



***Sambucus canadensis* – American Elderberry**

COMMON NAME: Common Elderberry, Black Elderberry

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Sambucus canadensis*. *Sambucus* is derived from the Greek *sambuca* which was a stringed instrument supposed to have been made from elder wood.

FLOWER: Large clusters of small white flowers. The clusters are flat.

BLOOMING PERIOD: July or later

SIZE: 5 to 12 feet tall and just as wide

BEHAVIOR: Sprawling shrub with suckers.

SITE REQUIREMENTS: This shrub prefers soils with ample moisture, growing on roadsides, in meadows, marshland edges and wet ditches. Grows well in full sun to part shade.

NATURAL RANGE: Found throughout the eastern part of the US and Canada, east of the Rocky Mountains. It is native in all of Wisconsin.

SPECIAL FEATURES: Flowers attract butterflies and other insects. The berries are black when fully ripe and quite edible. It is often a battle to get the berries before the birds do. Some people use the flowerheads to make fritters, dipping them in a batter and then frying. There is a red elderberry species that has red berries that are not edible. The most notable feature of the American elderberry is the flat flowerheads and flat heads of black berries. They may sag, though, from the weight of the ripe berries.

SUGGESTED CARE: Very easy to grow. It should be pruned regularly in late winter or spring.