

Allegheny Serviceberry Tree

Amelanchier laevis

The Allegheny Serviceberry is a shrub or understory tree native to Pennsylvania. It is one of the tallest Amelanchier species that may form into multiple trunks and can grow up to 25 feet at a rate of 1 to 2 feet per year. If you prefer a smaller single-trunk tree, prune it after the first year to create a central leader to serve as the main trunk. It grows best in well-drained loamy soils. Serviceberry is a provider of fruit for birds, other wildlife, and humans. It is beautiful in all seasons – spring airy blooms, summer fruit, fall color of yellows, oranges, and reds, and winter interest with its gray bark and attractive shape.

Serviceberry trees require full to partial sun and grow in well-drained moist soil. While it is considered to be an understory tree, berry production is better in full sun. Don't forget to water the tree well after planting. When mulching around the tree, do not pile mulch right against the trunk. Allow at least 2 inches of bare ground space to prevent decay and only use native plant bark mulch in its natural colors (no dyes added). Dyed wood mulch does not break down to enrich the soil. Instead, it leaches the dye and its contaminants into the soil, harming or even killing beneficial soil bacteria, insects, earthworms, and sometimes the tree itself.

Regarding fertilization of newly planted trees – **DON'T!** For at least the first year, their nutrient needs will be minimal. During this time **they are establishing their root systems** and fertilizer (which stimulates stems and leaves) will not be appropriate. In fact fertilizer is never really required for these plants unless they are suffering from some disease.

Provide follow-up care. The serviceberry tree requires moist to wet soil that should be watered at least once a week. It can be watered less often during periods of rain but more often during hot, windy weather. Continue watering until late November as lower temperatures require less-frequent watering. Additional controls such as fencing or repellents are recommended for areas with high deer populations. For example, when planting new trees or shrubs you may want to protect them temporarily with small cages taller than the plant to prevent the deer from “tasting” them before they have had a chance to grow. Another way to deter the deer in lieu of cages is deer repellent. Here are two different products that have been proven to be fairly successful:

1. Plantskydd Repellent – a pre-mixed liquid that contains environmentally safe ingredients, and long-term protection when sprayed directly on plants.
2. Deer Stopper – a highly effective but more expensive product that needs to be spray-applied every 30 days. Works by smell and taste, will not wash off, and is pleasant to use, odor free.

Botanical Name	Amelanchier laevis
Plant Type	Deciduous Tree
Mature Size	15-25 feet tall, 12-15 feet wide
Sun Exposure	Full sun to full shade
Soil Type	Coarse to medium loams
Soil Moisture	Slightly dry to moist