



# Edible woody plants for Arlington County



# Outline

- The value of our urban forest
- What to look for in edible woody species
- Considerations for care
- Fruit and nut species:
  - Native edible trees and shrubs
  - Traditional and exotic edible trees and shrubs
  - Species to avoid
- Questions and resources

# The essential value of trees



- Mental and Physical Health benefits
- Wildlife value
- Stormwater reduction
- Cooling and heating cost reduction
- Carbon sequestration
- Increased property value
- Air pollution reduction
- Beautification
- **Food!**

# What should I look for?

- Hardiness – in Zone 7b
- Disease susceptibility
- Management requirements - Pruning, fertilization, watering, etc.
- Pollination needs (self fruitful vs self-unfruitful)
- Size of plant and space available
- Fruit production
- Flavor/variety
- Invasive tendencies



# Considerations for care

## **Food plants**

- Managed for food production
- Fertilization to maximize harvest
- Significant concern about soil composition and pollution
- Pruned for access to food and stimulating fruit growth

## **Ornamental plants**

- Managed for beauty, size, environmental value
- Fertilization for plant health
- Less consideration of soil pollution, except when affecting plant health
- Pruned for plant health

# Considerations for care, cont'd

- Pruning and training
  - Some species only flower and fruit on new wood
  - Easy access to fruit requires heavy pruning
  - Yearly pruning, if not more, is common
- Soil health
  - Amendments may be needed
  - Always perform a soil test before planning for planting



# Considerations for care, cont'd

- Disease and predation
  - Pick disease-resistant varieties
  - Integrated pest management
    - Plant diverse crops
    - Promote natural predators
    - Remove diseased tissue and fruit
    - Use safe chemical pesticides when necessary
  - Reducing access to predation
    - Netting
    - Fencing
- Watering schedules
- Winter injury and frost damage



# Virginia Native Fruit trees, shrubs, and vines

- American plum (*Prunus americana*)
- Serviceberry (*Amelanchier spp.*)
- American persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*)
- Red mulberry (*Morus rubra*)
- Blueberry (*Vaccinium spp.*)
- Black raspberry (*Rubus occidentalis*)
- Allegheny blackberry (*Rubus allegeinensis*)
- Elderberry (*Sambucus Canadensis*)
- Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*)
- Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*)
- Grape (*Vitis spp.*)
- Native Crabapple (*Malus coronaria/angustifolia*)
- Purple passionflower (*Passiflora incarnata*)





# Virginia Native Nut and seed trees

- Black walnut (*Juglans nigra*)
- American hazelnut (*Corylus americana*)
- Shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*)
- Live oak (*Quercus virginiana*)
- Caution: Nut trees often need decades to start producing

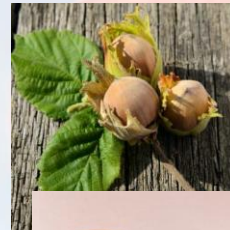


# Traditional fruit/nut trees and shrubs

- Apple
- Pear
- Peach
- Fig
- Apricot
- Plum
- Asian Persimmon
- Gooseberry
- Quince
- Cranberry
- Crabapple



- English Walnut
- Turkish Filbert
- Pecan
- Almond
- Chinese Chestnut



# Uncommon exotic fruit plants with cold-hardy varieties

- Pomegranate
- Jujube
- Banana



# Invasive Species to avoid

- Hardy Kiwi (*Actinidia arguta*)
- Autumn and Russian olive (*Elaeagnus spp.*)
- Wineberry (*Rubus phoenicolasius*)
- Currant (*Ribes rubrum*)
- Some Cherries (*Prunus spp.:* *avium*, *subhirtella*, *cerasus*, *mahaleb*, *padus*)
- White mulberry (*Morus alba*)

# Questions and resources

- Tree fruit in the home garden: <https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/426/426-841/426-841.html>
- Native fruit and nut trees and shrubs of Virginia: <http://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/ANR/ANR-23/ANR-23NP.html>
- Planting conservation buffers with native fruit and nut trees: <http://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/ANR/ANR-69/ANR-69.html>
- Arlington County invasive plant list: <https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2013/10/Invasive-Plant-List-2-19-15.pdf>
- Consider growing fruit trees indoors, to enhance your harvest: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mg243>