

Serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*)

The Serviceberry is a tall shrub or small tree, usually 15-25 ft. tall but sometimes growing as tall as 30 ft. Its white flowers occur in drooping racemes, appearing before the leaves. Young leaves are covered with soft, woolly hairs that disappear as the leaf matures. The plant's ornamental bark is gray and smooth but streaked with longitudinal fissures; often with a reddish cast. Old bark is scaly. Small, edible berries are reddish-purple. The deciduous leaves of downy service-berry may turn wine-red in fall.

The Serviceberry got its name because it blooms as soon as the ground starts to thaw, when people were able to dig graves and bury their dead after winter. It may also be known as "Shadbush" and "Shadblow" which allude to the fact that the showy masses of white flowers tend to occur at the same time that shad ascend the rivers in early spring to spawn.