

Viburnum sieboldii 'Seneca': 'Seneca' Siebold Viburnum¹

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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 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 an easy target for the birds who find them a delectable treat. There are extremely showy for a period of about two weeks. 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.

General Information

Scientific name: *Viburnum sieboldii*

Pronunciation: vye-BER-num see-BOLE-dee-eye

Common name(s): 'Seneca' siebold viburnum

Family: *Caprifoliaceae*

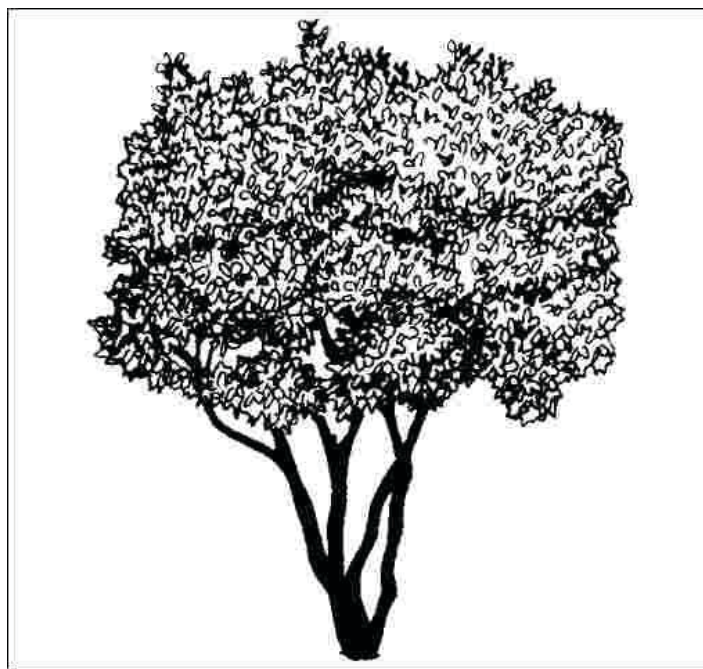


Figure 1. Mature *Viburnum sieboldii* 'Seneca': 'Seneca' siebold viburnum.

Credits: UF/IFAS

USDA hardiness zones: 4A through 7B (Figure 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: not assessed/incomplete assessment

Uses: hedge; specimen; deck or patio; street without sidewalk; highway median; tree lawn 3–4 feet wide; tree

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lawn 4–6 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft wide; sidewalk cutout (tree pit)

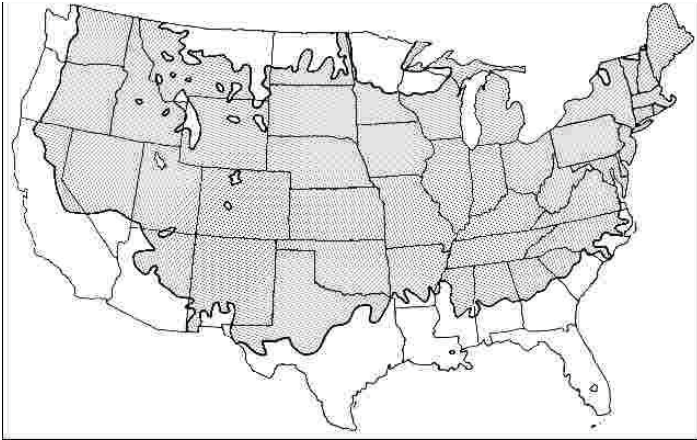


Figure 2. Range.
Credits: UF/IFAS

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 (Figure 3)

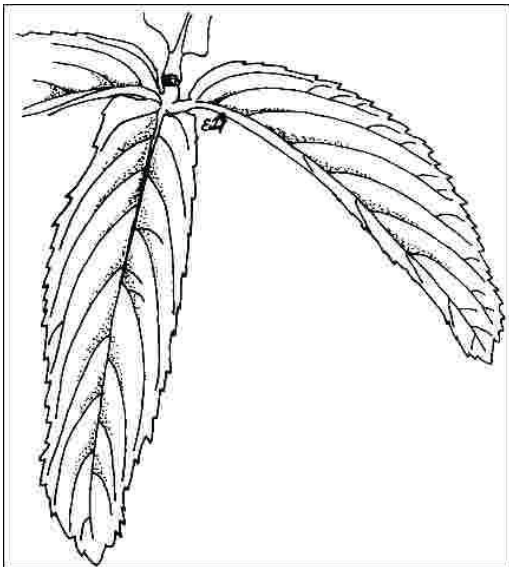


Figure 3. Foliage.
Credits: UF/IFAS

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 0.5 inch

Fruit covering: fleshy

Fruit color: red, black

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; 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; slightly alkaline; acidic; 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.

Propagation is by cuttings which root easily.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.