

Common Shrubs and Vines of the Chicagoland Region

Created by Logan Novak for Plants of Concern

This guide is in no way a complete guide of the shrub and vine species in the Chicagoland region, but was created to help discern common species.

1. Is a vine
 2. Leaves are simple
 3. Leaves palmately lobed... *Vitis riparia*
 3. Leaves unlobed... *Lonicera reticulata*
 2. Leaves are compound
 3. Leaflets in groupings of 5 per leaf... *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*
 3. Leaflets in groupings of three per leaf
 4. Leaflet edges smooth... *Amphicarpea bracteata*
 4. Leaflet edges toothed, often only on one side of leaflet... *Toxicodendron radicans*
1. Is a shrub
 2. Leaves simple
 3. Leaf edges smooth
 4. Fruits are red spherical seedheads... *Cephalanthus occidentalis*
 4. Fruits are blue berries... *Cornus amomum*
 4. Fruits are white berries
 5. Bark is grayish-brown... *Cornus racemosa*
 5. Bark is dark red... *Cornus sericea*
 3. Leaf edges serrated
 4. Leaves opposite
 5. Leaves palmately lobed, similar to a maple leaf... *Viburnum acerifolium*
 5. Leaves oval-shaped
 6. Leaves finely serrated
 7. Leaf stalks with winged edges... *Viburnum lentago*
 7. Leaf stalks not winged... *Viburnum prunifolium*
 6. Leaves with well-distinguished teeth
 7. Leaves have less than 10 pairs of teeth... *Viburnum rafinesquianum*
 7. Leaves have more than 10 pairs of teeth... *Viburnum dentatum*
 4. Leaves alternate
 5. Branches covered in thorns
 6. Leaves lobed... *Ribes missouriense*
 6. Leaves unlobed... *Crataegus crus-galli*
 5. Branches lacking thorns

- 6. Leaves lobed
 - 7. Leaf surfaces speckled with gold dots... *Ribes americanum*
 - 7. Leaf surfaces dark green and shiny... *Physocarpus opulifolius*

- 6. Leaves unlobed
 - 7. Leaves ovate
 - 8. Bark covered in white speckles
 - 9. Leaves finely toothed... *Ilex verticillata*
 - 9. Leaves coarsely toothed... *Betula pumila*
 - 8. Bark without speckles
 - 9. Leaves broadly ovate... *Hamamelis virginiana*
 - 9. Leaves narrowly ovate
 - 10. Leaf undersides white... *Salix discolor*
 - 10. Leaf undersides blue-gray... *Salix myricoides*
 - 7. Leaves linear
 - 8. Leaves hairless on undersides... *Salix interior*
 - 8. Leaf undersides covered in dense white hairs... *Salix candida*

- 2. Leaves compound
 - 3. Branches with thorns
 - 4. Leaflets have yellow glands between teeth... *Zanthoxylum americanum*
 - 4. Leaflets without glands between teeth
 - 5. Leaf stalks hairless... *Rosa setigera*
 - 5. Leaf stalks hairy
 - 6. Bases of branches prickly, rest of branches smooth... *Rosa blanda*
 - 6. Branches thorny all over
 - 7. Leaves have 5-7 leaflets and are pinnately compound... *Rosa caroliniana*
 - 7. Leaves have 3 leaflets or are palmately compound... *Rubus allegheniensis*
 - 3. Branches without thorns
 - 4. Leaves opposite
 - 5. Leaves are long and thin with a linear shape... *Hypericum kalmianum*
 - 5. Leaves are ovate... *Sambucus canadensis*
 - 4. Leaves alternate
 - 5. Stems covered in white hairs... *Amorpha canescens*
 - 5. Stems hairless
 - 6. Tops of leaves hairy... *Rhus typhina*
 - 6. Tops of leaves hairless

- 7. Leaflets linear... *Dasiphora fruticosa*
- 7. Leaflets ovate
 - 8. Leaf edges smooth... *Toxicodendron vernix*
 - 8. Leaf edges serrated
 - 9. Leaves have 15-25 leaflets per leaf... *Rhus glabra*
 - 9. Leaves have 3 leaflets per leaf... *Toxicodendron radicans*

***Cornus racemosa* (Gray Dogwood)** shrub, leaves simple and opposite, grayish-green leaves in the spring/summer and purple/red leaves in the fall, leaf edges smooth, white flowers that grow in clusters, grows 10-15 ft tall, bark is gray-ish brown or reddish in young stems.



