

URBAN TREES

NATIVE PLANTS IN ALBERTA

Consider Native Plants when Planting in your own Backyard.

Chokecherry

General Ecology:

- **Growth Form:** Perennial shrub or tree.
- **Height:** Between 3 and 20ft.
- **Flowers:** White.
- **Fruits:** Red to purple drupe, can be consumed. Harvested late summer to early fall.
- **Habitat:** Found in forested areas, ravines, shores, and sand dunes. Semi shade tolerant.
- **Soils:** Rich, loamy and sandy soils. Needs good drainage. Optimum soil PH 6.0 to 8.0.
- **Cultural:** Used for food by Blackfoot, entire fruit was ground to make dry cakes (the pit is somewhat toxic, so it is not recommended.) Leaves stems, bark, and roots used for tea to treat colds and fevers. Boiled bark was also used to stop bleeding on wounds.

Growing:

- **Light:** Semi-shade tolerant. Prefers full light.
- **Watering:** Keep the soil moist, not soaked.
- **Special Consideration:** Note the leaves, bark, stem, and stone of the chokecherry plant can become toxic when damaged when consumed. Has rhizomes.

Currant

General Ecology:

- **Growth Form:** Perennial shrub.
- **Height:** Between 3 and 7ft.
- **Flowers:** Golden Yellow.
- **Fruits:** Yellow-red to blackish. Can be consumed.
- **Habitat:** Common in prairies. They like slopes along rivers, shrubby thickets, or in coulee slopes.
- **Soils:** Well drained, and moist. Drought and flood tolerant.
- **Cultural:** Used as a food source. Used to make pemmican and to treat snakebites.

Growing:

- **Light:** Full light or moderate shade.
- **Watering:** Keep the soil moist, not soaked.
- **Special Consideration:** It is a bit of a picky plant, and will not do well with long periods without watering. Has rhizomes.

Thorny Buffaloberry

General Ecology:

- **Growth Form:** Perennial shrub.
- **Height:** Between 2 and 10 ft.
- **Flowers:** Yellowish-brown.
- **Fruits:** Bright red to yellow drupes. Can be consumed in MODERATION.
- **Habitat:** Common in open woods, thickets, coulees. Moderately tolerant to shade.
- **Soils:** Found in slit loam to sandy loam. Well drained soil. Slightly acid to slightly alkaline is preferred.
- **Cultural:** Used as a food source for Indigenous peoples. Used to treat tuberculosis, constipation, and cuts. Inner bark was used as a laxative. Roots, stems, and twigs were used to relieve infant fever.

Growing:

- **Light:** Full light or moderate shade.
- **Watering:** Keep the soil moist, not soaked.
- **Special Consideration:** Fixes nitrogen! Fruit is toxic. Sends out sucker, so pruning these may be required if you don't want it to spread. Has rhizomes.

Woods Rose

General Ecology:

- **Growth Form:** Perennial shrub.
- **Height:** Between 3 to 6 ft.
- **Flowers:** Rose to pink or white.
- **Fruits:** Red hip (rose hips).
- **Habitat:** Common in open prairie grassland. Likes sandy conditions.
- **Soils:** Well drained clay foam, sandy loam, or sandy soil.
- **Cultural:** Used as a source of vitamin C. Used in cold medicine as a astringent for mucus.

Growing:

- **Light:** Full light or moderate shade.
- **Watering:** Moist, drought tolerant. Will not tolerate long periods of no watering.
- **Special Consideration:** Has rhizomes.

Silver Sagebush

General Ecology:

- **Growth Form:** Perennial shrub.
- **Height:** Between 2 to 5 ft.
- **Flowers:** Yellow, very small and numerous.
- **Habitat:** Common in prairie and parkland. Likes dry grassland, found on eroded slopes and hillsides.
- **Soils:** Well drained soils. PH range slightly acidic to alkaline. Does not tolerate clay soils.
- **Cultural:** Used for spiritual cleansing. Used in a variety of medicines.

Growing:

- **Light:** Full light.
- **Watering:** Dry to medium moisture. Drought-resistant. Can handle longer periods of no watering.
- **Special Consideration:** Very aromatic. Likes to spread out, has rhizomes.

These native plants are especially important to Indigenous people for thousands of years. It is widely known for being used for food, medicine, materials, and in spiritual traditions. These species of plants are still used in traditional ways by both Indigenous and non-indigenous people, as they are a natural plant widely known for being able to help with many things. If these plants were to go extinct, it could affect many people who live in Canada. This is why we are asking people to keep these species alive by planting them.

Thank you to CICan ImpAct - for funding this incredible project.

Generally, all species need full light, good drainage, and not a lot of water. Over fertilization will kill these plants. Considering the native ecology of these plants, they are not used to a lot of water all the time.

Books Used:

Common Plants of the Western Rangelands: Volume 2 Trees and Shrubs. Kathy Tannas. Alberta Government: Olds College.

