Common Apple
Common Apple (Malus pumila)

General Description
Native to southeast Europe and has genetically contributed to the many cultivated fruiting apples for orchard production. Most cultivated apples are hybrids of M. pumila and are distinguished primarily by their fruit characteristics.

Leaves and Buds
Bud Arrangement - Alternate.
Bud Color - Reddish-brown, with several imbricate scales.
Bud Size - 1/8 to 1/4 inch long.
Leaf Type and Shape - Simple, elliptical-ovate to oval.
Leaf Margins - Finely-serrate to irregularly toothed or lobed.
Leaf Surface - Pubescent, later glabrate above.
Leaf Length - 1 to 3¼ inches.
Leaf Width - 1 to 2½ inches.
Leaf Color - Dark or olive-green above, paler green beneath; yellow fall color.

Flowers and Fruits
Flower Type - Umbel or corymb-like racemes.
Flower Color - White, sometimes with pink tint.
Fruit Type - A pome with persistent or deciduous calyx.
If fruit is larger than 2 inches across it is commonly classified as an apple.
Fruit Color - Range from red to yellow to green.

Form
Growth Habit - Rounded crown, decurrent branching.
Texture - Medium, summer; medium, winter.
Crown Height - 15 to 25 feet.
Crown Width - 10 to 25 feet.
Bark Color - Reddish-brown.
Root System - Fibrous, spreading to more than tree height.

Environmental Requirements
Soils
Soil Texture - Adapted to a variety of soils, prefers a heavy loam soil.
Soil pH - 5.0 to 7.5, prefers slightly acidic soils.
Windbreak Suitability Group - 1, 3, 4, 4C, 5.

Cold Hardiness
USDA Zone 3.

Water
Need well-drained, moist soils.

Light
Full sun.

Uses
Conservation/Windbreaks
Small tree on protected side of farmstead windbreaks.

Wildlife
Fruit eaten by a variety of birds and mammals. Branches browsed by mammals. Rodents and rabbits can destroy trees by girdling stem or trunk.

Agroforestry Products
Wood - Desirable for smokehouse kindling. Excellent quality firewood.
Food - Fruit used fresh, dried, and processed.
Medicinal - Used for liver problems, gout, indigestion, dysentery and diarrhea. Source of phloretin, an antibiotic.

Urban/Recreational
Fruit can be objectionable and messy in most urban and recreational plantings.

Cultivated Varieties
Malus x 'Dakota Gold', 'Hazen', 'Mandan', 'Northern Lights', and 'Wodarz' - Releases from NDSU, Fargo, North Dakota.
Malus x 'Chestnut', 'Haralred', 'Haralson', 'Honeygold' and 'Sweet Sixteen' - Releases from University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minnesota.
Malus x 'Goodland', 'Luke', 'Mantet' and 'Norland' - Releases from Morden Research Station, Morden, Manitoba.

Related Species
Flowering Crabapples (Malus species/hybrids)
Ussurian Pear (Pyrus ussuriensis) and cultivars

Pests
Diseases include fireblight, apple scab, frogeye leaf spot (black rot). Insect pests include cankerworms, fall webworm and apple maggot. Cultivars have variable resistance to many of these pests. Extracts of fruits have been used as an attractant to trap insect pests.