Photo by: Wilderness Barbie found on iNaturalist

***Rhus radicans/Toxicodendron radicans* (Poison Ivy)** can grow as either a vine up to 60 feet long or a shrub up to 3 feet tall, young stems are green-red but become woody and brown as they age, leaves are alternate and compound with 3 leaflets per leaf, leaflets are oval-shaped with a pointed tip and can be toothed or un-toothed with teeth often on only one side of the leaflet, yellow-green flowers grow in long clusters and bloom between late spring and mid-summer.



Photo by: Owen Strickland found on iNaturalist

***Vitis riparia* (Riverbank Grape)** vine growing up to 50 feet long, stems are woody and brown, leaves are cordate and palmately-lobed with shallow lobes, leaves are inconsistently serrated, tops of leaves are dark green/yellow and shiny while undersides are light green and can be covered in white hairs, flowers are greenish-yellow and fruits are green ripening to deep purple with both growing in drooping clusters.



Photo by: Jeff Skrentny found on iNaturalist

***Parthenocissus quinquefolia* (Virginia Creeper)** vine, clings to things as it grows such as trees, has compound palmate leaves with serrated edges, usually 5 leaflets per leaf that attach in the center, new leaves in spring are purple-ish, become green in summer, and turn purple-red in the fall, has clusters of inconspicuous small green-white flowers in late spring/early summer.

Photo by: Joseph MDO found on iNaturalist



***Rosa carolina* (Pasture Rose)** shrub growing to 0.5-3 feet tall, stems are covered in straight thorns, leaves are compound with 5-7 leaflets per leaf, leafstems are hairy, leaflets are serrated with well-distinguished teeth, pink flowers grow singly and fruits (hips) are large red shiny spheres.

Photo by: Roger Debenham found on iNaturalist



***Potentilla fruticosa*/*Dasiphora fruticosa* (Shrubby Cinquefoil)** shrub, alternate pinnately compound leaves, 3-7 leaflets per leaf, leaflets are oval-shaped and young leaves in spring are gray-green but become darker green in the summer, yellow flowers grow singly and bloom in June but do not fall until frost, stems are thin and the bark peels away from the stems.

Photo by: ajsibb found on iNaturalist



***Salix glaucophylloides/Salix myricoides* (Bayberry Willow)** shrub growing to 4m tall, leaves simple, alternate, and serrated, leaves oval-lance shaped, name changed from *S. glaucophylloides* to *S. myricoides*, branches thin and smooth, leaves dark green up on upper surface and dull-grey/green on lower surface, flowers come off of blackish specialized leaves covered in long soft hairs.

Photo by: Cassi Saari found on iNaturalist



***Cornus stolonifera/Cornus sericea* (Red-Osier Dogwood)** shrub growing to 3-9 feet tall, bark is dark red, smooth, and shiny with white speckles, leaves are opposite and simple, leaves are oval-shaped and have smooth edges, the upper surfaces of leaves are medium green and the undersides are light green that are either smooth or slightly hairy, white flowers grow in flat clusters and bloom between late spring and early summer, fruits are small round berries that become white when they ripen.

Photo by: Guillermo Debandi found on iNaturalist



***Salix interior* (Sandbar Willow)** shrub that grows as either a small tree up to 20 feet tall or a dense cluster of small branched woody stems up to 8 feet tall, young trees have gray smooth bark that flakes as it ages, leaves are very long and thin with a linear shape, leaves are simple and alternate with finely-serrated edges, upper surfaces of leaves are medium green and lower surfaces are light green, yellow flowers grow in spiked clusters that are partly-spiraled. Photo by: jokurtz found on iNaturalist



***Rubus allegheniensis* (Wild Blackberry)** shrub, leaves are alternate and palmately compound with 3-7 leaflets, leaves are dark green on top and lighter green on undersides, leaf edges are serrated, leaf stalks are prickly, thin woody branches that are reddish brown with straight or curved thorns, plants tend to grow very densely and produce berries in late summer. Photo by Michael_Morin_dit_Boucher found on iNaturalist.



