# Thundercloud Elder

***Sambucus nigra 'Thundercloud'***

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 8 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: Common Elder

**Description:**

A most impressive garden shrub with deep dark burgundy foliage, soft pink flowers look stunning against it in summer and then give way to dark fruits that are loved by the birds; will tolerate a wide range of soils; great for shrub borders or screens



*Thundercloud Elder flowers*
*Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder*



*Thundercloud Elder flowers*
*Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder*

**Ornamental Features**

Thundercloud Elder features showy clusters of fragrant shell pink flowers held atop the branches in early summer, which emerge from distinctive crimson flower buds. It has attractive burgundy deciduous foliage. The serrated pointy compound leaves are highly ornamental but do not develop any appreciable fall color. The deep purple fruits are held in clusters in early fall.

**Landscape Attributes**

Thundercloud Elder is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined 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

Thundercloud Elder is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

**Planting & Growing**

Thundercloud Elder will grow to be about 10 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 8 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot 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 shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It is quite adaptable, prefering to grow in average to wet conditions, and will even tolerate some standing water. 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 selected variety of a species not originally from North America.



*Thundercloud Elder foliage*
*Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder*