





# Aronia melanocarpa

## Black Chokeberry

Tried and True  
Native Plant Selections  
for the Mid-Atlantic

Earlier classified as *Photinia melanocarpa*, this attractive **native\*** is often found in bogs, swamps, and moist thickets. Although edible, the fruits' acerbic taste often causes choking—hence the common name. However, its red coloring and healthy nutrients make it useful in food processing.



Shrub	Flowers, Bark, July Shrub, Fruit, Fall Foliage
Height: 3–6 feet	
Spread: 3–6 feet	
Bloom Color: White or pink-tinged	
Characteristics	 
Upright, spreading, <a href="#">suckering</a> , <a href="#">deciduous</a> shrub	
Multi- <a href="#">stemmed</a> , slender branches, <a href="#">lenticeled</a> bark	
<a href="#">Alternate</a> , <a href="#">pinnate</a> , elliptic, glossy, dark green leaves with finely toothed edges	
Flat-topped clusters of white five-petaled flowers with pink <a href="#">anthers</a> from April to May	
Fruit ( <a href="#">pomes</a> ) turn black-purple July to November	
Fall color ranges from yellow to orange to crimson	
Attributes	 
Tolerates wide range of <a href="#">soils</a> , including boggy	
No serious insect or disease problems; deer seldom severely damage although they, along with rabbits, may browse twigs and foliage	
Fruit used for jams, juice, and natural red coloring	
Attracts bees and birds, incl. Cedar Waxwings, and mammals; <a href="#">larval</a> host to some Lepidoptera	
Growing and Maintenance Tips	Excellent Replacement for
<a href="#">Soil Requirements</a> : Average, well-drained	<a href="#">Eleagnus umbellata</a> - Autumn Olive
<a href="#">Light Requirements</a> : Sun, Partial Shade	<a href="#">Euonymus alatus</a> - Burning Bush
<a href="#">Water Requirements</a> : Moist	<a href="#">Ligustrum japonicum</a> & <a href="#">L. sinense</a> - Privets
Plant in full sun for best fruit production	<a href="#">Lonicera</a> species - Bush Honeysuckles
Remove root suckers to prevent spread	<a href="#">Viburnum</a> species - Asian Viburnums
Use as hedge or beside ponds and streams	*It is native to DC, historical in DE, and absent in about ten PA counties. In VA, it is frequent in the mountains, infrequent in the Piedmont (it is not reported to be in Loudoun county), and infrequent to rare in the Coastal Plain.
<a href="#">Hardiness</a> : USDA Zones 3–8	

developed by Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia, serving Arlington and Alexandria

Images by Elaine Mills, private garden, Arlington, Virginia and (shrub) National Garden, U.S. Botanic Garden