

Elaeagnus umbellata

Autumn Olive



Autumn olive is a nitrogen-fixing deciduous shrub or small tree growing up to 4.5m (14ft) at a medium growth rate. The flowers are fragrant, blooming in the spring, with a lovely warm spice smell. Autumn olive can grow in nutritionally poor soil and can tolerate drought and maritime exposure.

Physical Characteristics

Elaeagnus umbellata is a deciduous Shrub growing to 4.5 m (14ft) by 4 m (13ft) at a medium rate.

See above for USDA hardiness. It is hardy to UK zone 3 and is not frost tender. It is in flower from May to June, and the seeds ripen from September to November. The species is hermaphrodite (has both male and female organs) and is pollinated by Bees.

It can fix Nitrogen.

It is noted for attracting wildlife.

Suitable for: light (sandy), medium (loamy) and heavy (clay) soils, prefers well-drained soil and can grow in nutritionally poor soil. Suitable pH: mildly acid, neutral and basic (mildly alkaline) soils. It cannot grow in the shade. It prefers dry or moist soil and can tolerate drought. The plant can tolerate maritime exposure.



Edible Uses:

Fruit - raw or cooked. Juicy and pleasantly acid, they are tasty raw and can also be made into jams, preserves etc. The fruit must be fully ripe before it can be enjoyed raw, if even slightly under-ripe it will be quite astringent. The fruit contains about 8.3% sugars, 4.5% protein, 1% ash. The vitamin C content is about 12mg per 100g. Mature bushes in the wild yield about 650g of fruit over 2 - 3 pickings. The harvested fruit stores for about 15 days at room temperature. The fruit is about 8mm in diameter and contains a single large seed. Seed - raw or cooked. It can be eaten with the fruit though the seed case is rather fibrous.

Medicinal Uses

Plants For A Future can not take any responsibility for any adverse effects from the use of plants. Always seek advice from a professional before using a plant medicinally.

Astringent

Cancer

Cardiac

Pectoral

Stimulant



Vitamin C

The flowers are astringent, cardiac and stimulant. The seeds are used as a stimulant in the treatment of coughs. The expressed oil from the seeds is used in the treatment of pulmonary affections. The fruit of many members of this genus is a very rich source of vitamins and minerals, especially in vitamins A, C and E, flavanoids and other bio-active compounds. It is also a fairly good source of essential fatty acids, which is fairly unusual for a fruit. It is being investigated as a food that is capable of reducing the incidence of cancer and also as a means of halting or reversing the growth of cancers.