2007 Plant Pictures & Descriptions

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Douglas Fir

Latin Name: ***Pseudotsuga menziesii* var. *menziesii***

Description: This massive (100-250 feet tall), fast-growing conifer is a common and familiar tree in Western Washington. It can be identified by its tall, straight trunk and corky, brown bark which becomes deeply furrowed on older trees. The three to four inch cones consist of woody, brown scales with protruding, papery, three-pointed seed bracts.

Habitat: Throughout the Pacific Northwest in all but the wettest and driest sites, often growing in mixed stands with hemlock and red cedar. Does best in deep, moist, sandy loams; poorest on gravelly soils. Prefers full sun.

Wildlife Uses: Seeds are eaten by numerous birds and small mammals. Deer and grouse eat new shoots. Plants also provide many species of wildlife with shelter, nest sites, and insects (food).

Grand Fir

Latin Name: ***Abies grandis***

Description: This tall (100-250 feet), straight evergreen tree can be identified by its flat, shiny, dark-green needles; its green to yellow-green or greenish-purple cones; and its bark, which is grayish with light-colored mottling. Needles are 1-1½ inches long, have two white lines on their undersides, and look like they are on opposite sides of each branch. Cones are cylindrical, two to four inches long, held upright, and are found only on higher branches, where they remain through autumn as they gradually fall apart.

Habitat: Dry to moist coniferous or mixed forests, from dry mountain slopes to river valleys. Prefers deep, well-drained, alluvial soils. Full sun to partial shade: although seedlings are shade-tolerant, older trees require full sun.

Wildlife Uses: Provides cover and nesting sites for wildlife. Seeds are eaten by numerous birds and small mammals.

Shore Pine

Latin Name: ***Pinus contorta* var. *contorta***

Description: This pine is our only native two-needled pine. In exposed areas near the Pacific coast, it grows 15-50 feet tall, often with a crooked trunk, bushy form, and windblown crown. Slightly further inland, it can have a similar form, or grow as a straight tree to a height of 100 feet with an irregular crown. Needles are deep green, stiff, sharp-pointed, one to three inches long, and paired. Cones are numerous, small (one to two inches long), egg-shaped, usually covered with sharp prickles.

Habitat: A highly-adaptable species found in saturated to excessively well-drained soils. Occurs along the coast and on lowlands, especially on marshy or gravelly sites, where Douglas-fir and western hemlock can't grow well enough to exclude it. Also found in sphagnum bogs in some areas of Western Washington. Tolerant of low-nutrient soils. Prefers full sun.

Wildlife Uses: Used by numerous species of wildlife, some of which eat the seeds, others eat the insects attracted to it, and some use the tree for cover.

Sitka Spruce

Latin Name: ***Picea sitchensis***

Description: The largest of the world's spruces and one of the most prominent forest trees in stands along the northwest coast of North America. Easily recognized for its stiff, sharp pointed, pale green needles, papery cones up to four inches long, and branches that tend to droop down.

Habitat: This coastal species is seldom found far from tidewater, where moist maritime air and summer fogs help to maintain humid conditions necessary for growth. Throughout most of its range from northern California to Alaska, Sitka spruce is associated with western hemlock *(Tsuga heterophylla)* in dense stands where growth rates are among the highest in North America. It is a valuable commercial timber species for lumber, pulp, and many special uses.

Wildlife Uses: Used by numerous species of wildlife, some eat the seeds and others use the tree for cover.

Western Hemlock

Latin Name: ***Tsuga heterophylla***

Description: This evergreen conifer with drooping branches and furrowed, dark-brown to reddish-brown bark grows to 225 feet tall. It can often be identified from a distance by the drooping new growth at the top of the tree. Needles on the same branch vary in length from ¼ to ¾ inch; are flat, distinctly grooved, glossy yellow-green above, have two broad, white stripes below and form flat sprays. Cones turn from green to brown at maturity, and are abundant, one inch long, oval-shaped, attach directly to the branch, and fall intact to the ground.

Habitat: Throughout the region, especially in moist conditions. Does best on deep, moist, well-drained soils, and requires high organic content in the soil. Full sun to full shade, though seedlings are often dried out by full sun. Can be found in pure stands or mixed with other species. Not drought-tolerant.

Wildlife Uses: Provides food, nesting, and cover (especially winter cover) for birds and mammals. Seeds are eaten by several species of birds and small mammals.

