

Tree and Shrub Field Note  
July 16, 2014  
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Many shrubs planted in 2010-12 now produce fruit. Our hard work paid off and wildlife can enjoy the fruits of our labor. In this photo, ripening berries fill a golden currant.



Golden currants grow fast and can produce berries within one year of planting. This shrub, planted three years ago, receives overspray from the north center pivot which allows a bumper crop of berries. This forager grabbed a handful of berries as a mid-morning snack.





An exclosure restricts lateral growth but protects currant berries from the mule deer that forage in the Orchard House Draw (below). Rodents and birds can access the berries through the exclosure.





Their bitter taste and toxic pits may deter humans, but wildlife, especially bears, love chokecherries. In the next several weeks, berries will ripen to a deep red color. Older and larger shrubs produce berry clusters. Young trees may need several more years before producing fruit. Chokecherries planted in high abundance in draws and hedges should bring bears to new locations.





Although slow growing, serviceberries planted 2–4 years ago produce fruit. Blander than blueberries, but more palatable than chokecherries, serviceberries provide a ubiquitous source of plump fruit in July and August.



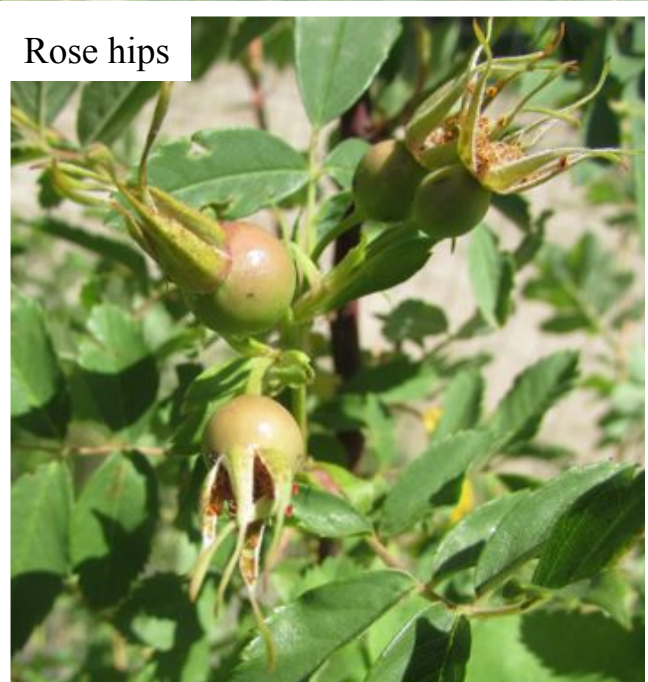


Hawthorn branches poke and scratch foragers that seek the plant's berry clusters. Bears often endure the pain to access the insipid fruit. Most large hawthorns (6–8 ft) produce fruit the same year as planting.





Rose flowers make the transition to rose hips. Rose hips will remain on the shrub in the winter and provide forage for wildlife when deep snow prevents access to other food sources.



Rose hips





Once ripe, we could turn this elderberry fruit into syrup, pie filling, or even ice cream! But instead, we will leave the fruit for the songbirds and ungulates tall enough to reach the berries.





Native to Asia, this Nanking Cherry settles its roots in MPG soil. Three years after planting, it produces its first crop. We planted this shrub, along with other native and exotic trees and shrubs, in one of two fruit orchards in lower Sheep Camp.





This Lodi Big Transparent apple semi-dwarf holds the first apple in the Sheep Camp Orchards. This species tolerates cold temperatures and ripens in early July. Cold overnight temperatures in May froze apple blossoms near the Orchard House and may explain the absence of apples on other trees. In the future, we will prune these trees to encourage fruiting.





A well-balanced diet cannot be fulfilled with only fruit, so we planted a tasty vegetable – wild asparagus. Many of the 725 asparagus plants survived the spring. We will let these plants establish for a couple years before harvesting their tasty spears.

