

American Beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*)

Alex X. Niemiera, Associate Professor, Department of Horticulture

Summary:

Foliage: Deciduous broadleaf

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 6 feet

Shape: upright informal habit.

The primary and sole attribute of beautyberry, a large loosely branched shrub, is the showy display of magenta fruits in the fall.

Plant Needs:

Zone: 7 (perhaps 6b) to 9

Light: Partial shade to full sun

Moisture: Wet to moist

Soil Type: Sandy, loam, or clay

pH Range: 3.7 to 6.4

Functions:

Suggested uses for this plant include border, naturalizing, and massing.

Planting Notes:

Transplants readily.

Plant in well-drained soil.

Care:

Since flowers occur on new growth, prune to within 4 to 6 inches of the ground each spring.

Heavy, early spring pruning increases fruit production.

Problems:

No serious problems.

Alternatives:

Consult local sources, including historic or public gardens and arboreta, regarding cultivars and related species that grow well in your area.

Varieties of *Callicarpa americana*:

var. *lactea* has white berries.

Related species:

Purple beautyberry (*Callicarpa dichotoma*) is the most refined of the beautyberry species and is more cold hardy (zone 5) than American beautyberry.

Japanese beautyberry (*Callicarpa japonica*) has metallic purple fruit and yellow fall color.

Comments:

American beautyberry is a native plant grown for its colorful berries in autumn.

Well suited to planting in groups, and to create natural settings.

This material was developed by Carol Ness as part of the Interactive Design and Development Project funded by the Kellogg Foundation.