

MYRICA

Myricaceae-Waxmyrtle family

MYRICA L. Bayberry by Arnold
Krochmal '

Growth habit, occurrence, and uses.-The genus *Myrica* is composed of evergreen shrubs and small trees up to 40 feet in height. Six species occur within the United States that are used by wildlife for food and habitat, but only four are considered here (table 1). The fruits of *M. cerifera* and *M. pensylvanica* are covered with a fragrant wax that has been used in making bayberry candles (11) . Pharmaceuticals have been extracted from the fruit, bark, and leaves of *M. cerifera* (5, 11). This species was first cultivated in 1699 and has been used extensively in environmental planting.

Flowering and fruiting.-Flowers are unisexual and mostly dioecious. Flowers of *M. calif ornica*, however, are unisexual and monoecious (10) . Fruits are small, globose, dry drupes heavily coated with wax (fig. 1) . Seeds have no endosperm (fig. 2). Color of the ripe fruits varies with species (table 2) . Fruits of most species of *Myrica* persist on the shrubs over

winter but those of *M. californica* are dropped early in the winter (10).

Collection of fruits; extraction and storage of seeds.-Ripe drupes can be stripped by hand into a container or shaken onto a canvas. The



FIGURE 1. *Myrica cerifera*, southern bayberry: wax coated drupe and cleaned drupe (seed), 8 X.

' Southeastern Forest Exp. Stn.

TABLE 1.-*Myrica*: nomenclature, occurrence, and height at maturity; data compilers

Scientific names and synonyms	Common names	Occurrence	Height at maturity <i>Feet</i>	Data compilers for the species
<i>M. californica</i> C&S_____	Pacific bayberry, Pacific waxmyrtle, western waxmyrtle.	Pacific coast region from Santa Monica Mountains, California, north to Washington.	3-35	Richard L. Hubbard.
<i>M. cerifera</i> L. _____ <i>Morella cerifera</i> (L.) Small. <i>Cerothamnus ceriferus</i> (L.) Small. <i>M. carolinensis</i> Mill.	southern bayberry, southern waxmyrtle, waxmyrtle.	East Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana, east to Florida and north to New Jersey.	30-40	Robert M. Blair and R. L. Barnes.
<i>M. pensylvanica</i> Mill.	sweetgale. _____	Shallow water and swamps Alaska to Newfoundland and Nova Scotia; north eastern and north central United States.	1-6	Gayne G. Erdmann.
<i>M. pensylvanica</i> Loisel.'_____	northern bayberry, bayberry, candle-berry.	Newfoundland to New York and Maryland.	2-8	Arnold Krochmal.

'*M. pensylvanica* was referred to as *M. caroliniensis* Miller until 1935 when Fernald showed that the latter name was a synonyms for *M. cerifera* L., southern bayberry (6).