

Sweet Pepper Bush Botanical Name: *Clethra alnifolia*



Photo by John Brandauer, growing wild in the back

Description:

In the garden they thrive in part shade or even full sun if given adequate moisture. Will work great in wet, shaded or sunny locations. and attract many bees.

Common Name: Sweet Pepperbush, Summersweet **Family:** White Alder (Clethraceae)

Type: Deciduous Shrub

Growth Rate: Fast

Soil Preference: Will tolerate wet soils, flooding and some salt. Prefers a pH of acidic to slightly alkaline. Easily grown in average, medium wet to wet, well-drained soil in full sun to part shade. Adaptive to a wide range of soil, moisture and light conditions. Prefers part shade and consistently moist to wet, acidic soils. Zones 4a-10a

Light Requirements: Full sun, partial sun, partial shade, reduced blooms in lower light.

Care: Optionally, fertilize with Holly-tone or a water-soluble fertilizer as recommended.

Blooms: White fragrant, spiky flowers bloom in July to September, with a spicy scent. The fragrant flowers last up to 6 weeks or more. The flowers have are 1/4 inch across, in clusters 2-3 inches high.

Size: 3-10 feet high, 3-6 foot spread

Native habitat: native to North America. It occurs from southern Maine and New Hampshire, south to eastern Texas and Florida, in wet, sandy soil, and in swamps and woods

Wildlife: The fragrant white flowers and nectar of coastal sweet pepperbush attract hummingbirds and butterflies. Deer eat it only when other forage vegetation is limited. Birds eat the fruit and aid in seed dispersal. Attracts butterflies, serves as a butterfly nectar source

Propagation Methods:

From softwood cuttings, from seed. Spreads slowly by rhizomes

Information compiled from the web, supplemented by our experiences.

John Brandauer ibrandauer@ootonline.net