Sea-buckthorn
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(Hippophae rhamnoides)

General Description
A shrub or small tree, native from Europe to the Altai mountains in western and northern China and the Himalayan mountains. Sea-buckthorn was introduced into North America in 1923. A very hardy plant with foliar and fruit interest, but sometimes short-lived.

Leaves and Buds
Bud and Leaf Arrangement - Alternate.
Bud Color - Silvery to pale brown.
Bud Size - 1/8 to 1/4 inches long.
Leaf Type and Shape - Simple, linear to linear-lanceolate.
Leaf Margins - Entire with no serrations.
Leaf Surface - Silver-white scales, becoming glabrescent at maturity.
Leaf Length - 1 to 3 inches.
Leaf Width - 1/8 to 1/4 inch.
Leaf Color - Silvery-green in summer, grayish-green in fall.

Flowers and Fruits
Flower Type - Borne in axillary racemes on old wood.
Flower color - Yellow, before leafing out.
Fruit Type - Drupe-like, globose 1/4 to 1/3 inch long.
Fruit Color - Bright orange, persisting from September through the winter.

Form
Growth Habit - Large shrub or small tree, spreading and irregularly-rounded, loose and open.
Texture - Fine, summer; medium, winter.
Crown Height - 10 to 15 feet.
Crown Width - 8 to 10 feet.
Bark Color - Grayish-brown.
Root System - Fibrous spreading.

Environmental Requirements

Soils
Soil Texture - Performs best on coarse-textured soils.
Soil pH - 6.0 to 8.5. Adaptable to high pH and saline soils.
Windbreak Suitability Groups - 1, 1K, 3, 4, 4C, 5, 8, 9C, 9L.

Cold Hardiness
USDA Zone 3.

Water
Prefers subsoil moisture as opposed to water-logged or ponded sites.

Light
Full sun or light shade.

Uses

Conservation/Windbreaks
Medium shrub to small tree for farmstead and field windbreaks, roadside bank stabilization, living snow fences and riparian plantings.

Wildlife
Dense shrubby form provides cover for many wildlife species.

Agroforestry Products
Food - Astringent fruits, highly acidic, used as a juice in Asia with high Vitamin C content.
Medicinal - Used as curative skin ointments and in cancer research.

Urban/Recreational
Very attractive silvery-green foliage and orange persisting fruit throughout the winter. A variety of uses in the landscape, especially on droughty and saline sites. Thorns may limit use in some sites. Sometimes short-lived.

Cultivated Varieties
None.

Related Species
Russet Buffaloberry (Shepherdia canadensis)
Russian-olive (Elaeagnus angustifolia)
Silverberry (E. commutata)
Silver Buffaloberry (S. argentea)

Pests
No major pest problems.