Adams American Elder

Sambucus canadensis 'Adams'



Adams American Elder fruit
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 12 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 3

Description:

A large, vigorous shrub with attractive clusters of small, white flowers in spring followed by large, edible purplish-black berries, good for jams and wine, quite coarse in winter; very adaptable, survives with minimal care but tends to sucker

Ornamental Features

Adams American Elder features showy clusters of lightly-scented creamy white flowers held atop the branches in early summer. It features an abundance of magnificent deep purple berries with black overtones in early fall. It has dark green deciduous foliage. The compound leaves turn yellow in fall.

This plant is primarily grown as an ornamental, but it's also valued for its edible qualities. The large round sweet berries are most often used in the following ways:

- Preserves
- Wine-Making

Landscape Attributes

Adams American Elder is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage.

This is a high maintenance shrub that will require regular care and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It is a good choice for attracting birds to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Suckering

Adams American Elder is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Orchard/Edible Landscaping

Planting & Growing

Adams American Elder will grow to be about 10 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 12 feet. It tends to be a little leggy, with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years. This variety requires a different selection of the same species growing nearby in order to set fruit.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist locations, and should do just fine under average home landscape conditions. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This is a selection of a native North American species.