American Gooseberry

Ribes hirtellum



American Gooseberry in fall
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 4 feet

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 3a

Other Names: Hairy-Stemmed Gooseberry, Swamp Gooseberry

Description:

A native gooseberry that produces abundant yellow-green fruit that ripens to red with a purplish blush; berries have sweet flesh and tangy skin; resistant to mildew; needs regular pruning for best production

Edible Qualities

American Gooseberry is a small shrub that is commonly grown for its edible qualities. It produces red round berries with a deep purple blush which are usually ready for picking from early to mid summer. The berries have a tangy taste and a juicy texture.

The berries are most often used in the following ways:

- Fresh Eating
- Baking
- Preserves

Features & Attributes

American Gooseberry has forest green deciduous foliage on a plant with an upright spreading habit of growth. The lobed leaves turn outstanding shades of orange and in the fall. It features an abundance of magnificent red berries with deep purple blush in early summer.

This is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition. This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It is a good choice for attracting birds and butterflies to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Spiny

Aside from its primary use as an edible, American Gooseberry is sutiable for the following landscape applications;

- General Garden Use
- Orchard/Edible Landscaping

Planting & Growing

American Gooseberry will grow to be about 4 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. It has a low canopy. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 15 years. This is a self-pollinating variety, so it doesn't require a second plant nearby to set fruit.

This shrub is typically grown in a designated area of the yard because of its mature size and spread. It does best in full sun to partial shade. It is quite adaptable, prefering to grow in average to wet conditions, and will even tolerate some standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. This species is native to parts of North America.