

AMERICAN BEAUTYBERRY aka CALLICARPA AMERICANA



IDENTIFICATION: A small, deciduous shrubs 1 to 2 m in height, leaves opposite, elliptical to ovate, large, with saw-toothed edges. Flowers cluster around stem, funnel-shaped with four clefs. Fruit magenta 2 to 4 seeds, White fruited ones are an escaped cultivar and edibility is unknown. The leaves incidentally, make an excellent fish poison for stunning them.

TIME OF YEAR: Spring and fall in Florida, late summer to fall in northern climes

ENVIRONMENT: Dry, open woods, moist woods, thickets and hammocks, adapted to climates with hot, humid summers and moderate winters

METHOD OF PREPARATION: A few berries can be eaten raw, depending upon your agreeing with the flavor, otherwise makes a great jelly. The berries can be used to make a tea with antioxidants. Native American Indians used the roots and leaves to make a tea to treat fever, dysentery, malaria and rheumatism. The leaves of this one, incidentally, make an excellent fish poison for stunning them. **Beautyberry Jelly**

1 ½ qts. of Beautyberries, washed and clean of green stems and leaves. Cover with 2 qts. water. Boil 20 minutes and strain to make infusion. Use 3 cups of the infusion, bring to boil, add 1 envelope Sure-Jell and 4 ½ cups sugar. Bring to second boil and boil 2 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand until foam forms. Skim off foam, pour into sterilized jars, cap.