

Sorbus americana

[Synonyms : *Aucuparia americana*, *Pyrus americana*, *Pyrus aucuparia*, *Pyrus microcarpa*, *Sorbus aucuparia* var. *americana*, *Sorbus micrantha*]

AMERICAN MOUNTAIN ASH is a deciduous shrub or tree. Native to eastern North America (from New Foundland to North Carolina and Michigan), it has tiny white flowers with many stamens.

It is also known as American rowan tree, American service tree, *Amerikanische Eberesche* (German), Dogberry, Life of man, Missey-moosey, Mountain ash, Mountain sumac, Quick-beam, Red ash, Round tree, Roundwood, Small-fruited mountain ash, Wine tree, and Witch wood.

The flowers are attractive to bees.

Americana means ‘of or from America (North or South)’.

Some of the North American Algonkin and Chippewa Indian tribes ate the pea-sized, glossy bright red berries.

Authorities note that the Montagnais Indians seem to have been especially aware that bears enjoy these berries.

The soft and lightweight wood was used by some of the Chippewa tribe for making canoe ribs, snowshoe frames and lacrosse sticks.

Several North American tribes made use of the plant’s medicinal properties including the Micmac, Potawatomi and some of the Chippewa Indians. Both the Penobscot and Micmac Indians used it to cause vomiting, and the Montagnais prescribed it not only as a blood purifier but also to enhance appetite. It was a pleurisy remedy for the Tlingit tribe, and the Micmac and Iroquois valued it as a remedy for indigestion. Both the Malecite and Micmac Indians used it for childbirth, and they applied it to skin disorders too. Some of the Algonkin tribe took it as a tonic and to ease colds, while others in the tribe turned to it for the treatment of nervous disorders. Some of the Chippewa used it for treating venereal disease.

Medicinally, the bark used to be recommended for the treatment of malarial fevers. Today it can be used in homoeopathic treatments.