



# Bloom Guide: November



**Winterberry Holly** *Ilex verticillata*. The bright red fruit of this native shrub almost glow against the stark late fall landscape. Like all other hollies, winterberry holly only produces fruit on the female plants, but unlike the well-known evergreen American Holly, winterberry is deciduous. The fruit are primarily eaten by winter resident birds. Find winterberry in the Visitor Center garden, in the parking lot and along President's Drive.

Photo credit Alonso Abugattas



**Hickory** *Carya species*. We have several different kinds of hickory trees at Bowman's Hill and their nuts are easily found along many of the trails. The mockernut hickory, *Carya tomentosa* is the largest, while the bitternut *Carya cordiformis*, is the most common. Comparing the bark of hickory trees will help identify the shagbark hickory, *Carya ovata* since the bark looks like it is peeling off the trunk. All hickory nuts are prized by wildlife and are eaten immediately or cached for later.



Photo credit Mary Anne Borge

**Blackhaw Viburnum** *Viburnum prunifolia*. The dark fruits of this deciduous shrub become obvious once the leaves fall making them easy targets for hungry migrating and resident birds. Though not as common as other viburnum species, black haw fruits ripen later in the season offering nutrition weeks after the others have been consumed.



**Oaks** *Quercus species*. The ubiquitous oaks are a treasure in all seasons, but as a winter food source, they really shine. Generally speaking, oaks can be divided into roughly two categories: red and white. Typically, red oak leaves have pointy lobes and round acorns, while white oak leaves have rounded lobes and their acorns are more oblong. Oaks can hybridize making identification difficult but enjoying the antics of a chipmunk stuff it's cheeks with acorns is a simple pleasure.



Photo credit Prairie Moon Nursery

**American Cranberrybush Viburnum** *Viburnum trilobum* syn. *V. opulus* var. *americanum*. The bright red berries of this native shrub ripen late in the fall and are consumed by resident birds and mammals of the Preserve. Though they look and taste similar to the cranberry of the sauce variety of which they are named, American cranberry bush is not a cranberry at all, but a drupe which is a fleshy fruit surrounding a flat seed.



**Sweetgum** *Liquidambar styraciflua*. Native to the coastal plain, the prickly seed pods of this tree are familiar to many. Each spherical ball contains 80-120 holes that open like a birds' beak releasing tiny seeds. Many species of birds eat the seeds either by holding onto the balls while they are still on the tree or by feeding on them from the ground.

Photo credit mycherokeegarden.com



Photo by Mary Anne Borge

**Black Walnut** *Juglans nigra*. These large spherical nuts start out green, but quickly turn black as they rot after they fall from the tree. The nuts are edible, but bitter, and the black walnut shell is extremely hard, so they are best left to the squirrels. Indigenous peoples have used the nuts for food and boiled the sap for syrup. You can find several black walnut trees along the edge of the meadow and near the new pond.



Photo by Mary Anne Borge

**American Beech** *Fagus grandifolia* Finding a beech nut in November may prove difficult since they are coveted by so many of the critters that call the Preserve home. Chipmunks, squirrels, opossum, raccoon, turkey and many other birds seek out the sweet meat of the beech as soon as they drop. The unusual twin triangular nuts are enclosed in a spikey husk that splits when the nuts are ripe. Beech trees are common along the low-laying trails and can be easily identified in winter by their gray smooth bark and persistent brown leaves.