

# False Indigo

(*Amorpha fruticosa*)



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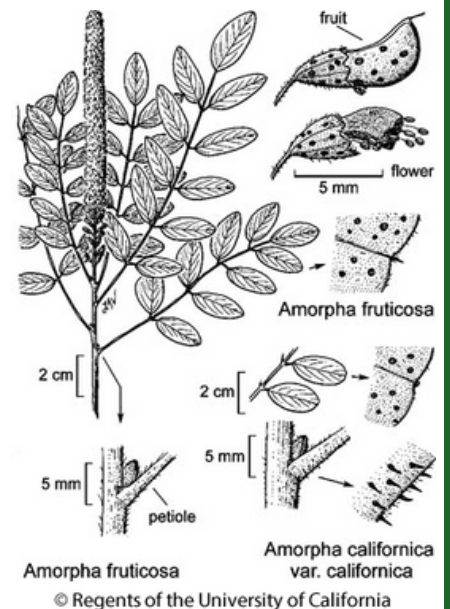
## Key ID Features

**Appearance:** Indigobush (*Amorpha fruticosa*) is a shrub that can grow as tall as 20 feet high and its width is typically twice its height. The branches are firm and woody and the new growth is green and hairy.

**Foliage:** Foliage is composed of alternate pinnately compound leaves with 13 to 35 leaflets per leaf. leaflets are elliptical with individual petioles (stems from leaf to leaflet). the leaves are dark green above and light green on the bottom of the leaf.

**Flowers:** Flowers appear on the terminals of branches in erect standing flower clusters. they are deep purple/blue with obright orange/yellow anthers (inner part of flower). flowers appear mid-summer.

**Fruit:** Fruit resembles small cucumbers, bright green and drying to brown when aged. these seed pods grow up towards the sky.



## The Impact

*Amorpha fruticosa* can tolerate nutritionally poor soils, most notably because of its association with nitrogen fixing bacteria. It also makes a good highway shrub because of its tolerance for salt. It has the potential to crowd out native species, especially along waterways above the high water level.



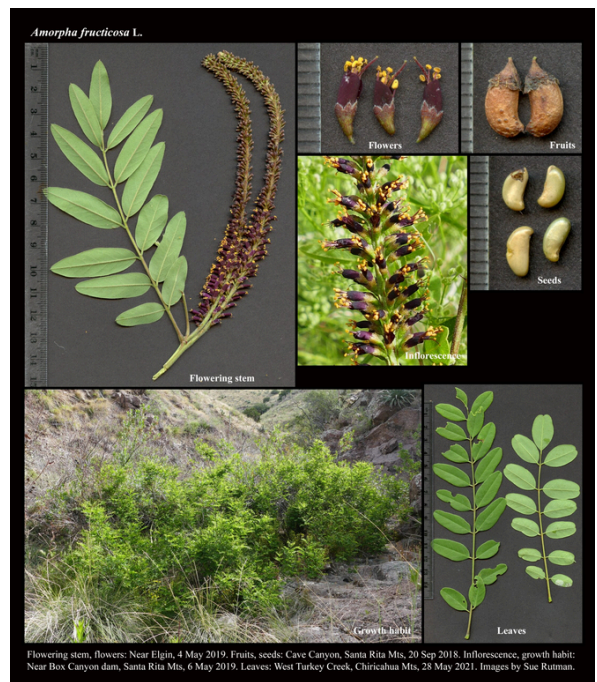
## Quick Facts

**Plant Family:** legume family (Fabaceae)

**Habitat:** Edge, wetland, lake or pond, open disturbed area, river or stream, roadside, yard or garden. In New England, *Amorpha fruticosa* is typically found along riverbanks, flood plains, tidal zones and other areas associated with water. It can occasionally be found in moist open woods. It is also found planted along highways in some sections of southern New England.

**Present in Vermont?:** Yes

**Method of Spread:** Reproduces through both seed and vegetative pieces. seeds are bouyant and can move through water sources, spreading rapidly on waterways.



## Common Look-alike

Bristly locust (*Robinia hispida*)



Bristly locust is generally a bigger plant with larger flowers. this species also sports bristly stems and bark that are noticeably sharp.

## Native Plant Alternatives



Photo by Prairie Moon Nursery

Nannyberry  
(*Viburnum lentago*)

A local beneficial pollinator, produces berries that are important to bird and wildlife diets.

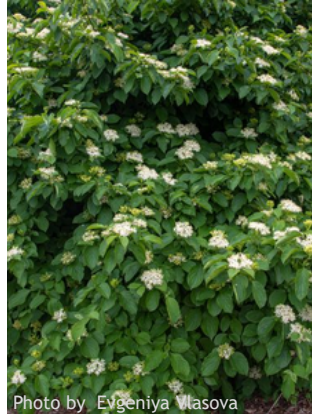


Photo by Evgeniya Vlasova

Silky dogwood  
(*Cornus amomum*)

A great wind break landscape plant, provides erosion control and wildlife benefits.

## Control Information

To learn more about identification & control options, check out the Gallery of Land Invasives on [VTinvasives.org](https://www.vtinvasives.org) and these additional resources:

[Washington state fact sheet](#)