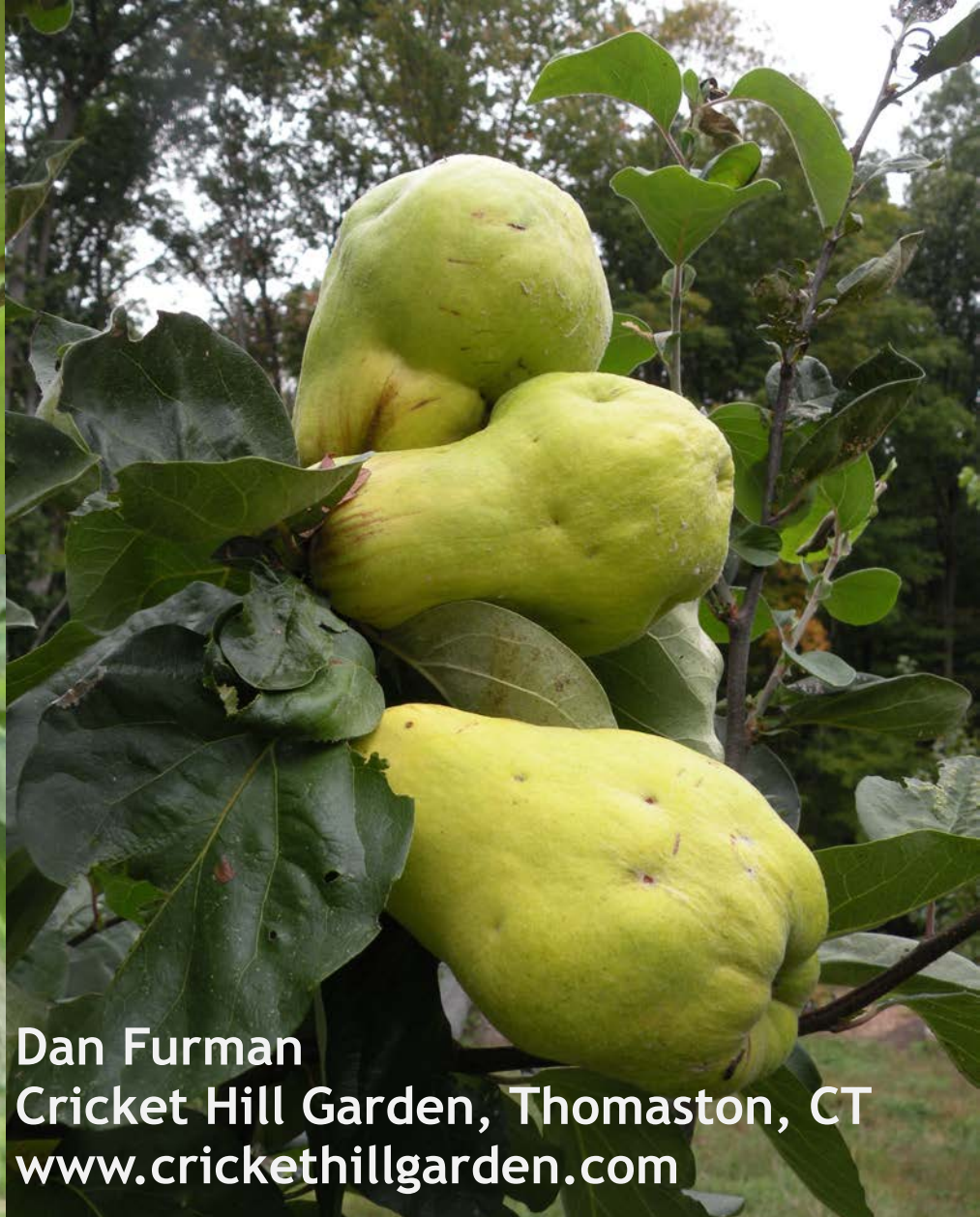


Landscape Edibles for Connecticut



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Cricket Hill Garden, Thomaston, CT
www.crickethillgarden.com



