

Wild Apples

“Not if I had a hundred tongues, a hundred mouths,
An iron voice, could I describe all the forms
And reckon up all the names of these wild apples.”

—Johannes Bodaeus, 1644

Banquet Tree

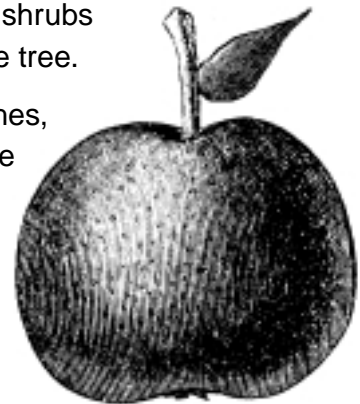
Though we consider it as American as apple pie, the domestic apple is a relatively recent newcomer, introduced by European settlers. Since then, its fruits have become a mainstay to Vermont's human and natural communities. Wild apple trees—planted by chance where ever people, birds, or other animals happen to drop their seeds—receive plenty of wild tending. Deer, grouse, rabbits, and mice regularly prune their twigs, buds, and bark. Bees feed on their pollen and nectar. Foxes, bobcats, red squirrels, and songbirds eat their tangy fruits. Bluebirds, orioles, and fly catchers nest in their branches.



Caring for wild apple trees

Wild apple trees fend for themselves remarkably well. There are a few simple things you can do to prolong their life and help them continue producing food for wildlife.

- Apple trees need sun and space. Cut competing trees and shrubs back to the drip line of the tree.
- Remove any dead branches, as well as about 1/3 of the living branches, to encourage new growth.
- Fertilize the soil beneath the tree with compost.



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