



# Vaccinium corymbosum (Northern) Highbush Blueberry

Tried and True  
Native Plant Selections  
for the Mid-Atlantic

Commercially valuable as a food crop, this species yields the best blueberries and autumn color when grown in full sun. Due to widespread hybridization, its distribution in Virginia has been difficult to map.\*



Shrub	Flowering Shrub, Flowers, Fruit	
Height: 6–12 feet		
Spread: 4–10 feet		
Bloom Color: White or pink-tinged		
Characteristics		
Upright, broad-spreading, <a href="#">deciduous</a> shrub		
<a href="#">Alternate</a> , ovate, <a href="#">glabrous</a> foliage, paler below, with smooth or finely toothed and often <a href="#">ciliate</a> margins; brilliant gold-orange-red to purple colors in autumn		
Bell-shaped flower clusters (corymbs) April-June		
Edible, many-seeded, <a href="#">glaucous</a> blue to black <a href="#">berries</a>		
Spreads by reseeding		
Attributes		
No serious pests or diseases; <a href="#">deer</a> and rabbits occasionally severely damage (esp. in winter)		
Reddish <a href="#">stems</a> attractive in winter		
Excellent ornamental value		
Attracts bees; many animals eat the berries, especially birds, so cover with netting to protect as crop ripens; <a href="#">larval</a> host to ~250 <a href="#">lepidopterans</a> , incl, Red-spotted Purple & Snowberry Clearwing		
Growing and Maintenance Tips		Excellent Replacement for
<a href="#">Soil Requirements</a> : Rich, well-drained, acidic		<a href="#">Berberis thunbergii</a> - Japanese Barberry
<a href="#">Light Requirements</a> : Sun, Partial Shade	<a href="#">Elaeagnus umbellata</a> - Autumn Olive	
<a href="#">Water Requirements</a> : Moist, Wet	<a href="#">Euonymus alatus</a> - Burning Bush	
Although self-fertile, for best crop yield plant more than one variety with synchronous bloom	<a href="#">Mahonia bealei</a> - Leatherleaf Mahonia	
In the planting year and the following year, remove flowers to promote growth; starting third year after planting, prune as needed in late winter	<a href="#">Rosa multiflora</a> - Multiflora Rose	
Use in shrub border, native plant garden, or as hedge	<p>*It is <a href="#">native</a> to DC, but rare in DE and MD. It is present throughout PA. In VA, it is apparently frequent in the southern half of the mountains, infrequent in the northern mountains, and rare in the north Piedmont and north Coastal Plain. In NoVA, it is found in Arlington and Fairfax counties.</p>	
<a href="#">Hardiness</a> : USDA Zones 3a–8b		
developed by Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia, serving Arlington and Alexandria		

Images by Elaine Mills, National Garden, U.S. Botanic Garden and by Mary Free (fruit), Rhode Island



Virginia Cooperative Extension is a partnership of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and local governments, and is an equal opportunity employer. For the full non-discrimination statement, please visit [ext.vt.edu/accessibility](http://ext.vt.edu/accessibility).