Western Red Cedar

Latin Name: ***Thuja plicata***

Description: This evergreen conifer can grow over 200 feet tall, with a massive (three to ten feet in diameter) tapering trunk that flares at the base to form buttresses. Bark is thin, shaggy, reddish, and easily peels off into long strips. Needles are flat, overlapping like scales, and are shiny bright-green above, and paler on the underside with white markings. The needles form flattened sprays on drooping branches that turn up at the tips. Cones are clustered near the ends of branches, and are bluish-green when young, becoming brown, half-inch, tulip-shaped cones with woody scales.

Habitat: Prefers moist to swampy soils. Full sun to full shade, though seedlings require some shade. Tolerates seasonal flooding and perennially-saturated soils.

Wildlife Uses: Seeds are eaten by numerous species of birds. Deer and elk browse seedlings. Provides nesting sites and cover for many species of birds and small mammals. Plants host butterfly caterpillars.

Big Leaf Maple

<u>Latin Name</u>: ***Acer macrophyllum***

<u>Description:</u> This broad-leaved, deciduous tree grows 40-100 feet tall, with a single trunk two to four feet in diameter, and can have a branch spread of up to 50 feet. Greenish-yellow flowers appear in the spring before the leaves, and hang in cylindrical clusters. Fruits are winged, and disperse by flying "helicopter style".

<u>Habitat:</u> Lowland areas, usually in moist, well-drained soils, but also on dry sites. Almost never in saturated soils. In mixed stands with conifers, along stream banks, and in the open. Full sun to partial shade.

<u>Wildlife Uses:</u> Wildlife eat seeds, leaves, and new sprouts. Flowers are an early nectar source for bees and other insects. Provides cover and nesting sites for birds and other wildlife.

Pacific Crabapple

Latin Name: ***Malus fusca***

Other Names: Oregon crab, Oregon crab apple, Pacific crab apple, western crab apple, wild crab apple

Description: Deciduous thicket-forming shrub or small tree, often with several trunks, to 30 ft, sometimes more. Spur shoots abundant on older branches. Flowers in small upright clusters, each two centimeters wide, five rounded white or rarely pink petals. Fruit 12-19 milimeters long, usually longer than wide, yellow-green to red, edible but sour.

Habitat: Sun or partial shade. Apparently not fussy about soil, a "wetlander" plant. Native range along the Pacific Coast, from southern Alaska south to northern California, up to 1,000 ft (305 m) elevation. Usually found on moist sites near streams and other wet places.

Wildlife Uses: Provides shelter for birds and animals.

Red Alder

Latin Name: ***Alnus rubra***

Description: This familiar tree has thin, smooth, gray bark and grows 30-120 feet tall. Leaves are deciduous, alternate, three to six inches long, broad and elliptic, with pointed ends. Male and female flowers appear on the same tree, and the small, winged seeds are shed August to October from small, brown cones that remain on the tree for several years. This tree is greatly under-valued, although it is a quick grower and fixes nitrogen, which make it particularly useful for stabilizing disturbed soils and revegetating nutrient-poor soils.

Habitat: Grows in various types of disturbed soils; tolerates drought, flooding, or brackish conditions. Full sun to partial shade. Typically mixed with other trees, but can form pure stands in nutrient-poor soils or on logged-over or otherwise disturbed lands.

Wildlife Uses: Deer and elk browse the leaves, as do large numbers of invertebrates (which in turn feed many insect-eating bird species). Beaver use the branches. Larger trees provide habitat for numerous cavity-nesting birds and small mammals.

Rocky Mountain Maple

Latin Name: ***Acer glabrum***

Description: This deciduous tree often grows to 30 feet tall, taking the form of a shrub or small tree. Leaves are one to three inches in diameter, and opposite. In the fall, leaves turn gold or bright red before falling. Like other maples, it has "helicopter" seeds.

Habitat: Dry to somewhat moist sites. Full sun to partial shade; prefers some shade, but becomes leggy in deep shade.

Wildlife Uses: Provides valuable forage for deer and elk, and cover for deer, elk, birds, and small mammals. Flowers attract butterflies. Several species of birds and mammals eat the seeds.

Vine Maple

Latin Name: ***Acer circinatum***

Description: This deciduous native often grows to 25 feet tall, taking the form of an erect tree (often with multiple stems) or a tangle of branches creeping vine-like along the ground before turning upward. Branches are usually green or slightly reddish. Leaves are two to four inches in diameter, and opposite. In the fall, leaves turn gold or bright red before falling. Like other maples, it has "helicopter" seeds.

Habitat: Common understory plant in coniferous forests, and in clear-cut or burnt-over areas. Dry to moist sites. Full sun to full shade; prefers some shade, but becomes leggy in deep shade.

Wildlife Uses: Provides valuable forage for deer and elk, and cover for deer, elk, birds, and small mammals. Flowers attract butterflies. Several species of birds and mammals eat the seeds.

