

'Eskimo' Viburnum¹

Donald R. Egolf²

U.S. National Arboretum, Washington, DC 20002

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'Eskimo' establishes a landmark in the development of elite *Viburnum* cultivars as the first selection that combines the tubular *V. carlesii*-type flower in a snowball inflorescence, dwarf growth habit, and semi-evergreen foliage. This compact, slow-growing introduction is especially noteworthy since the majority of *Viburnum* species are too large and vigorous to be included in the modern home landscape. Not only does this cultivar fulfill the requirements of the home gardener, but also promotes commercial production and use by the nurserymen and landscape architects. 'Eskimo' is the 14th *Viburnum* cultivar introduced from the U.S. National Arboretum shrub breeding project (1, 2, 3, 4, 5).

Origin

Two selections were made from the 1962 hybridization of *V. X carcephalum* Skip. 'Cayuga' (Egolf) and *V. utile* Hemsl. One was designated 'Chesapeake' and introduced in 1981; the other was maintained in the breeding nursery and self-pollinated in 1967. The resultant seedling population with 3-species parentage displayed great variability in flower, foliage, and growth habit. Among the seedlings, a compact plant with abundant white snowball inflorescences was selected in 1975 for evaluation at other locations. After outstanding performance ratings in trial plantings, additional plants were distributed for stock increase in 1978.

The cultivar name has been registered with the U.S. National Arboretum, the international registration authority for cultivated *Viburnum*, in accordance with the *International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants*—1980 (6). Herbarium specimens and photographs are on deposit in the U.S. National Arboretum Herbarium.

Description

Viburnum X 'Eskimo', n. cv., NA 43148, PI 445780, is a compact, deciduous shrub, 1.2 m high and 1.5 m wide after 12 years of

growth. The naked, densely stellate, light-brown buds are borne on light-green (Yellow Green 146C) (7), stellate branches that become glabrate and grey-brown (Greyed Brown 199A). The opposite, coriaceous, semi-evergreen, dark-green (Yellow Green 147A above and Yellow Green 148B beneath) leaves are obovate-elliptic, with acute apex and obtuse base, 8–10 cm long, 3–4.5 cm wide, with petiole 10–14 mm long, sparsely stellate above on veins and margins when young, becoming glabrate, and stellate beneath. In early May, the 7–8 cm diam globose cymes are composed of 80–175 florets, each 1.6–2.0 cm diam and tubular, that are pale cream (Yellow 8D) with a touch of pink (Orange Red 35C) at the outer edge in bud, opening pure white. The 18–80 elliptic, 8–10 mm long and 6–9 mm wide fruits on each inflorescence ripen in August to a dull red to black. The chromosome number of 'Eskimo' is $2n=18$.

Culture

Although 'Eskimo' can be cultivated under many diverse climatic and soil conditions, it grows best in partial to full sun in a heavy loam with an adequate moisture supply. It is reliably hardy to USDA Zone 6 (8), but has survived in Zone 5 with only moderate top injury. Even though the plant will survive in colder regions, the naked flower buds will be



Fig. 1. Globose inflorescences with tubular flowers on *Viburnum X 'Eskimo'*.

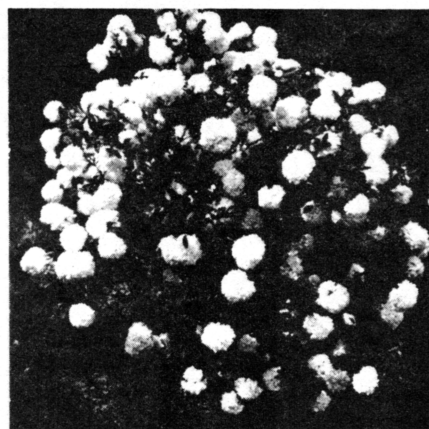


Fig. 2. *Viburnum X 'Eskimo'* showing dense growth habit.

frost-damaged. Plants are most readily propagated by softwood cuttings under mist. Because of the dwarf growth habit, the plants are slower to produce a branched top. Small plants frequently will flower on the terminal shoots the first season, but it is not until the 3rd or 4th year of growth following propagation that flowering is profuse. The plant has been resistant to bacterial leaf spot. The dwarf, dense growth habit; glossy, dark-green foliage; abundant snowball flowers; and autumn foliage coloration characteristics are combined in a superior cultivar suitable for use in the landscape as a specimen, a hedge, or for mass planting.

Availability

'Eskimo' has been commercially propagated from plants previously distributed to wholesale nurseries under the cooperative programs of the U.S. National Arboretum. The cultivar will be introduced by the National Arboretum in 1982. A subsequent distribution will be made to arboreta and botanic gardens. The U.S. National Arboretum does not have stock of this cultivar available for general distribution.

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²Research Horticulturist.