

# *Amelanchier canadensis*: Shadblow Serviceberry<sup>1</sup>

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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. 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:** 4A through 7B (Fig. 2)

**Origin:** native to North America

**Invasive potential:** little invasive potential

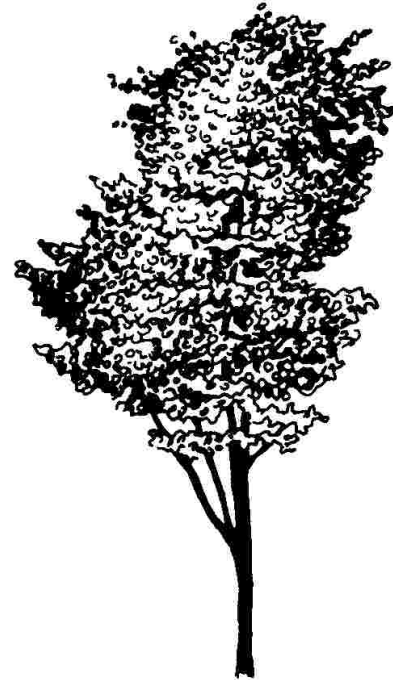


Figure 1. Young *Amelanchier canadensis*: Shadblow Serviceberry

**Uses:** specimen; deck or patio; container or planter

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

## Description

**Height:** 20 to 25 feet

**Spread:** 15 to 20 feet

**Crown uniformity:** symmetrical

**Crown shape:** upright/erect

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Figure 2. Range

**Crown density:** open  
**Growth rate:** moderate  
**Texture:** fine

### Foliage

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

### Flower

**Flower color:** white/cream/gray  
**Flower characteristics:** very showy

### Fruit

**Fruit shape:** round  
**Fruit length:** less than .5 inch  
**Fruit covering:** fleshy  
**Fruit color:** red, purple  
**Fruit characteristics:** attracts birds; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

### Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** branches droop; not showy; typically multi-trunked; thorns  
**Pruning requirement:** little required  
**Breakage:** resistant  
**Current year twig color:** brown  
**Current year twig thickness:** thin  
**Wood specific gravity:** unknown

### Culture

**Light requirement:** full sun, partial sun or partial shade

**Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; loam; acidic; well-drained  
**Drought tolerance:** moderate  
**Aerosol salt tolerance:** moderate

### Other

**Roots:** not a problem  
**Winter interest:** no  
**Outstanding tree:** no  
**Ozone sensitivity:** unknown  
**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** unknown  
**Pest resistance:** resistant to pests/diseases

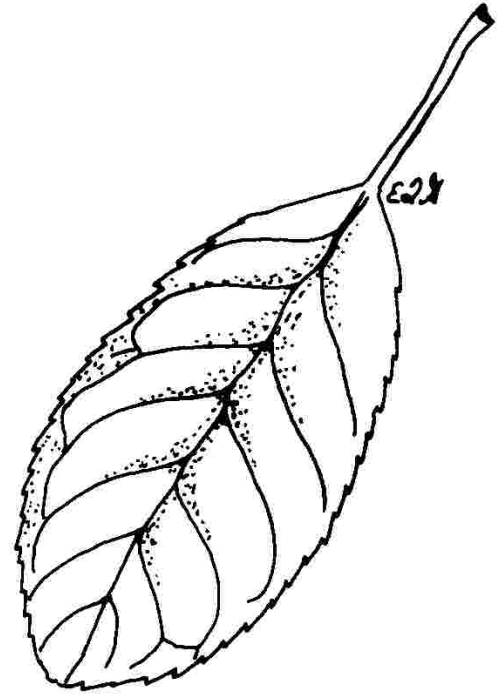


Figure 3. Foliage

## 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.