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Serviceberry (*Amelanchier sp*), Nebraska Forest Service

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Serviceberry (*Amelanchier sp*)

Nebraska Forest Service

Serviceberry (*Amelanchier sp*), is a small forest tree that gives the promise of spring. It is one of the first to bloom with delicate white flowers. There are many varieties of serviceberry including Allegheny serviceberry (*Amelanchier laevis*), Autumn Brilliance Apple serviceberry (*Amelanchier x grandiflora* 'Autumn Brilliance'), Downy serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*), and Saskatoon serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*). There are others but these seem to be the most popular in the Nebraska/Iowa area.

Serviceberry provides four-season appeal. In landscapes, its spring flowers, summer fruits, fall foliage, and winter zig-zag twigs with light gray bark provide year-round interest. In natural sites, early summer fruits are relished by birds and mammals, while the thick canopy is a frequent nesting site for small birds. Serviceberry is native in one form or another over most of the United States and Canada.



Serviceberry, when found in the open, may reach 20 feet tall by 15 feet wide and is strongly multi-trunked. It prefers partially sunny to partially shaded sites at the edges of fields and woodlands. As a member of the Rose Family, it is related to the chokeberries, hawthorns, crabapples, plums, cherries, pears, and roses.

Serviceberry prefers moist, acidic, rich soils, but adapts to dry soils of acidic, neutral, or alkaline pH. It grows in full sun to partial shade (best performance in partially sunny sites).

Serviceberry does have disease and pest problems like all other members of the rose family, especially the leaves (rusts, spots, blights, mildews, etc.).

Serviceberry is also known other several other names including Sarvis Tree, Shadbush, and Juneberry. The Allegheny and Saskatoon serviceberry are native to parts of Nebraska and Iowa. The Saskatoon Serviceberry has a large sweet fruit that can be used for jellies and jams. Some are grown for profit.