Cricket Hill Garden

Growers of rare peonies & unusual landscape edibles

Nursery and display garden founded in 1989, specializing in peonies. 5 acres of gardens planted primarily with peonies. From the beginning we have grown all of our plants organically and follow CT NOFA standards

Since 2010 we have focused on growing more edible landscaping plants, both in our own garden and as nursery stock

In 2013 we planted a ½ acre display orchard with additional acreage under development for tree crop planting



Chinese tree peony



Asian pear espalier

USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map

Connecticut and Rhode Island



Right plant, right place

Site should help determine what you grow

Areas can be altered and amended, but there is a lot to be said for taking the path of least resistance

Be open to planting unusual varieties or genera

Avoid plantings which are unsuitable to the site/zone

Example:

- Peaches in poorly drained areas
- Frost pockets
- 'Granny Smith' apples, our season is too short to re



Stressed or weakly growing plants also require more pest and disease control, organic or otherwise

Plants for various site types

Ideal: Fertile, well drained soil, slightly acid to neutral pH 5.5-6.5, full sun (6+ hours)

Almost all fruiting trees or shrubs will thrive under these conditions

- Pome fruits: apple, pear, quince, medlar
- Stone fruits: apricot, peach, plum, cherry
- Unusual tree fruits: pawpaw, persimmon, mulberry, jujube
- Cane fruits: black berries, raspberries (red & black)
- Bush fruits: blueberries (acidic soil) , currants and gooseberries

Areas with constantly moist soil:

- High-bush blueberries
- Elderberries
- Pawpaw

Shadier areas: 4-5 hours of sun, or dappled sun all day

- Pawpaw
- Black raspberries
- Elderberries
- High-bush cranberry
- Nanking cherry
- Cornealian cherry
- Black currant

Choosing what to plant: seedlings vs. named varieties (cultivars)



Seedlings are generally not planted, because fruit bearing plants are heterozygous, that is have dissimilar pairs of genes for any hereditary characteristic



Most fruit tree cultivars are propagated by grafting, most berry bushes are by cuttings

Strategies for altering the site to suit a particular crop



Terracing- helps retain water in steep areas



Mulch- retains soil moisture



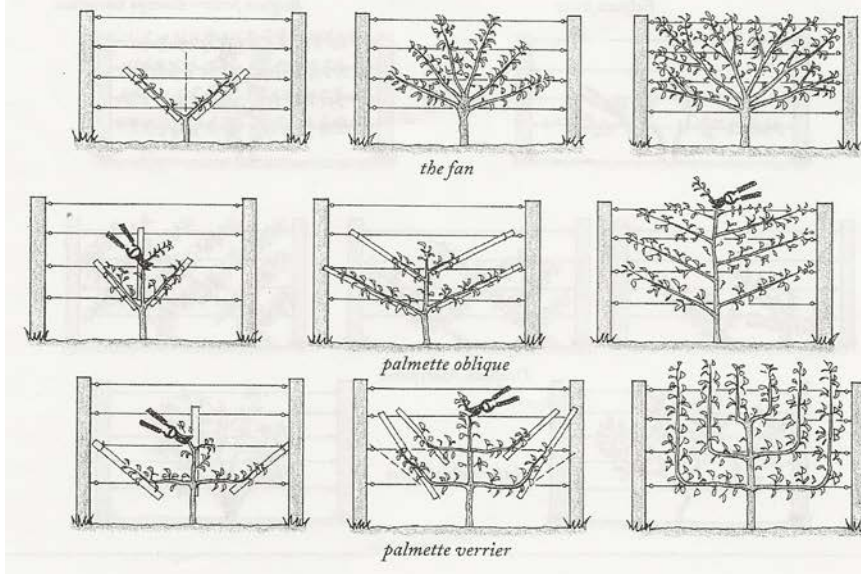
Creating a mound or berm in poorly drained areas



Soil Amendments- Alter pH, add fertility

Choosing a pruning style

Common Fruit Tree Training Systems



Consider an espaliers for smaller spaces



Ancient espalier apples, Mt. Vernon

Almost any type of fruit tree can be trained as an espalier!

