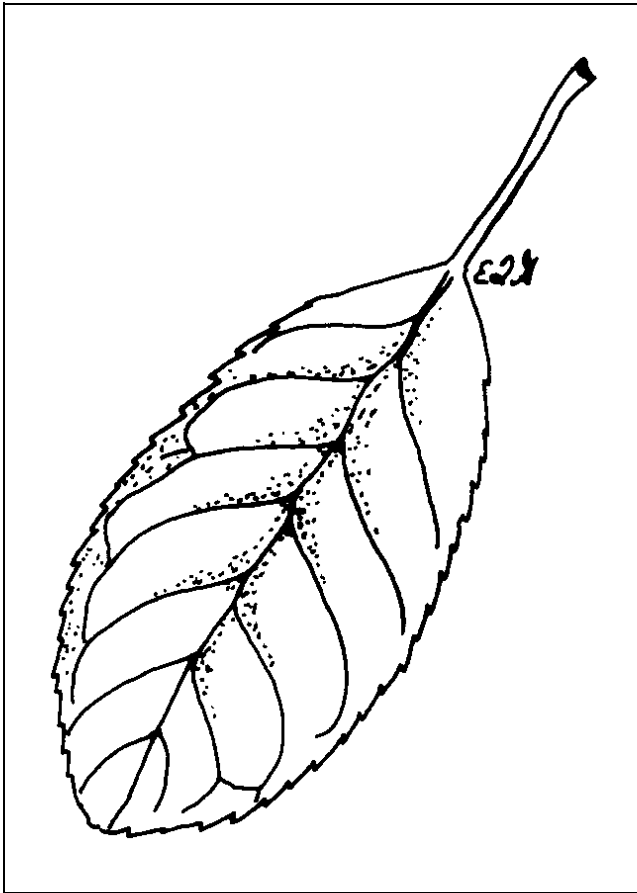


Figure 3. Foliage of Shadblow Serviceberry.

Pruning requirement: needs little pruning to develop a strong structure

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: brown

Current year twig thickness: thin

Culture

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

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

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate

Soil salt tolerance: moderate

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding tree: not particularly outstanding

Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time

Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

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.