Viburnum sieboldii: Siebold Viburnum

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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. 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: 4A through 7B (Fig. 2)
Origin: not native to North America
Invasive potential: little invasive potential
Uses: hedge; specimen; deck or patio; street without sidewalk; highway median; tree lawn 3-4 feet wide; tree lawn 4-6 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft wide; sidewalk cutout (tree pit)
Availability: not native to North America

Figure 1. Mature Viburnum sieboldii: Siebold Viburnum

Figure 2. Range
### Description

**Height:** 20 to 30 feet  
**Spread:** 10 to 12 feet  
**Crown uniformity:** irregular  
**Crown shape:** upright/erect  
**Crown density:** moderate  
**Growth rate:** moderate  
**Texture:** coarse

### Foliage

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

### Flower

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

### Fruit

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

### Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** branches don’t droop; showy; typically multi-trunked; thorns  
**Pruning requirement:** needed for strong structure  
**Breakage:** resistant  
**Current year twig color:** gray  
**Current year twig thickness:** thick  
**Wood specific gravity:** unknown

### Culture

**Light requirement:** full sun, partial sun or partial shade  
**Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; loam; acidic; slightly alkaline; well-drained  
**Drought tolerance:** moderate  
**Aerosol salt tolerance:** moderate

### Other

**Roots:** not a problem  
**Winter interest:** no  
**Outstanding tree:** yes  
**Ozone sensitivity:** unknown  
**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** susceptible  
**Pest resistance:** free of serious pests and diseases

### 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.