Pests and diseases

A lot of prevention can be accomplished through good culture & sanitation



Cytospora canker
On stone fruit



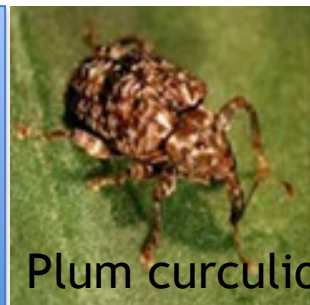
Apple scab



Fire blight

“You can only get fruit if you spray”

Field Guide for Identification of Pest Insects, Diseases, and Beneficial Organisms in Minnesota Apple Orchards
<http://www.mda.state.mn.us/plants/pestmanagement/ipm/apple-guide.aspx>



Plum curculio



No hassle fruits for the home orchard in New England



Pawpaw *Asimina triloba*

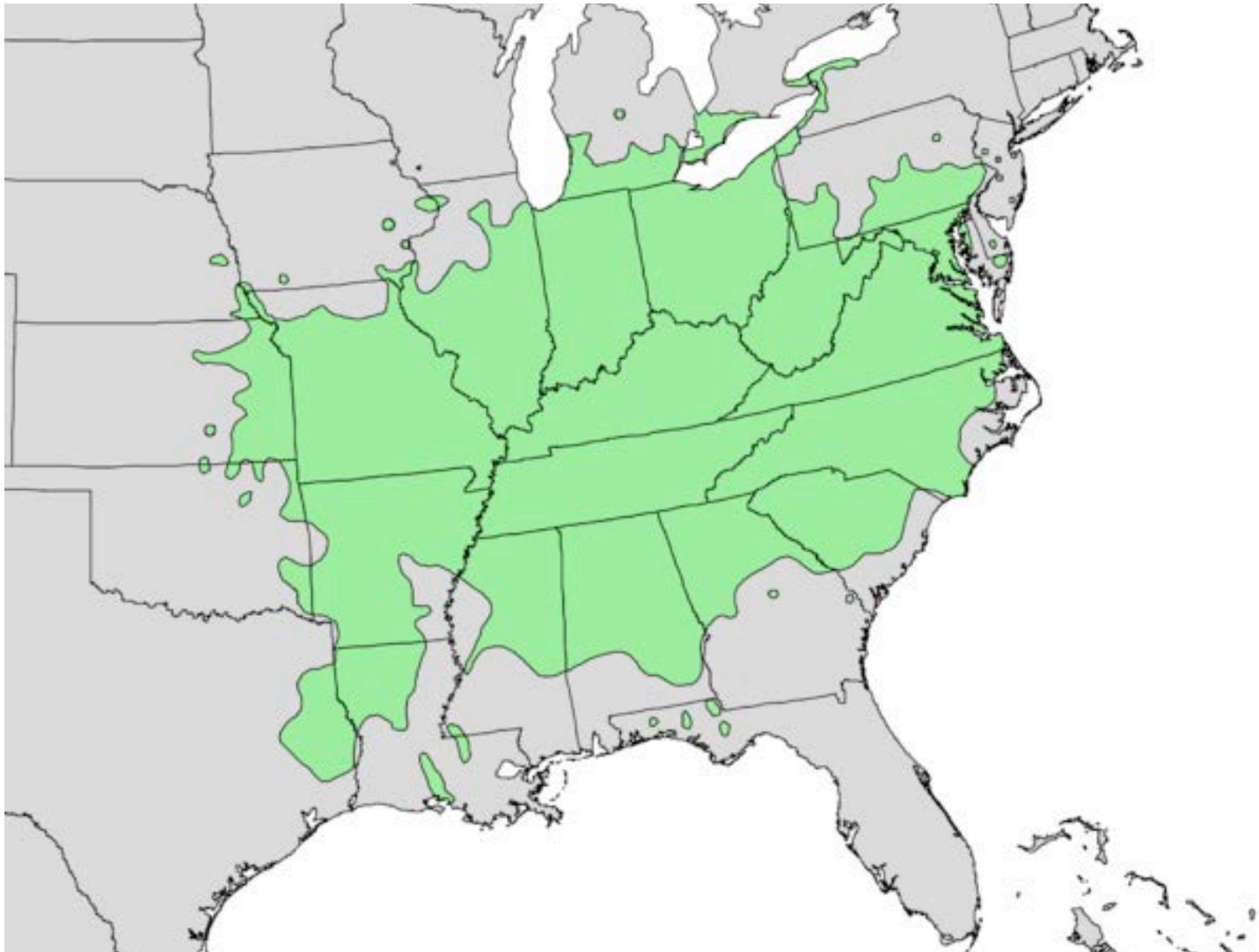
- Largest fruit native to North America
- Negligible pest and disease issues, deer resistant once established
- Will fruit in part sun, though yields are decreased
- Exotic foliage adds to landscape interest
- Trees will grow to 30' if un-pruned, but can be maintained at 8-10'

