

Viburnums are broadleaved, evergreen shrubs or small trees that thrive throughout most of Florida. They are cold-hardy and withstand temperatures of 20 degrees F and ever lower, depending upon length of exposure. Viburnums have limited salt tolerance.

Viburnum varieties

There are over a hundred known species of Viburnum, but of those only three are recommended for use in Brevard County. The most common is **Sandankwa Viburnum (V. suspensum)** which grows to about eight feet. Oppositely arranged leaves are bright to darkish green in color, somewhat leathery in texture. and In late winter or spring, small white flowers appear sporadically in panicles throughout the entire plant. Viburnum suspensum makes an excellent, trimmable hedge from three to six feet tall. Plants will grow well in full sun to partial shade and require good soil drainage for successful growing.

Sweet Viburnum (V. odoratissimum) is a larger growing shrub capable of attaining as much as 25 feet in height. Leaves are light to bright green in color and are slightly larger than leaves of Viburnum suspensum. Sweet Viburnum flowers in late winter or spring, with fragrant, small, white blossoms, like those of the Viburnum suspensum. Viburnum odoratissimum can be used in the landscape as a large hedge or screening plant; with proper pruning it can be trained as a small tree.

Mirror-Leaf Viburnum (V. wabuki) has large, glossy, dark green leaves and grows to 15 feet in height. This variety is not as cold hardy as other viburnums and may be used as a large specimen or screening plant.

Planting

Best growth can be expected when plants are set in well-drained, improved soil, in full sun or partial shade. Plants should be placed in the ground at soil level, and mulch should be applied around the root

area (keep 6 inches away from trunk) to help keep the soil moist. Water three times a week for three weeks, then water only as necessary to prevent wilt.

Fertilizing

Viburnum should be fertilized at least two or three times during the growing season. Use **Espoma Plant-Tone**, **Sunniland 6-6-6** or **Osmocote** in March, June and September. Apply the fertilizer according to package instructions. Distribute lightly over the root zone, which generally extends over and beyond the spread of the plant, especially when sheared as a hedge.

Plant Problems

Twig die-back: Branch tips die back and turn black; leaves wilt and turn brown.

Solution: remove and dispose of infected twigs, then spray with **Systemic Fungicide**.

Aphids, whitefly & mites: Sucking-type pests that remove juices from the leaves or new growth. This weakens plants, causing leaf-drop or distorted growth. A black, sooty mold will also accumulate on lower leaves during times of infestation.

Solution: spray with **insecticidal soap, pyrethrins, spinosad** or **imidacloprid** and apply at the prescribed application rate.

