

New Jersey Tea (*Ceanothus americanus*)

2-4' x 3-5', broad rounded compact shrub.

Dense with many slender upright spreading branches, can slowly spread by suckering.

CT native, found in sandy or rocky soils, dry open woods, thickets, at woodland edges, pine barrens, roadsides.

Elongated 2" panicles of tiny honey-scented frothy white June-July flowers, at ends of stems, when few shrubs in bloom.

2-4" glossy toothed dark leaves, yellow in fall.

Yellow twigs stand out in winter.

Sun to part sun. Dry to medium, average to sandy and/or rocky, well-drained acidic soils. Tolerates poor or shallow soils, and drought. Easily grown, very adaptable, due to massive deep roots. Not easy to transplant. Upper new growth tends to be herbaceous, but plant tolerates even hard pruning in the dormant season.

Use in shrub or perennial borders, as tall ground cover. Mass on banks, cuts, eroded areas, and in difficult dry sunny areas. Good cut flower. Dried leaves used as tea substitute during the American Revolutionary War, hence its common name.

A premier plant for many pollinator insects, like bees, beneficial wasps. Larval host for Spring/Summer Azure and Mottled Duskywing butterflies. Nectar plant for over 40 butterflies, including Hairstreaks (see lower right.)

Seeds attract song and game birds and hummingbirds.

Photos 1, 2, 3

Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder
mobot.org/gardeninghelp/plantfinder

Photo 4

Jeffrey S. Pippen
duke.edu/~jspippen/nature.htm

Photos 5, 6

Will Cook, Duke University
duke.edu/~cwcook/trees/ceam.html

Photo 7 Darel Hess

cas.vanderbilt.edu/bioimages/species/ceam.htm