Growing requirements:

- Prefers rich, moist soil
- pH between 5.0-7.0
- Two genetically distinct plants are needed for cross pollination
- Pollination done by flies and beetles, hand pollination may be necessary in small plantings
- Hardy to zone 5a/5b, protect with mulch for first few winters



Distribution of pawpaws (*Asimina triloba*) in North America



Hardy to USDA zone 5, -20 degrees F

Require a minimum of 30" of rainfall in spring and summer



A

A. The flesh colored and “fetid” smelling pawpaw flowers attract insect pollinators.



B

B. Fruit forms in clusters, with individual fruit weighting between 3 oz and 2 lbs

C. Fruit ripens in late September through October. Flavor is complex and combines notes of mango, banana, melon and pineapple



C

Pawpaws in the landscape... while you wait for fruit



- Glossy, tear-drop shaped foliage
- Pure gold autumn foliage

New England's Champion Pawpaw



1952

2015

- 36' tall, 32' spread- measured by Notable Trees of Connecticut
- Likely planted in the late 1920s when the property began to be restored under the leadership of Katherine Day
- Also notable because the tree appears to be self-fertile

American persimmon

Diospyros virginiana

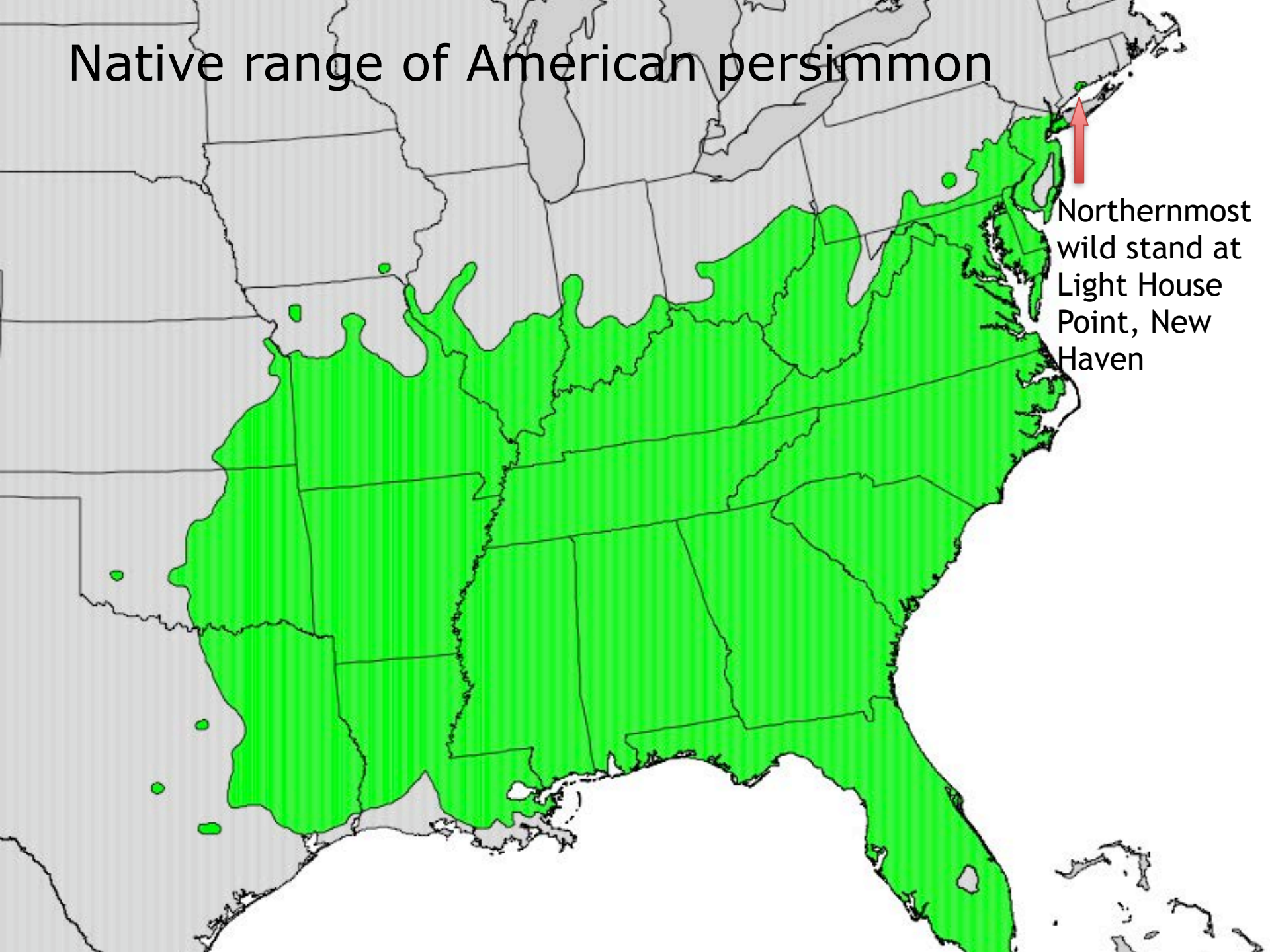
- Pest and disease free
- Unripe fruit are very astringent
- Trees are dioecious- individual trees are either male or female, some female clones are parthenocarpic, produce seedless fruit without pollination

Growing requirements:

- Highly adaptable, prefer well drained soil
- Can be maintained at 15-20'
- Hardy to zone 5, GGD requirement of 2300



