

2011 May Guess that Plant:



Red Chokeberry, *Aronia arbutifolia*

Red chokeberry is a native shrub and is classified as a member of the Rose Family. It is found State-wide and can be found on moist loam and wetland sandy soils. The distinct 5-petal white flowers with purple anthers are visible from a distance, making the plant an attractive addition to landscape plantings. The shrub has a lanky form, growing upright from a multi-stem base. Red chokeberries are prized by migrating birds that devour its red fruits during the fall migration, distributing its seeds wherever they roost.

New Jersey supports three types of chokeberries (black, purple and red). Each is distinguished from the others by the hairs or lack thereof on the bottom side of the leaves. Red chokeberry has a dense covering of woolly (tomentose) hairs, covering the entire underside of the leaf. Black chokeberry is usual completely free of hairs or glabrous. Purple chokeberries have an intermediate form somewhere between the two extremes. Each berry is distinct as well as the individual names imply: black, purple or red berries make this suite of plants relative easy to identify from one another during the growing season.