***Viburnum lentago* (Nannyberry)** shrub, leaves are simple and opposite, leaves finely serrated and oval-shaped, leaf stalks with winged edges, top of leaves dark green and glossy with lighter undersides but changing to red/purple in the fall, small white flowers grow in clusters.



Photo by connieyoungstrom found on iNaturalist

***Ribes missouriense* (Missouri Gooseberry)** shrub growing to 2-4 feet tall, young branches are green but become grey/brown and woody with age, branches have both long straight thorns and small straight thorns, the large thorns grow at the bases of the leafstems, leaves are alternate and simple with leaves growing in groupings of 3, leaves have 3-5 large lobes and are toothed with rounded edges, the undersides of the leaves are hairy and the upper surfaces are hairless, produces red/purple round berries. Photo by: Sherri Snyder found on iNaturalist



***Betula pumila* (Bog Birch)** shrub, leaves simple and alternate, leaves are fleshy and oval-shaped, with serrated edges that have well-distinguished teeth, leaves are medium green and turn yellow in fall, older bark is dark gray and peels in strips while young bark is reddish-brown and has wart-like bumps, flowers grow as cylindrical spikes that are either red or yellow.

Photo by: Mark Kluge found on iNaturalist



***Amorpha canescens* (Leadplant)** shrub that grows to 2-4 feet tall and 4-5 feet wide, grows in tallgrass prairie, leaves are alternate and compound, each leaf has about 15-45 gray-green leaflets that are linear, flowers are long lavender-blue spikes blooming in June/July. Photo by: Cassi Saari found on iNaturalist



***Hamamelis virginiana* (Common Witch-Hazel)**

shrub that grows to 15-20 feet high and 15-20 feet wide, leaves are simple and alternate, leaves are oval-shaped with shape inconsistent across leaves, leaves have toothed edges and are green in summer and yellow in the fall, bark is grayish with tan-colored speckles, yellow flowers have stringy, thin petals and bloom in October.



Photo by: Lena Struwe found on iNaturalist

***Cornus obliqua/Cornus amomum* (Swamp Dogwood)** shrub growing to 12 feet tall, bark of young shoots is smooth with white speckles and becomes rough with age, leaves are opposite and simple, leaves are oval-shaped with a pointed tip and smooth edges, upper leaf surfaces are yellow-green and shiny while the undersides are whitish-green, white-green flowers grow in flat clusters and are replaced by clusters of round blue fruits



Photo by: kwb1954 found on iNaturalist

***Amphicarpaea bracteata* (Hog Peanut)**

vine that grows to 2-8 feet long, stems are thin and light green-reddish green and are covered in white hairs, leaves are alternate and compound and grow in groupings of three, leaflets are oval-shaped and have smooth edges, tops of leaflets are medium green and undersides of leaves are light green and hairy, pink-white flowers are



long and curved upwards growing in groupings, fruits are flattened pea-pods containing 1-4 large seeds. Photo by: Fred Losi found on iNaturalist.

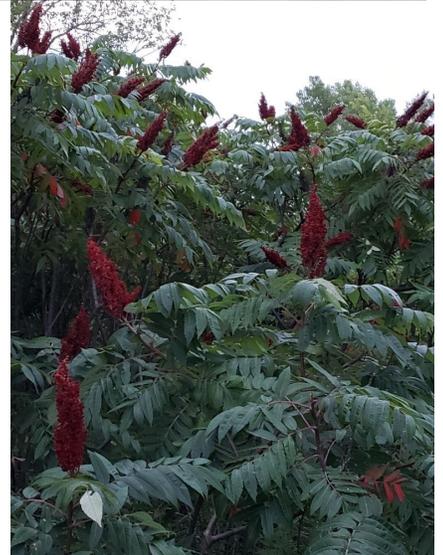
***Lonicera prolifera/Lonicera reticulata* (Grape Honeysuckle)** vine that grows up to 15 feet long, stem is woody and the bark peels into gray strips at the base revealing a red-brown inner layer, leaves are opposite and simple with oval-shaped leaves, leaf edges are smooth and rounded, tops of leaves are whitish green to whitish gray-blue, orange-pink flowers grow in whorls out of the leaves from a small flowering stalk and bloom between late-spring and early summer, fruits are orange-red round berries.