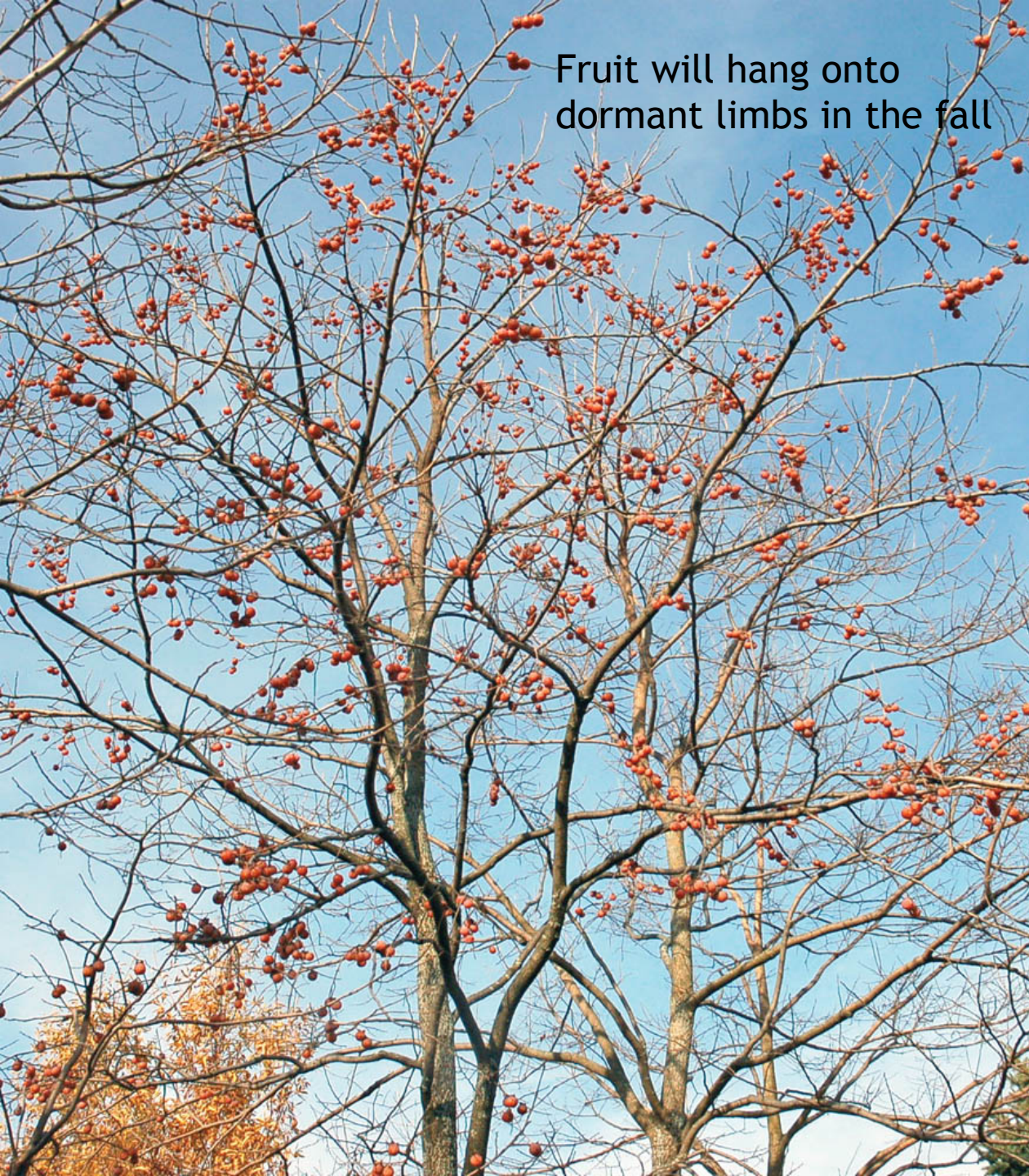
Native range of American persimmon



Northernmost
wild stand at
Light House
Point, New
Haven

The many textures of a persimmon tree





Fruit will hang onto dormant limbs in the fall



Ripe vs. unripe fruit



Recommended cultivars:

- Gordon
- Prok
- Szukis
- Rossayanka

Elderberries

Sambucus canadensis and *S. nigra*



- Fast growing shrub reaches 10'
- Prefers moist, rich soil
- Pest and disease free
- Flowers provide nectar for bees and hummingbirds
- Berries are late summer treat for birds



“Nature’s Medicine Chest”

- Berries are important in traditional herbal medicine
- Fruit used for pie, wine and preserves

Recommended cultivars:

- **Adams**
- **Johns**
- **Nova**
- **York**

Elderberries

Sambucus canadensis

Named cultivar

Wild seedling



Larger and more numerous berries



Smaller berries



S. nigra
'Black Lace'

Nanking Cherry

Prunus tomentosa

- Bush form tart cherry
- Reaches 6' tall and 5' wide
- Vulnerable to late frost
- Plant two or more for cross pollination



No cultivars in
commerce, plant
seedlings



Cornelian cherry

Cornus mas

- Edible dogwood, widely cultivated in eastern Europe and Turkey
- Cherry like fruit ripe in the late summer, grows to 10' x 10'
- Self-fertile

Recommended cultivars: Red Star, Elegant





Standard form *C. mas* in Durham, CT





Quince *Cydonia oblonga*

- Close relative of apple and pear, yet more resistant to pome fruit pests and diseases
- Blooms late, after the danger of frost, diminutive tree 12-15' tall, 4-6' spread





