



**CORNELL
COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION OF
ONEIDA COUNTY**

HOME GROWN FACTS

121 Second Street Oriskany, NY 13424-9799
(315) 736-3394 or (315) 337-2531 FAX: (315) 736-2580

Red-Osier Dogwood

Identification

Red-Osier Dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), a deciduous multi-stemmed shrub, grows 3-to-12 feet tall. Its young twigs are reddish with white lenticels that gray with age. White-petal flowers form terminal clusters in mid-summer, with white-to-bluish fruits maturing in late summer to early fall (Viereck 1972). The 5-to-7-inch parallel-veined leaves are oval-to-elliptic-shaped and arranged opposite each other along the stem (Pojar 1994).



Habitat

Red-Osier Dogwood flourishes in clearings, river floodplains and the open forest understory of Southeast and Central Interior Alaska. It also grows throughout North America into Labrador, Newfoundland and south into northern Mexico (Viereck 1972).

Historic Use

Interior Natives ate the shrub's berries and mixed its dried bark with other ingredients for smoking. Coastal Natives prepared a tea from the bark and made salmon spreaders and basket rims from the stems. (Pojar 1994).

Cultivation and Uses

Red-Osier Dogwood is cold tolerant and can be established in wet areas along streams, pond margins, wetlands or woodlands. Landscape attributes include red fall foliage, red stems and white berry clusters (Kruckeberg 1996). The shrub also forms thickets by self-layering and produces root and stem-based sprouts. (Pojar 1994).



Propagation Methods

Tip and softwood cuttings taken from year-old wood yielded the most successful propagation. The best media in the absence of mist propagation is two parts peat moss to one part sand while maintained in a hotbed with a clear plastic film cover. Tip cuttings were harvested locally in June 2005 while stems were flexible. Cuttings were

re-cut to 6-inch lengths with the basal cut below a node and the basal end treated with Hormodin 2 IBA (0.3% indole-3-butyric acid) powder. Cuttings were then stuck in a media of two parts peat moss to one part sand, placed in a shaded hotbed and covered with clear plastic film. Once rooted, cuttings were potted in a media of six parts peat to one part each of perlite and vermiculite. Plants were over-wintered in raised beds or planted in raised beds of peat moss, volcanic ash and compost.

Softwood cuttings from 1-year-old stems were taken in June 2004. Lower leaves were removed and remaining leaves cut in half. Cuttings were soaked in a 10 percent bleach solution for five minutes and rinsed. Next, the basal stem was re-cut just below a node to a length of 8-to-12 inches. Cuttings were then treated with Hormodin 2 IBA (0.3% indole-3-butyric acid) powder, stuck in a media of one part sand to one part perlite and placed in a hotbed for eight weeks while shaded. Rooted cuttings were potted in 6-inch square containers with a media of two parts potting mix, one part sand and one part perlite/vermiculite and moved to raised beds for over-

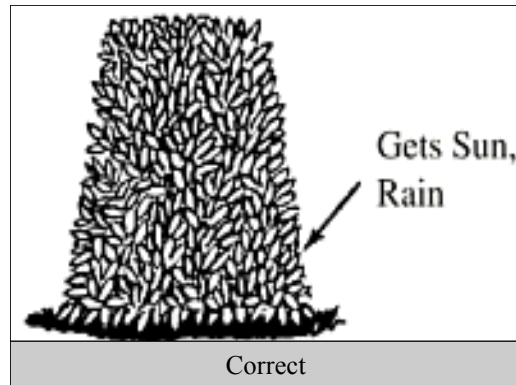
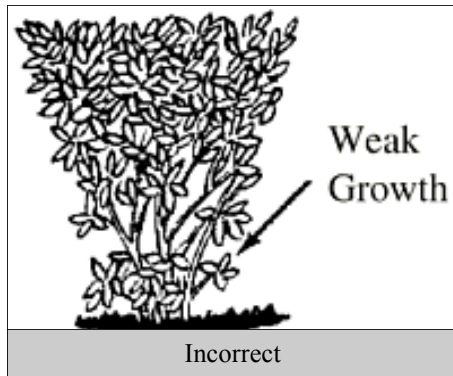
Helping You Put Knowledge to Work

wintering. Seed collected in late summer to fall can be sown immediately or cleaned and cold stratified for 60 to 90 days to prepare for spring sowing. Seed should be covered with 0.5-1.5 cm of soil and mulched with 1.5 -2.5 cm sawdust (Rose 1998). Seed growth is easy to track on proper sites.

Seed viability: cold storage 4-8 years (Crane 1989). Stems can be layered in mid-summer when they are still flexible

Common Shrub Questions:**What is the proper shape to prune shrubs and hedges?**

Hedges/shrubs are often shaped with flat tops and vertical sides. This unnatural shaping is seldom successful. The best shape, as far as the plant is concerned, is a natural form—rounded or slightly pointed top with sides slanting to a wide base.



When is the proper time of pruning for flowering trees and shrubs? Part of the answer depends on whether the time of flowering is in the early spring or later in the season. As a general rule of thumb, prune flowering trees and shrubs immediately after flowering.

Early spring bloomers formed their buds in early fall the season before on old wood. Pruning these plants before flowering in spring will result in cutting off the buds and decreased bloom.

Trees and shrubs that flower after the end of June develop their buds on the new wood of the season and should be pruned in late winter to early spring (late March-early April). During this time the trees are dormant and it is easier to see before new growth starts.

Don't mound mulch up against the trunks of trees and shrubs (1). Those volcano-shaped piles may look good to some, but they can kill your trees.

Instead, spread the mulch about 3 to 4 inches deep in a circle at least 3 feet in diameter around young trees and shrubs. Then brush away mulch at the center of the circle so that it is several inches from the base of the tree. A slight depression in the center is OK (2). Think lunar crater—not Mt. Vesuvius.

Even if you keep it away from the trunk, spreading mulch deeper than 4 inches can create shallow, vulnerable root systems. (2) As your trees grow, extend the mulch to their dripline (the edge of the canopy).

Trees benefit more from this kind of extensive mulching (3). You're not doing them any favors by piling it higher and deeper.



*This publication contains pesticide recommendations. Changes in pesticide regulations occur constantly, some materials mentioned may no longer be available, and some uses may no longer be legal. All pesticides distributed, sold, and/or applied in New York State must be registered with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Questions concerning the legality and/or registration status for pesticide use in New York State should be directed to the appropriate Cornell Cooperative Extension Specialist or your regional DEC office. **READ THE LABEL BEFORE APPLYING ANY PESTICIDE.***

DISCLAIMER: *Please note that neither Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oneida County nor any representative thereof makes any representation of any warranty, express or implied, of any particular result or application of the information provided by us or regarding any product. If a product is involved, it is the sole responsibility of the User to read and follow all product labeling instructions and to check with the manufacturer or supplier for the most recent information. Nothing contained in this information should be interpreted as an express or implied endorsement of any particular product or criticism of unnamed products. With respect to any information on pest management, the User is responsible for obtaining the most up-to-date pest management information. The information we provide is no substitute for pesticide labeling. The User is solely responsible for reading and following the manufacturer's labeling and instructions. (October 2009)*

Updated 2011 lsk13

Source: <http://www.uaf.edu/ces/publications/freepubs/HGA-00232J.pdf>