



## Northern Bayberry

*Myrica pensylvanica*

NS General Status Rank: Secure

SHRUBS : WOODY PLANTS



© MEGAN CROWLEY



Leaf upper and undersides © MEGAN CROWLEY



Fruits

© ALAIN BELLIVEAU



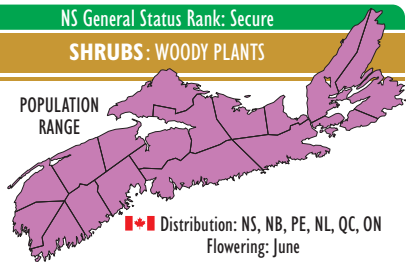
Larger shrub

© MARTIN THOMAS



Twig and buds © ALAIN BELLIVEAU

POPULATION  
RANGE



☛ Distribution: NS, NB, PE, NL, QC, ON  
Flowering: June

**SIZE:** 0.5-2.5 m tall.

**LEAVES:** Obovate to elliptical with smooth leaf edges or a few teeth near the tip, 4-8 cm long and 1.5-3 cm wide. The upper surface is glossy and smooth (generally with white hairs), and the underside is dull.

**STEM:** Mostly smooth bark. There may be small, white hairs on younger stems.

**FLOWERS:** Male flowers (catkins) are cylindrical and 6-15 mm long. Female flowers (catkins) are slender and 5-10 mm long. The flowers emerge on older stems with the leaves in the spring.

**FRUITS:** Small, round, waxy nutlets on the stem, 3.5-5 mm wide, in small clusters.

**NOTES:** This plant is very fragrant when you crush any part of it. It has only male or only female flowers on an individual plant (dioecious). Also known as *Morella pensylvanica*.



© NS MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

Fruit



Sweet Gale

© SEAN BLANEY

### Habitat:

Lakeshores, wetlands (bogs), along the coast (including salt marsh edges) and in upland forests and old fields.

**Interesting point:** Tea can be made from the roots of this plant, candles from the waxy fruits, and the leaves can be used as a substitute for bay leaves.

**Similar species:** Sweet Gale (*Myrica gale*) has dull leaves and flowers (catkins) that appear before the leaves in the spring. The fruit is not waxy. Leatherleaf (*Chamaedaphne calyculata*) has smaller leathery leaves (1.5-5 cm long) that are green with pale undersides, and small, round teeth along the edges. Its flowers are small, white, and bell-shaped.