

Crataegus coccinea

[Synonyms : *Crataegus aboriginum*, *Crataegus brunetiana*, *Crataegus brunetiana* var. *fernaldii*, *Crataegus caliciglabrata*, *Crataegus chrysocarpa*, *Crataegus chrysocarpa* var. *aboriginum*, *Crataegus chrysocarpa* var. *longiacuminata*, *Crataegus chrysocarpa* var. *phoenicea*, *Crataegus chrysocarpa* var. *rotundifolia*, *Crataegus coccinata*, *Crataegus coccinea* var. *viridis*, *Crataegus columbiana* var. *chrysocarpa*, *Crataegus doddsi*, *Crataegus faxonii*, *Crataegus faxonii* var. *durifrucata*, *Crataegus faxonii* var. *praecoqua*, *Crataegus faxonii* var. *praetermissa*, *Crataegus illuminata*, *Crataegus intricata*, *Crataegus jackii*, *Crataegus laurentiana* var. *brunetiana*, *Crataegus laurentiana* var. *dissimilifolia*, *Crataegus mercerensis*, *Crataegus modesta*, *Crataegus pedicellata*, *Crataegus praecoqua*, *Crataegus praecox*, *Crataegus premora*, *Crataegus putnamiana*, *Crataegus rotundifolia*, *Crataegus sicca*, *Crataegus sicca* var. *glabrifolia*, *Crataegus subrotundifolia*]

SCARLET FRUITED THORN is a deciduous shrub or tree. Native to north-eastern North America it has cherry-like red fruit.

It is also known as Fireberry hawthorn, Hawthorn, *Nystyorapihlaja* (Finnish), Red haw, Scarlet haw, Scarlet hawthorn, Scarlet thorn, and Thorn bush.

The scent from the flowers varies according to the stage of their maturity. At the time of first opening the fragrance is pleasant but this becomes progressively fetid to attract insects for pollination.

Coccinea means 'scarlet' with reference to the fruit.

For some of the Dakota and Chippewa North American Indian tribes the fruit meant food – and they were also eaten occasionally by the Potawatomi Indians as well. [The Blackfoot Indians did eat the fruit – but they believed that the berries caused stomach cramps. In order to avoid these a special ritual was performed before they harvested the berries. Tiny moccasins were fashioned out of the leaves and a small bow and arrow was made from the thorns. These were placed on the tree's branches (the former from a girl and the latter from a boy) as presents.] These berries were recognized primarily as a famine food by the Winnebago, Omaha and Ponca tribes. Omaha Indians made a tea from the leafy twigs.

One or two Indian tribes considered scarlet fruited thorn to be a source of medicine. Some of the Chippewa used the root to ease diarrhoea, while the Blackfoot took a fruit decoction as a laxative and the Potawatomi prescribed the fruit for some stomach disorders.

The fruit are eaten by bears and deer. Scarlet fruited thorn is also said to attract various birds such as finches, jays and grosbeaks.

The wood has been used to make tool handles and small implements.