Fragrant Sumac
**Fragrant Sumac**  
* (Rhus aromatica)

**General Description**
Spreading shrub with branches turning up at the tip. Tends to form a dense mass of stems and leaves. Good for bank stabilization. Fragrant aromatic leaves, particularly when crushed. Yellow catkin-like flowers.

**Leaves and Buds**
Bud Arrangement - Alternate.
Bud Color - Yellow, pubescent, covered by leaf scar.
Bud Size - Small.
Leaf Type and Shape - Trifoliate.
Leaf Margins - Acute to acuminate, crenate-serrate.
Leaf Surface - Hairy, pubescent.
Leaf Length - 1½ to 3 inches; leaflets 1 to 2 inches.
Leaf Width - 1½ to 3 inches; leaflets 1/2 to 1 inch.
Leaf Color - Soft green as leaflets unfold, then turning semi-glossy, deep green in summer, and yellow to red in autumn.

**Flowers and Fruits**
Flower Type - Polygamous or dioecious, male buds are 1 inch catkins, female are short panicles at the ends of branches.
Flower Color - Yellowish.
Fruit Type - Hairy-clustered drupes, 1/4 inch in diameter, females only.
Fruit Color - Red.

**Form**
Growth Habit - Ascending, branchlets pubescent, rounded mounds.
Texture - Medium, summer; medium, winter.
Crown Height - 3 to 9 feet.
Crown Width - 6 to 10 feet.
Bark Color - Gray-brown, aromatically fragrant when bruised, leaf scars circular, distinctly raised.
Root System - Fibrous, spreading.

**Environmental Requirements**

**Soils**  
Soil Texture - Adapted to a variety of soils.
Soil pH - 5.0 to 7.5. Prefers acidic soils.
Windbreak Suitability Group - 1, 1K, 3, 4, 4C, 5, 6D, 6G.

**Cold Hardiness**  
USDA Zone 4.

**Water**  
Moderately drought tolerant.

**Light**  
Full sun, to partial (1/2 to 3/4) shade.

**Uses**

**Conservation/Windbreaks**
Small to medium shrub for farmstead windbreaks and riparian plantings.

**Wildlife**
Excellent escape and nesting ground cover.

**Agroforestry Products**
Wood - Bark used in tanning leather and basket making.
Medicinal - Used in treating diabetes, kidney and bladder discharge, and as a diuretic and mouthwash.

**Urban/Recreational**
Massing, naturalizing. Fast cover for bank stabilization.

**Cultivated Varieties**
Green Globe Sumac (*Rhus aromatica* ‘Green Globe’) - Rounded, 5 to 5½ feet tall.
Gro-low Sumac (*R. aromatica* ‘Gro-low’) - 2 to 3½ foot ground cover, much lower growing.

**Related Species**
Skunkbush or Lemonade Sumac (*Rhus trilobata*)

**Pest**
No major pest problems.