

Cusick Serviceberry

(Amelanchier cusickii)



Where does it grow? Cusick serviceberry usually grows in the ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir zones in the Wallowa and Blue Mountains and on the east slopes of the Cascade Mountains.

Is it important? Cusick serviceberry is a highly important browse species for deer and elk. It is usually good for sheep and fair for cattle. The fruit is relished by birds and rodents and is palatable to man.

What does it look like? Cusick serviceberry is usually a pale green appearing, medium to tall slender shrub up to 10 feet high. It may be low and twiggy if browsed heavily by wildlife or livestock.

Description:

Length of Life--Perennial.

Flowers and Fruit--Showy white flowers on stems with petals about 1 inch long, 3 to 8 flowers per cluster. The fruit is a scarlet berry-like pome (apple) which turns black when ripe.

Leaves--Pale green on both sides, mostly oval, about 2 inches long, and rounded or abruptly pointed at the tip. Margins sharply saw-toothed.

Twigs--New twigs pliable, slender, wand-like and shiny. Old twigs are brownish to dark grey.

Does it look like anything else? It looks similar to Saskatoon serviceberry (Amelanchier alnifolia) and the two often grow together. Saskatoon serviceberry has leaves dark green on the upper side, quadrangular in shape and small flowers with petals less than 1/2 inch long. Cusick serviceberry leaves are pale green on both sides, rounded or abruptly pointed, and the flowers are large with petals up to 1 inch in length.