



SPICEBUSH

Small Shrub, Big Impact

Environmental Message February 2025

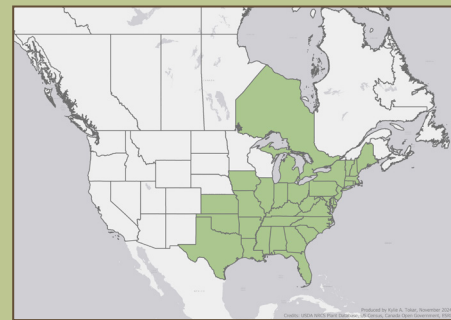
Did You Know? The berries of spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) can be used as a natural substitute for allspice seasoning! Once ripe in late summer, the bright red berries can be harvested, dried, and ground into a spice with a flavor profile similar to allspice. Historically, early settlers used spicebush berries as a seasoning for soups, stews, and baked goods, making this plant a flavorful and functional addition to woodland ecosystems.



Human and Wildlife Uses. Indigenous American people utilized spicebush for various medicinal purposes and brewed its twigs and leaves into teas. The shrub's bright red berries, maturing in late summer, are a food source for over 20 species of birds, including wood thrushes. Additionally, spicebush serves as a host plant for the spicebush swallowtail butterfly, providing essential nourishment for its larvae.

Border Zone Compatible. Spicebush thrives in moist, rich soils and is commonly found in bottomlands, woods, ravines, valleys, and along streams. Incorporating spicebush into vegetation management plans can enhance biodiversity, support wildlife habitats, and contribute to erosion control in riparian zones. With an average height of 6-12 feet, Spicebush could be left in border zones of rights-of-way without interfering with infrastructure.

Distribution Map



References/Works Cited

USDA, NRCS. [2025]. The PLANTS Database (<http://plants.usda.gov>, 01/10/2025). National Plant Data Team, Greensboro, NC USA.

Lindera benzoin - Plant Finder. (n.d.). www.missouribotanicalgarden.org.
<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=d890>

Lindera. (2024, October 25). Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lindera>



BOOTS TO THE BOARDROOM