ARNOLD ARBORETUM
HARVARD UNIVERSITY BULLETIN
OF
POPULAR INFORMATION

JAMAICA PLAIN, MASS.

MAY 23, 1922

American Crabapples. Following the last of the eastern Asiatic Crabapples, *Malus Sargentii* and *M. Sieboldii*, which were covered with flowers the end of last week, some of the American species are in bloom. Nine species of these trees are now recognized, with several varieties and two hybrids. They have white or pink fragrant flowers which do not open until the leaves are partly or nearly entirely grown, and green or pale yellow fragrant fruit which hangs on slender stems and, with the exception of that of the species from the northwestern part of the country is depressed globose, usually broader than high, and usually from an inch to two and a half inches in diameter and covered with a waxy secretion. All the species spread into thickets and are excellent plants for the decoration of wood-borders and glades. Some of the species have only been distinguished in recent years, and although the species and many of the varieties are now growing in the Arboretum several of these have not yet flowered, and most of these Crabapples cannot be found in commercial nurseries.

***Malus glaucescens*,** which is named from the pale glaucous color of the under surface of the leaves, is the first of the American species to flower here and has been blooming for more than a week. It is a shrub usually rather than a tree, not more than fifteen feet high, with stems four or five inches in diameter. The flowers are white or rose color, up to an inch and a half in diameter, and the pale yellow fruit is often an inch and a half in diameter. This plant was first distinguished several years ago in the neighborhood of Rochester, New York; it is now known to be common in several western New York counties

and to range to western Pennsylvania, southern Ontario, and Ohio, and to occur on the southern Appalachian Mountains to northern Alabama. The discovery and introduction of this interesting plant into gardens is due to the officers of the Park Department of the city of Rochester.

Malus ioensis begins to open its flowers several days later than *M. glaucescens*. This is the common Crabapple of the northern middle western states, and in a number of varieties has a wide range southward through Missouri to western Louisiana and Texas. It is a tree sometimes thirty feet high with a trunk often eighteen inches in diameter, a wide open head of spreading branches and usually incised leaves tomentose on the lower surface, flowers often two inches in diameter with white or rose-colored petals, and fruit hanging on stout hairy stems, and up to an inch and a half in diameter. A form of this tree with double flowers (var. *plena*), the Bechtel Crab, named for the man who found it several years ago growing in the woods in one of the western states, has opened its pale rose-colored flowers which look like small Roses. When in flower this is one of the popular trees of the Arboretum, judging by the number of persons who want to get close to it. This double-flowered Crab can now be found in many of the large American nurseries, but these nursery trees are often short-lived, probably because the common orchard Apple on which they are usually grafted does not suit them as stock. Persons buying the Bechtel Crab should insist that it is grafted on one of the American Crabapples, the best for the purpose being the single-flowered type of *M. ioensis*.

Malus coronaria, sometimes called the Garland Tree, is the common eastern species, although it does not approach the coast north of Pennsylvania and Delaware, and ranges west to Missouri. It is a beautiful tree sometimes twenty-five feet high with a short trunk, pink flowers rather more than an inch in diameter and depressed globose fruit. From *M. glaucescens* it is distinguished by the green under surface of the leaves, and from *M. ioensis* by the absence of pubescence on leaves, fruit-stalks and young shoots. The calyx on one variety (var. *dasycalyx*) not rare in Ohio and Indiana is thickly covered with white matted hairs. A form with long acuminate leaves (var. *elongata*) which sometimes forms dense impenetrable thickets grows in western New York to Ohio, and on the southern Appalachian Mountains from West Virginia to North Carolina. Recently a double-flowered form of *M. coronaria* has been found growing in the woods near Waukegan, Illinois (var. *Charlottæ* or the Charlotte Crab). The flowers are larger and whiter than those of the Bechtel Crab, and there is no reason why the Charlotte Crab should not become as great or greater garden favorite. It is now growing in the Arboretum but the plants are too young to flower.

Malus platycarpa has fruit much broader than high, often two and a half inches in diameter with a deep cavity at base and apex. The flowers are about an inch and a half in diameter with a glabrous pedicel and calyx, but in the var. *Hoopesii* with a pubescent calyx. There is a large tree of this variety in the old Malus Collection opposite the end of the Meadow Road. *M. platycarpa* is a handsome tree well

1922. "Malus glaucescens." *Bulletin of popular information - Arnold Arboretum, Harvard University* 8(7), 25–26. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.321213>.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/216933>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.321213>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/321213>

Holding Institution

Harvard University Botany Libraries

Sponsored by

BHL-SIL-FEDLINK

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: Public domain. The BHL considers that this work is no longer under copyright protection.

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.