

# VIRGINIA WILLOW

Itea virginica

***AKA Virginia Sweetspire; Tassle White; Sweetspire - Pure-white flowers shoot like fireworks in early summer.***



**Description:** Sweetspire is an open, airy shrub with slender, arching branches. The white flowers are individually small, but borne from the tips of branches in elongate clusters that are very showy in June. The clusters of slightly fragrant may last for several weeks in the spring and early

summer. The fruits are dry capsules and usually remain on the shrub throughout the autumn and winter.

**Natural Habitat:** in swamps and along the edges of streams and lakes.

**Conservation Status:** Indiana - endangered; Pennsylvania - extirpated

**Size:** 3- 6' tall

**Growth Rate:** Slow

**Light:** Sun to part shade

**Planting and Care:** Avoid heavy fertilizing. Sweetspire will thrive in partial shade, but it produces its best flowers if bathed in full sunlight for at least a couple hours each day. All pruning should be after bloom as flowers are produced on old wood.

**Ornamental Value:** Fall color is spectacular and long-lasting; a mix of yellow, orange, crimson, maroon and Mahogany to orange red fall foliage that persists throughout most of winter.

**Landscape Usage:** Displays best in large groupings. Excellent choice when used in erosion control.

**Wildlife Benefits:** flowers attract butterflies; seeds eaten by birds very favored by deer and cattle.