

Red osier Dogwood



Tree Type

This an ornamental shrub is deciduous and loses its foliage for the winter.

Planting

This shrub may be used as a screen, shrub border or in mass plantings. Plant 3 to 4 ft apart to make a hedge. Refer to back for best planting practices for your bareroot.

Watering

Even when established, the shrub will not tolerate excessively dry soil. Refer to watering guidelines on back for specific watering directions.

Pruning

To retain stems with good red color, remove a few of the oldest stems to the ground every spring just as leaf buds start to swell. Remove root suckers if colonial spread is undesired.

Preferences

This shrub prefers full sun to partial shade meaning it needs at least 4 hours of direct, unfiltered sunlight each day. It prefers moist, well-drained, organically rich, wet soils but tolerates alkaline, clay and dry soils. It is salt sensitive so planting along roads may affect its health.

Attributes

Red osier Dogwood grows to a height of 7 to 9 ft at with a spread of 8 to 12 ft at maturity and it a multi-stemmed, round, thicket-forming shrub. It grows at a fast rate with height increases more than 24 inches per year. Besides the attractive red stems in the winter, Red osier Dogwood has yellowish-white flowers that appear in late May to June, and bluish-white fruit borne in late summer. The leaves turn reddish-purple in the fall.

Wildlife Value

The Red osier Dogwood provides dense cover for wildlife. The white berries are eaten by at least 18 species of birds including ruffed grouse, bobwhite quail, wild turkey and gray catbird. The twigs and foliage are browsed by elk, deer, moose, rabbits and chipmunks. It is one of several hosts for the cecropia silk moth and the spring and summer azure butterflies.

When newly planted trees go without enough water, growth slows to a crawl. This delays establishment and may even lead to the death of leaves, branches, roots or the whole tree.

For the most part, trees can only take up water from soil that is in direct contact with roots. Even in the best conditions, newly transplanted trees use water from a relatively small volume of soil. To make matters worse, roots of bare root, balled & burlaped, and spaded trees are cut during transplanting.

Within two to three days after spring or summer planting, the soil around the roots of trees dries enough to impede root growth. Newly transplanted trees in the Midwest benefit from daily watering for the first one to two weeks. Apply 1 to 1½ gallons of water for each inch of trunk diameter. After that, water trees every two to three days for the next two to three months and then weekly until established. The more closely you match your watering frequency to the optimum, the quicker trees become established.

Reduce watering in cool, cloudy, or wet weather if the soil is poorly drained (soil drains less than 3/4 inches per hour). Eliminate daily irrigation in poorly drained soil.

After it rains, stop watering until the rainwater drains from the soil. Stop watering in the autumn once leaves fall from trees.

Mulch reduces evaporation and conserves water. An investment in frequent watering helps insure against tree death and the cost of replanting trees.

BEFORE PLANTING

Select the correct tree for your site.
Find help at mndnr.gov/treecare.

Before digging, contact Gopher State One Call at 800-252-1155 or gopherstateonecall.org to check for underground lines.

AFTER PLANTING

Mulching

Applying mulch, such as wood chips, around a tree has many benefits, including:

- Improving growing conditions
- Retaining moisture
- Controlling weeds and grasses
- Adding nutrients
- Insulating soil
- Protecting trunk and roots

Mulch that is applied too deeply and against the tree is harmful. This "mulch volcano" can rot the tree's trunk, lead to insect and disease problems, and deprive roots of oxygen. Use the "3-3-3 Rule" for applying mulch: 3 feet in diameter, 3 inches deep, and 3 inches away from the trunk.

Watering

Watering a tree is critical to its survival during the first three years. During any week in which less than 1 inch of rain falls, provide 15-25 gallons of water, until the ground freezes. After the first few years, continue to water trees during dry times. Tree water bags may make watering easier.

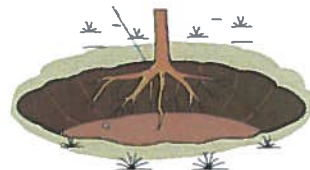
Protecting

A plastic or metal mesh tree guard can be installed around the tree's trunk to protect it from animal, mower, and trimmer injury. The tree guard must be removed or replaced as the tree grows.

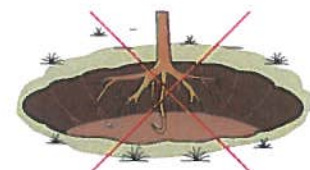


- 1 Keep roots moist at all times. Dry roots die.
- 2 Dig a hole twice as wide as and slightly deeper than root length.
- 3 Place roots in hole so top of first woody root is within 1 inch of soil surface.

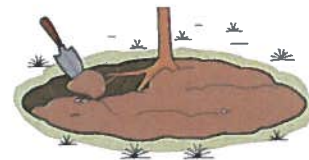
FIRST WOODY ROOT



- 4 Distribute roots evenly, making sure roots are straight and not doubled over or "J" rooted.



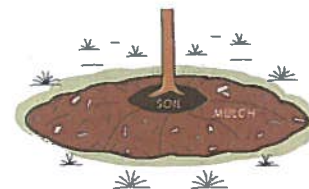
- 5 Keeping tree straight, backfill hole up to top of first woody root.



- 6 Heel in soil with foot over entire backfill area to remove air pockets from the soil.

- 7 Water entire backfill area.

- 8 Layer 3 inches of mulch over backfilled area, keeping mulch away from trunk.



DON'T CREATE A MULCH VOLCANO. IT CAN ROT YOUR TREE.