

March of every other year. This will cause re-growth of long young stems which are graceful and vibrant in color during the winter. Well established plants will grow 4 to 6 foot stems the summer after pruning.



Propagation

'Ruby' is propagated by vegetative methods. Hardwood cuttings, approximately 9 inches long, are made in mid-February. They are held in plant coolers until they are planted into nursery beds in mid-May. Rooting hormones significantly improve rooting ability. The plant is ready for shipping the following spring as 1-0 stock.

Availability

Nursery owners may obtain propagated material from the Big Flats Plant Materials Center, Corning, New York, to start their cutting block for commercial production. For the names of commercial nurseries that sell 'Ruby' or for more information on its use, contact your local NRCS office or the Soil and Water Conservation District.

For More Information

Visit our Plant Materials Internet site at <http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov> to find more information on solving conservation problems using plants.

USDA NRCS
Big Flats Plant Materials Center
RD #1, Box 360A, Rt. 352
Corning, NY 14830
phone: (607) 562-8404
fax: (607) 562-8516

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March 1999



'Ruby' redosier dogwood



An improved
conservation
plant developed by
the Big Flats Plant
Materials Center,
Corning, NY



Ruby' redosier dogwood

'Ruby' redosier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*) is a low-growing shrub with bright red bark.

'Ruby' is especially useful for streambank protection because of the tendency of the side branches to root or "layer". This layering ability provides excellent soil erosion control and streambank stabilization, especially in soil bioengineering systems.

In addition, 'Ruby' can be used for borders and as a single plant for beautification and landscaping. Twigs are a desirable deer browse. The fruit of this shrub is eaten by many species of songbirds and a number of upland game birds.

The cultivar, 'Ruby' redosier dogwood, was released in 1988 by the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in cooperation with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Description

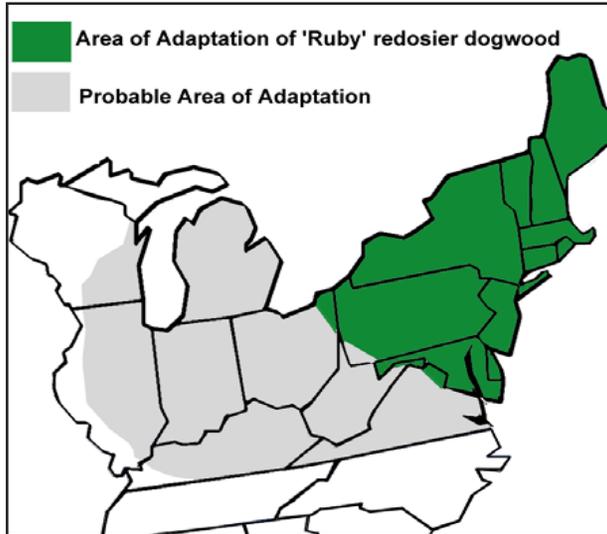
'Ruby' is a shrub that can grow 6 to 10 feet in height with outside stems ascending. Where stems contact the ground, roots develop at the nodes. 'Ruby' has bright red stems that turn greenish in spring/summer and back to red in fall/winter, white pith, dark green leaves, and fruit that is white to cream in color. 'Ruby' flowers are creamy white in color. 'Ruby' is a thicket-forming shrub because of its stems that grow along or under the ground and take root at the nodes to form new plants.



Adaptation

'Ruby' redosier dogwood was collected from a single native plant in Painted Post, New York, in 1975. 'Ruby' can be adapted wherever redosier dogwood grows naturally in the United States and Canada. It grows in medium fertility and in slightly acid, clayey, loamy, or sandy soils. It is moderately tolerant of shade but poorly tolerant of drought.

Area of Adaptation for 'Ruby'



Establishment

Before planting 'Ruby' streambanks with steep slopes must be graded to 2 to 1 slope or flatter. It should be planted in the early spring using 1 year old rooted cuttings. Do not plant after June 1.

Both rooted and unrooted cuttings should be planted in a vertical position and the soil tamped firmly around the roots or cuttings to eliminate air pockets. At the edge of water, a single or double row of 'Ruby' is recommended at spacings of 2 feet. 'Streamco' willow or 'Bankers' dwarf willow should be planted on the remainder of the bank.

Full length stems of 'Ruby' dogwood can be combined with willow in live fascines, brush layers, or brush mattresses. See Chapter 16 of the NRCS Engineering Field Handbook for bioengineering guidance.

'Ruby' is susceptible to browsing by livestock and cannot be established unless protected by a fence.

Grass and legume seed mixtures should be seeded immediately after planting 'Ruby', to provide initial streambank protection. 'Ruby' becomes effective 2 to 3 years after planting.

For help in planning streambank plantings, contact your local NRCS office or Soil and Water Conservation District.



Management

Protecting the waterline as damage takes place is necessary to prevent accelerated erosion. Streambanks should be examined each spring, and sparse plant cover should be filled in with the new plants at once.

Any mechanical measures used to control the bank, such as riprap, must be kept in repair to maintain effective vegetative cover. When used on stream-banks, 'Ruby' requires little care unless damaged by winter or ice flow.

In landscaping plantings, it is helpful to prune 'Ruby' to within 6 inches of the soil surface in