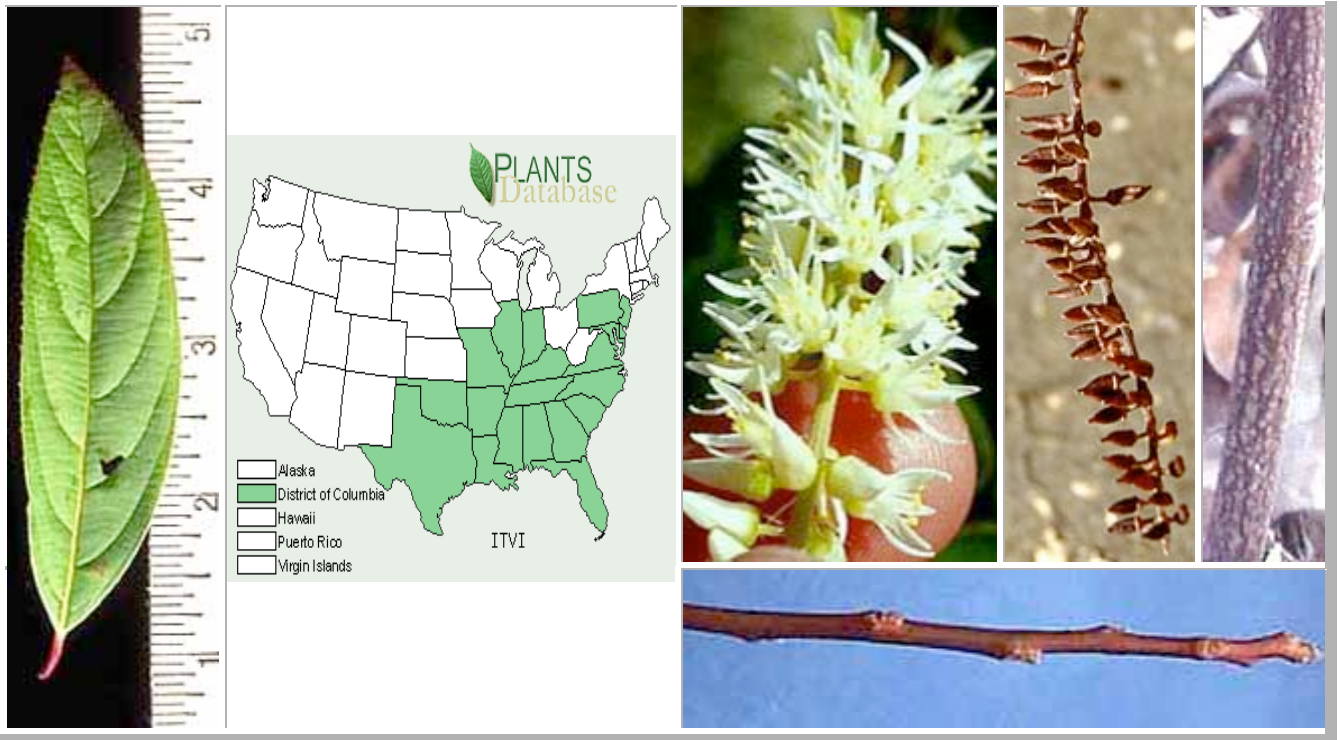




Sweetspire - *Itea virginica*

Description: Sweetspire is native throughout southeastern United States. Virginia sweetspire cultivar is an erect, rounded, deciduous shrub which typically grows 3-4' tall. Features fragrant, tiny white flowers borne in cylindrical, drooping racemes (3-6" long) which cover the shrub with bloom in early summer. Oval, dark green leaves (1-4" long) turn an attractive garnet red in autumn, sometimes persisting on the shrub until December. Flowers (racemes larger) and fall color of this cultivar are superior to that of the species.



Leaf: Alternate, simple, elliptical, finely serrated, 2 to 4 inches long, 1 to 1 1/2 inches wide, green above and slightly paler below.

Flower: White, 1/4 inch across, occurring in terminal arching racemes, usually quite abundant, appearing in late spring to early summer.

Fruit: Small (1/4 inch) elongated, woody capsules occurring in racemes, appearing in mid-summer and persisting into winter.

Twig: Slender, arching, green turning red in fall; buds small, triangular, leaf scar with 3 bundle scars, chambered pith.

Bark: Smooth, developing splits and turning brown.

Form: Arching, loose shrub, reaching 6 to 8 feet.

Site Requirements: Grows in full sun and full shade. Prefers moist, rich, slightly acidic soils, but is highly adaptable to all soil types, both wet and dry. Sweetspire is commonly found in swamps, and on banks of streams is flood tolerant. Versatile shrub for sunny or shady areas of the shrub border or woodland garden. Also a good specimen or foundation plant.

Native Range: 5-9

AL, AR, DC, DE, FL, GA, IL, KY, LA, MD, MO, MS, NC, NJ, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA

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