

Myrica pensylvanica

Northern Bayberry

Native to Maine

Upland
Forests and Fields

Leaves



Derek Ramsey



Look for oval leaves that alternate and have fine teeth near the tip. The waxy leaves are very fragrant with a sweet smell when crushed. Leaves are crowded toward the end of the branch.

LEAF ARRANGEMENT	LEAF TYPE	LEAF/LEAFLET SHAPE	LEAF/LEAFLET EDGE
 ALTERNATE	 SIMPLE	 PALMATE	 SMOOTH
 OPPOSITE	 COMPOUND-PALMATE	 OVAL	 TOOTHED
 WHORLED	 COMPOUND-PINNATE	 ROUND	 WAVY

Plant



dogtooth77, flickr



Look for a broad, dense shrub growing 2 to 3 m tall. It can hold on to its leaves well into fall, but is not evergreen.

Stem

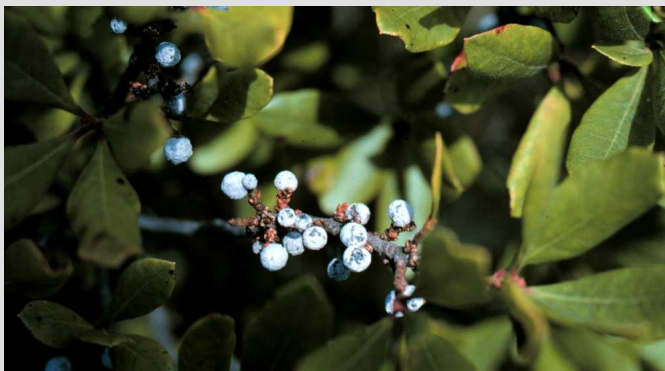


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Look for green twigs that turn tan or gray as the branch matures. Look for suckers (new shoots growing up from the roots next to the trunk).

Seasonal Change



Joan Muller, Waquoit Bay NERR and NOAA



In early spring (March to April) look for small white flowers BEFORE the leaves appear. Small waxy bluish-white berries on short stalks appear in late summer.

Similar Species

Northern Bayberry is similar to Wax Myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), which grows in southern climates and has smaller fruit and narrower, elongated leaves.

Fun Fact

Settlers boiled berries to collect the wax to scent candles in colonial days. The root of this plant has nodules with nitrogen-fixing microorganisms that allow it to grow in relatively poor soils.

Researched and created by: Denley Poor and Sue Donaldson
Help us improve this species card! Contact us with your updates.