Russian-olive
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(\textit{Elaeagnus angustifolia})

\textbf{General Description}

Small tree, sometimes referred to as a large shrub, introduced from Russia. Tolerates saline/alkaline soils. May invade unmanaged bottomlands and moist pastures. Thorny. Silvery leaf color. Leaves retained very late into fall. The largest tree in North Dakota is 43 feet tall with a canopy spread of 63 feet.

\textbf{Leaves and Buds}

Bud Arrangement - Alternate.

Bud Color - Gray-brown, rounded, oblong, with 4 silvery scales.

Bud Size - 1/8 inch.

Leaf Type and Shape - Simple, oblong-lanceolate to linear.

Leaf Margins - Entire.

Leaf Surface - Scaly.

Leaf Length - 1 to 3 inches.

Leaf Width - 1/4 to 5/8 inch.

Leaf Color - Upper surface scaly, grayish-green; undersurface silvery-scaled.

\textbf{Flowers and Fruits}

Flower Type - Flowers are perfect.

Flower Color - Silvery or whitish outside, yellow inside, fragrant.

Fruit Type - Fruits are drupe-like, 1/4 inch long and pulpy.

Fruit Color - Yellow inside, coated with silvery scales.

\textbf{Form}

Growth Habit - Branches random and spreading, starting at base of the trunk, forming a somewhat rounded tree.

Texture - Medium-fine, summer; medium-coarse, winter.

Crown Height - 15 to 25 feet.

Crown Width - 12 to 25 feet.

Bark Color - Young branches silvery, older branches a glistening bronzy-brown, pith is brown.

Root System - Fibrous root system.

\textbf{Environmental Requirements}

\textbf{Soils}

Soil Texture - Adapted to a wide variety of soils.

Soil pH - 5.5 to 8.0. Tolerates alkaline and saline soils.

Windbreak Suitability Group - 1, 1K, 2, 2K, 3, 4, 4C, 5, 6D, 6G, 8, 9C, 9W, 9L.

\textbf{Cold Hardiness}

USDA Zone 2.

\textbf{Water}

Drought resistant. Does not withstand ponding.

\textbf{Light}

Full sun.

\textbf{Uses}

\textbf{Conservation/Windbreaks}

Small tree for farmstead and field windbreaks. Seed is spread prolifically by birds and may overrun unmanaged areas, especially saline sites.

\textbf{Wildlife}

Excellent for wildlife, over 50 species use it for food and cover.

\textbf{Agroforestry Products}

Wood - Beautiful wood for small woodwork pieces.

\textbf{Urban/Recreational}

Can be used as specimen plant for its color accent, or as an impenetrable border or screen.

\textbf{Cultivated Varieties}

Red King Russian-olive (\textit{Elaeagnus angustifolia} ‘Red King’) - Rusty-red fruits. Not sufficiently winter hardy in North Dakota.

\textbf{Related Species}

Sea-buckthorn (\textit{Hippophae rhamnoides})

Silverberry (\textit{Elaeagnus commutata})

Silver Buffaloberry (\textit{Shepherdia argentea})

\textbf{Pests}

Often infected by branch and stem cankers (\textit{Tubercularia canker}).