



## *Viburnum sieboldii* 'Seneca' 'Seneca' Siebold Viburnum<sup>1</sup>

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson<sup>2</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

Most often grown as a large multi-trunked shrub or small tree, Siebold Viburnum only reaches about 20 feet high (occasionally to 30 feet) and 10 feet wide, creating an upright silhouette with short, firm branches (Fig. 1). The two to six-inch-long by 1.5 to 3-inch-wide, dark green leaves give off a pungent odor when crushed, and have been known to give an occasional autumn display of red or purple color although typically there is no fall color. In late May, the plant is covered with three to six-inch-diameter clusters of off-white, tiny blossoms. These blooms are followed by small, half-inch, pinkish-red fruits which ripen to dark blue or black from August to October, and are held above the foliage, making them an easy target for the birds who find them a delectable treat. There are extremely showy for a period of about two weeks. The cultivar 'Seneca' has very firm fruits which are not eaten by birds and provide for a much longer fruit effect than the species. It is preferred over the species because of the extended fruiting effect.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Scientific name:** *Viburnum sieboldii* 'Seneca'  
**Pronunciation:** vye-BER-num see-BOLE-dee-eye  
**Common name(s):** 'Seneca' Siebold Viburnum  
**Family:** *Caprifoliaceae*  
**USDA hardiness zones:** 4 through 7 (Fig. 2)  
**Origin:** not native to North America  
**Uses:** hedge; wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; near a deck

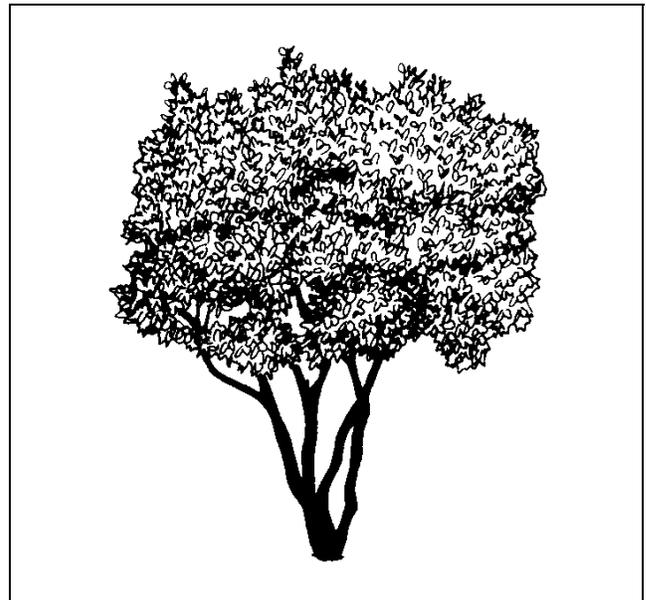


Figure 1. Mature 'Seneca' Siebold Viburnum.

or patio; narrow tree lawns (3-4 feet wide); specimen; sidewalk cutout (tree pit); residential street tree; no proven urban tolerance

**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

### DESCRIPTION

**Height:** 20 to 30 feet  
**Spread:** 10 to 12 feet  
**Crown uniformity:** irregular outline or silhouette  
**Crown shape:** upright  
**Crown density:** moderate  
**Growth rate:** medium

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2. Edward F. Gilman, associate professor, Environmental Horticulture Department; Dennis G. Watson, associate professor, Agricultural Engineering Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611.



Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Texture:** coarse

### Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite (Fig. 3)

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** crenate; serrate

**Leaf shape:** elliptic (oval); obovate

**Leaf venation:** bowed; banchidodrome; pinnate

**Leaf type and persistence:** broadleaf evergreen; evergreen; fragrant

**Leaf blade length:** 4 to 8 inches; 2 to 4 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

### Flower

**Flower color:** white

**Flower characteristics:** showy; spring flowering

### Fruit

**Fruit shape:** oval

**Fruit length:** < .5 inch

**Fruit covering:** fleshy

**Fruit color:** black; red

**Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; no significant litter problem; persistent on the tree; showy

### Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** routinely grown with, or trainable to be grown with, multiple trunks; grow mostly upright and will not droop; showy trunk; no thorns

**Pruning requirement:** requires pruning to develop strong structure

**Breakage:** resistant

**Current year twig color:** gray

**Current year twig thickness:** thick

### Culture

**Light requirement:** tree grows in part shade/part sun; tree grows in full sun

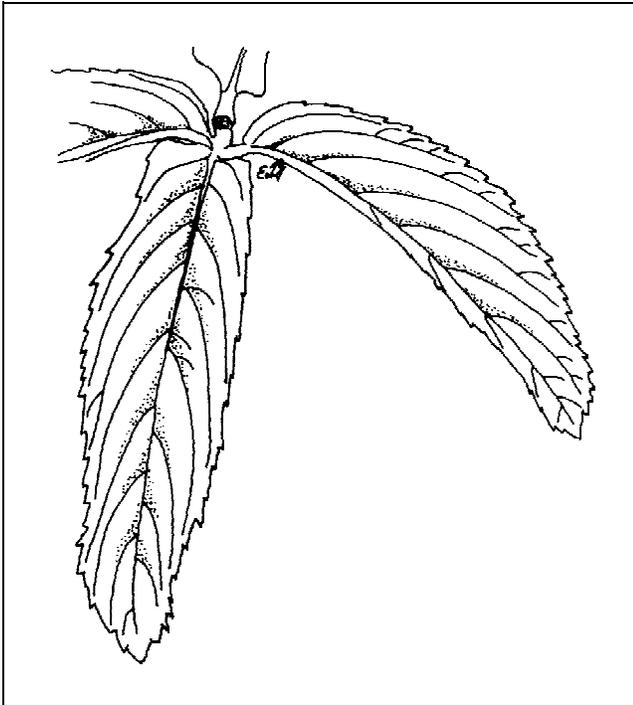


Figure 3. Foliage of 'Seneca' Siebold Viburnum.

**Soil tolerances:** clay; loam; sand; slightly alkaline; acidic; well-drained

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Aerosol salt tolerance:** moderate

**Soil salt tolerance:** poor

### Other

**Roots:** surface roots are usually not a problem

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding tree:** tree has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

**Invasive potential:** little, if any, potential at this time

**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** susceptible

**Pest resistance:** no pests are normally seen on the tree

## USE AND MANAGEMENT

Best used as a specimen or patio tree where there is plenty of soil space for root expansion. Provides nice scale to a small landscape but is also suited for planting in mass or on 15 to 25-foot centers along a boulevard or entrance road to a commercial landscape. The multi-trunks twist as they grow providing a nice formal Oriental effect.

Siebold Viburnum should be grown in full sun or partial shade on moist, well-drained soils, acid or alkaline. Leaves will show evidence of scorch if soil

dries out, but this appears to be a drought avoidance mechanism causing little permanent damage.

Propagation is by cuttings which root easily.

### Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.