

ELAEAGNACEAE (Oleaster Family)
Order Proteales

Shrubs and trees having N-fixing bacteria in their root nodules. Often colonizing recently disturbed sites. Most common in subtropics and temperate regions. The two species in Alaska are common to gravel bars and open dry woodlands.

Plants often covered with scurfy or scaly pubescence. Leaves simple, firm; opposite or alternate along twigs. Small flowers are uni- or bisexual, actinomorphic, and arranged in small axillary racemes or umbels. Petals absent; sepals 2 or 4, fused to form a disc-shaped or tubular calyx. Single carpel is superior, but may appear to be inferior if within the fused calyx. Fruit is an achene, but surrounded by swollen calyx tissue and appearing to be a berry.

Shepherdia (soap berry) with opposite leaves and uni-sexual flowers
Elaeagnus (silver berry) with alternate leaves and perfect flowers