Photo by: nweickert found on iNaturalist



***Rhus glabra* (Smooth Sumac)** shrub growing to 10-15 feet tall and wide, leaves are alternate and pinnately compound with 15-25 leaflets per leaf, leaflets are oval-shaped with serrated edges and hairless, leaves shiny with dark green upper surface and lighter green on undersides changing to yellow/orange/purple in fall, flowers are large green-yellow spikes growing up to 10 inches tall, plants flower in June/July

Photo by: Brian Kilmer found on iNaturalist



***Rhus typhina* (Staghorn Sumac)** shrub growing to 8 to 25 feet tall, leaves are alternate and compound with 11-25 leaflets per leaf, leaflets are linear to oval-shaped with serrated edges, tops of leaves are dark green and hairy while undersides are hairless and white, leaves change to scarlet red in the fall, leaf stalks are also hairy, flowers are green-yellow spikes that appear in June and July and grow up to one foot long.

Photo by: Bill (wefwef) found on iNaturalist



***Viburnum acerifolium* (Maple-Leaved Viburnum)** shrub growing to 3-8 feet tall, leaves simple and opposite with 3-lobes per leaf, leaf shape similar to maple leaf and leaf edges serrated, leaves green in spring and summer and change to yellow/pink/red/purple in fall, bark is smooth gray with prominent pores, white flowers grow in flat clusters and bloom in May.



Photo by: tlit46 found on iNaturalist

***Rhus vernix/Toxicodendron vernix* (Poison Sumac)** shrub growing to 10-25 feet tall, the genus changed recently from Rhus to Toxicodendron, bark is gray and smooth aside from some scattered bumps, leaves are alternate and compound with 7-13 leaflets per leaf, upper surface of the leaf is shiny and dark green and undersides are light green and shiny, exudes an oil that can be irritating to the skin similar to poison ivy.



Photo by: aarongunnar found on iNaturalist

***Viburnum prunifolium* (Black-Haw Viburnum)** shrub, simple opposite leaves that are oval-shaped with a pointed tip, leaves have finely serrated edges, top of leaves medium green and undersides light green but leaves turning purple/red in the fall, leaf stalks are not winged like they are in Viburnum lentago, small white flowers that grow in clusters.



Photo by: Erin Faulkner found on iNaturalist

***Hypericum kalmianum* (Kalm's St. John's Wort)** shrub growing to 1 to 3 feet tall, bark is woody and reddish-yellowish brown and peels in strips, leaves are opposite and compound with smooth edges, leaves are oval-shaped with pointed tips and are slightly rolled down from the upper-side over the underside, yellow flowers are solitary and have many long stamens.



Photo by: Paul Tavares found on iNaturalist

***Ilex verticillata* (Winterberry)** shrub growing to 5-20 feet tall, bark is gray-brown and gains white speckles with age, leaves are simple, alternate and oval-shaped with rounded points and finely-serrated edges, tops of leaves are medium green and leaf undersides are light green and slightly hairy, white-green flowers grow in clusters and bloom between late spring and early summer, fruits are red spherical berries that grow in clusters.



Photo by: Mark Rosenstein found on iNaturalist

***Ribes americanum* (American Black Currant)** shrub growing to 3 to 5 feet tall and wide, leaves are alternate and simple with 3-5 palmate lobes, leaves are singly or doubly toothed, tops of leaves are medium green with speckles and undersides have hairy veins and speckles, flowers are yellow-green and grow in clusters in early to mid-spring, fruits are round purple berries that hang in clusters.



Photo by: Joanne Redwood found on iNaturalist

***Rosa setigera* (Climbing Wild Rose)** shrub, alternate pinnately compound leaves each having 3 leaflets or rarely 5 leaflets, top of leaves darker green and bottom of leaves pale green, leaf edges singly or doubly serrated, bark is greenish red with white speckles and curved thorns, flowers mostly pink bloom in mid-June to July. Photo by: Cassi Saari found on iNaturalist



***Rosa blanda* (Smooth Wild Rose)** shrub, leaves alternate and compound with 5-9 oval-shaped leaflets, leaves have serrated edges sometimes only on the upper-half, grows 4-5 ft tall, flowers pink and fragrant, bark is reddish brown or purple-ish and has bristly thorns near the bases of each branch but new stems are green and lack thorns.