Medlar

Mespilus germanic





LVDVICVS COMPARELLVS REAVAR
MOLEHANCESTRONITACIOVM IIII
FRIDERICVS SVBOMARELEK
SERVICAVS REAVARVX
ADZONAVS REAVARVX
REFECHFORNICVS SVSTINVT
COENACVLIATITVS INXNIIIPEDADDIT
COLVNNAM TOTIVS TEGVLI SVSTINENTEM
EMEDIOSVS SVSTINVT
INMOTOINREFFVCTO
HAECNONMINTAPDVAIT
ASSMDCXII



Mulberry

Morus alba

- Unpruned trees will grow to 30' tall, so training at a young age is important
 - Many cultivars are self-fruitful
- Recommended cultivars:
Gerald dwarf, Carmen, Italian



Juneberries *Amelanchier ssp.*

- Will thrive in a wide range of soils
- Self-fertile
- Flavor reminiscent of dark cherries or raisins
- Very healthy, key ingredient in pemmican





Shiitake mushrooms

Lentinula edodes

Delicious and nutritious crop which is grown in the shade

New England is very well suited for shiitake cultivation- climate and abundant substrate

Inoculate your own logs, or purchase pre-inoculated logs



The challenge of changing growing conditions



**Spotted Wing
Drosophila**



Mutated White Pine Blister Rust

Fruit you have to work for.... or have a high tolerance for blemishes



Perfect Asian pear



Asian pear damaged by brown
marmorated stink bug (BMSB)



Fig
Ficus carica

- Not susceptible to pests or diseases, but buds are damaged at 20° F and below
- To ensure fruit ripening, buds need to be protected for the winter
- Light color fruited varieties are better suited to our climate than darker colored varieties

Stone Fruits *Prunus ssp.*

Peach, Plum, Apricot, Cherry



Prunus ssp.

- Many pests and diseases, though most are negligible for a backyard tree
- Late frosts are a yearly concern
- Fruit needs to be thinned
- **“Peaches are best for CT” NOT IN 2016!**

Recommended cultivars: Red Haven,
Blushingstar,



Asian pears

Pyrus pyrifolia

- Less susceptible to pests and diseases than apples and European pears
- Trees can be maintained at 10-15'
- Most cultivars require another variety for cross pollination
- Beautiful ornamental, spring flowers and fall foliage

Recommended cultivars: Su Li, Hosui
(Both are self-pollinating)

Recommended resources for growing specific crops

Growing Raspberries and Blackberries

Bulletin #2066 Prepared by David T. Handley, vegetable and small fruit specialist, University of Maine Cooperative Extension
<http://extension.umaine.edu/publications/2066e/>

Kentucky State University Pawpaw growing information

<http://www.pawpaw.kysu.edu/GrowingInformation1.htm>

Persimmons Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service

by Richard A. Hayden

<http://www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/HO-108.pdf>

American Persimmon, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service

<http://www.uky.edu/Ag/CCD/introsheets/persimmon.pdf>

Penn State Extension Elderberries

<http://extension.psu.edu/plants/gardening/fphg/elderberries>

Growing and Marketing Elderberries in Missouri

<http://extension.missouri.edu/explorepdf/agguides/agroforestry/af1017.pdf>

Gooseberries and Currants Penn State Extension

<http://extension.psu.edu/plants/gardening/fphg/gooseberries-currants>

Stone Fruits: Peaches, Nectarines, Plums, Apricots, and Cherries Penn State Extension

<http://extension.psu.edu/plants/gardening/fphg/stone>

Shitakke Mushrooms, Cornell Guide to Growing Shitakke Mushrooms in the Northeast

<http://blogs.cornell.edu/mushrooms/factsheets/>

Excellent books:

The Holistic Orchard

by Michael Phillips

Uncommon Fruits for Every Garden

by Lee Reich

Websites:

NAFEX Facebook page

Growingfruit.org



Come visit Cricket Hill this Spring!

Nursery open from April 15th

31st Annual Peony Festival May 5th to June 18th see
www.crickethillgarden.com for details

