

# MULTIFLORA ROSE

[*Rosa multiflora* Thunb.]  
ROMU



UGA0016092

**Habit:** Perennial, deciduous shrub up to 5 m (16 ft) and as wide; long, slender, arching branches.<sup>11,16,15</sup>

**Reproduction:** By seed; stem sprouts,<sup>11,16</sup> shallow root sprouts, and layering (rooting cane tips that touch the ground);<sup>23</sup> colonial;<sup>16</sup> may self-fertilize or outcross (also with other roses, i.e., *R. wichuraiana* (non-native tetraploid)); male-donor-tetraploid crosses have larger fruit, more seeds.<sup>17</sup>

**Leaves:** Alternate, pinnately compound with 5-11 elliptic to obovate leaflets 2.5 cm (1 in) long with fine teeth;<sup>16,23,31</sup> underside of leaflets with hairs and paler than upper surface;<sup>23,31</sup> base of leaves have a fringed stipule.<sup>16,23,31</sup>

**Stems:** Flexible, green-red; rigid, recurved thorns with a wide base;<sup>23</sup> thornless cultivar exists.<sup>8,4</sup>

**Flowers:** White or slightly pink, numerous, arranged in terminal panicles; 1-4 cm ( $\frac{3}{8}$ –1½ in) wide; May-June.<sup>15,23,16</sup>

**Fruits/Seeds:** Clustered, hard, maturing to red; 5-7 mm ( $\frac{1}{4}$  in) wide, egg-shaped; glossy, smooth; September-October,<sup>23,11</sup> lasting into winter;<sup>11</sup> yellowish seeds;<sup>23</sup> dispersed by turkeys, deer mice,<sup>36</sup> birds (some migratory);<sup>27,28</sup> seed bank<sup>24</sup> active up to 20 years;<sup>21,25</sup> cold stratification required;<sup>1,4</sup> germinates best in light (~60%); less than 10% in dark;<sup>37</sup> optimum germination at 10-20°C (50-68°F)<sup>38</sup> or 5°C (41°F)<sup>1,38</sup> after a long period.<sup>38</sup>

## MULTIFLORA ROSE



UGA0016232



UGA2308013

### *Rosa multiflora* **Thunb.**

**Habitat:** Streambanks, pastures, roadsides,<sup>9</sup> forest canopy gaps, disturbed areas, and mature forests;<sup>20,31</sup> introduced into the U.S. from Asia ~1886;<sup>25</sup> promoted in 1930s and '40s by government agencies as a 'living fence,' a soil stabilizer, and wildlife food/cover;<sup>9,12,19</sup> tolerates a variety of soils;<sup>11,33,26</sup> USDA hardiness zones 5-8.<sup>11</sup>

**Comments:** Used as rootstock for other roses<sup>32,34</sup> but not the best choice for longevity and flower production;<sup>22</sup> repeated herbivory lethal;<sup>3,25</sup> rose rosette disease (also affects other cultivated and native roses;<sup>5,14</sup>) may be lethal;<sup>10,13,19</sup> responds well to mycorrhizal inoculation;<sup>6,7,30</sup> preferential nest site for veeries,<sup>18</sup> other birds,<sup>35</sup> and mammals, such as rabbits;<sup>2</sup> at least 3 cultivars;<sup>11</sup> 371 rose species considered its progeny.<sup>29</sup>

**Similar Native Species:** *R. carolina* (pasture rose) and *R. blanda* (smooth rose); stipules not fringed.<sup>16</sup>