Photo by: jlmason found on iNaturalist

***Sambucus canadensis* (American Elder)** shrub that grows to 5-12 feet tall, leaves are opposite and compound with 5-11 leaflets per leaf, leaves are serrated and dark green changing to yellow-green in fall, white flowers grow in flat clusters and are lemon-scented.

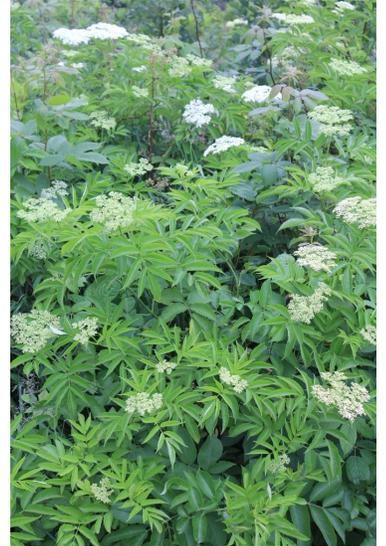


Photo by: Nolan Shigley found on iNaturalist

***Zanthoxylum americanum* (Prickly Ash)** shrub growing to 8-25 feet tall and wide, leaves are alternate and compound with dark green finely-toothed leaflets, between each tooth on leaflets is a small yellow gland, leaf stalks are covered in small prickles, leaves smell like citrus when crushed, older bark is brown and smooth with 1/3 inch long prickles and young branches are light green and can be hairy, flowers are yellow-green and grow in clusters.



Photo by: Don Sutherland found on iNaturalist.

***Salix discolor* (Pussy Willow)** shrub, leaves simple, alternate, and oval-shaped, leaves serrated with rounded teeth to nearly smooth edges, dark blue-green color on tops of leaves and white-ish and hairless on undersides, bark is gray-brown. Photo by: Mike Leveille found on iNaturalist



***Viburnum rafinesquianum* (Downy Arrowwood)** shrub growing to about 5-6 feet wide and tall, simple opposite leaves that are oval-shaped, leaves are serrated and the teeth are well distinguished, flowers are white and grow in flat clusters.

Photo by: Don Sutherland found on iNaturalist



***Cephalanthus occidentalis* (Buttonbush)** shrub growing to 3-8 feet tall, leaves simple and opposite or whorled in groups of 3, leaves are oval-shaped with smooth edges and dark green with a shiny upper surface, flowers are white and fruits are red with both growing in spherical clusters, older branches are woody and brown with new shoots green.

Photo by: Ken-ichi Ueda found on iNaturalist



***Salix candida* (Sage Willow)** shrub growing to 1m tall, leaves are simple, alternate, and dark green, leaves are long and thin with a linear shape, both branches and bottoms of leaves covered in white hairs, inconsistently serrated leaf edges, flower ovaries and capsules covered in white hairs.

Photo by: Joanne Redwood found on iNaturalist



***Viburnum dentatum* (Southern Arrowwood)** shrub growing to 6-10 feet high and about 6-12 feet wide, leaves simple and opposite, leaves have prominent veins and serrated edges with well-distinguished teeth, leaves glossy and dark green in summer and turn wine red in the fall, white flowers grow in flat clusters.

Photo by: ana_kaahanui found on iNaturalist



***Physocarpus opulifolius* (Common Ninebark)** shrub growing to 6-10 feet tall and wide, leaves simple and alternate with 3-5 lobes per leaf, tops of leaves dark green and undersides lighter green changing to yellow in fall, leaf edges serrated, white flowers are very small and grow in clusters, flowers have hairy petals and bloom in late-May to early-June.

Photo by: David McCorquodale found on iNaturalist



***Crataegus crus-galli* (Cockspur Hawthorn)** shrub growing to 15-40 feet tall, leaves are simple and alternate, leaves are oval-shaped with a rounded tip and finely serrate, leaves dark green and glossy changing to purple-ish in the fall, bark is coarse and can become peely with age, branches are covered in thorns that are 2-3 inches long, white flowers grow in flat clusters.

Photo by: Chris Poling found on iNaturalist



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