

Saskatoon

Amelanchier alnifolia



Identification Tips

- ◆ small clusters of white flowers in May
- ◆ leaves oval-shaped and toothed at tip and $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$ along margins
- ◆ leaves and branches alternate
- ◆ purple berries
- ◆ branches smooth, reddish-brown when young, older branches dark grey
- ◆ bark has a bitter smell when scraped

Similar Species

May be confused with **chokecherry** (*Prunus virginiana*) which has long clusters of flowers and teeth all along leaf edges. Chokecherry has black berries with pits. Both are found in riparian and upland areas.

Riparian Function & Values

- ◆ Grows on stable parts of riparian areas and is not found in places subject to annual flooding.
- ◆ Twigs provide important forage for ungulates, rodents, rabbits and livestock.
- ◆ Decreases in response to grazing. Heavy use in riparian areas can eliminate this species.
- ◆ Shrubs have a massive root crown, horizontal and vertical rhizomes, and an extensive root system. Thus, they play important role in bank stability along flowing water and on steep slopes.
- ◆ The fruit makes great pies and jam!

Forage Value

G	F	P
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Bank/Shoreline Protection

E	G	F	P
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Plant Status

Native

Riparian Remark

Tall, dense shrubs such as saskatoon provide excellent structure for breeding birds. The gray catbird needs dense shrub cover for nesting and is only found in riparian areas where several layers of shrubs are intact.