Evergreen Huckleberry

Photos courtesy of www.rainyside.com

Latin Name: ***Vaccinium ovatum***

Description: Bushy shrub with small, leathery, evergreen leaves. Pinkish-white bell flowers appear March to August in clusters and mature into small, shiny, purplish-black berries. Fruits are less than 1/4 inch in diameter and are edible and sweet. Plants growing in full sun average 3-5 feet tall, those in deep shade may reach 15 feet tall and may become spindly.

Habitat: Commonly find in coniferous forests at low elevations. Prefers most to slightly dry soils, full sun to full shade, but prefers some shade.

Wildlife Uses: Fruits are eaten by birds, chipmunks, and black bear. Foliage is browsed by elk and deer, also used in floral arrangements. Flowers attract butterflies.

Indian Plum

Latin Name: ***Oemleria cerasiformis***

Description: This deciduous shrub grows five to sixteen feet tall and is one of the first natives to put on leaves and flower in early spring. Leaves are alternate and bright yellow-green. Flowers appear before the leaves in February and early March, and hang in elongated, greenish-white clusters. Only female plants produce the small (about ½ inch long) plum-like fruit, which ripen from peach to orange to dark purple by early June.

Habitat: Moist to dry sites; along stream banks, rivers, and wetlands (but never in saturated soils), and in open woodlands. Full sun to partial shade, but prefers shade.

Wildlife Uses: Flowers are an early nectar source for bees and other insects. Fruits are edible to humans, but are quickly eaten by birds and other wildlife.

Mock Orange

<u>Latin Name:</u> ***Philadelphus lewisii* var. *gordonianus***

<u>Description:</u> This multiple-stemmed, loosely-branched shrub grows five to ten feet tall, and can be distinguished from similar shrubs by its showy, fragrant, white flowers. Flowers appear May through July in clusters of three to fifteen flowers at the ends of branches. Leaves are opposite, deciduous, oval, one to three inches long, with short stems. Fruits are oval, woody capsules about ¼ inch long.

<u>Habitat:</u> Grows in moist, well-drained soils to dry soils. Full sun to partial shade.

<u>Wildlife Uses:</u> Flowers attract butterflies and bees.

Nootka Rose

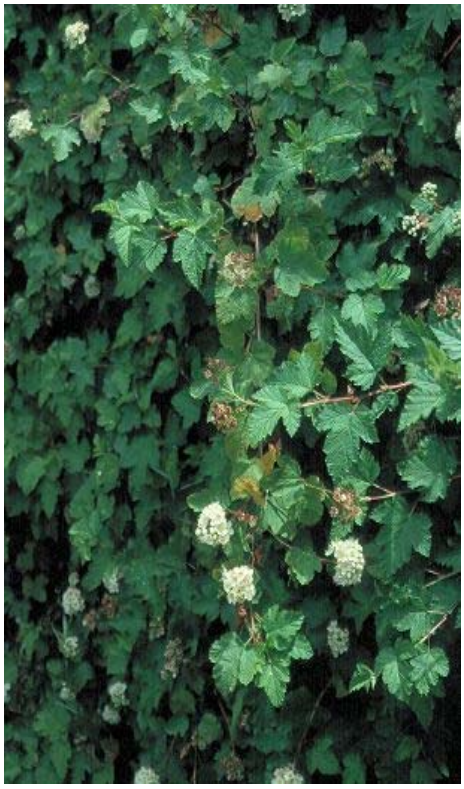
Latin Name: ***Rosa nutkana***

Description: This thorny rose grows two to eight feet high and has a pair of large prickles at the base of each leaf or bud. Leaves are deciduous, alternate, and contain five or seven toothed leaflets. Flowers are large (to three inches across), pink to purplish, and are usually borne singly or in pairs at the tips of branches. Fruits are large (½ - ¾ inch across) and round; when ripe, they are purplish-red.

Habitat: Fairly dry to wet areas. Grows in bogs, wet meadows, grasslands, forests, and mountain slopes. Full sun to partial shade. Tolerates saturated soils or inundation for much of the growing season. Can grow near salt water.

Wildlife Uses: Flowers are a nectar source for butterflies and other insects. Fruits are important winter food source for birds and small mammals. Thickets also provide excellent cover for birds and small mammals.

Ninebark (Pacific)



Latin Name: ***Physocarpus capitatus***

Description: Deciduous shrub, five to twenty feet tall with open, straggly, angled branches, and bark that exfoliates in long irregular strips. Leaves are alternate, simple, three to ten centimeters long, palmately three to five lobed and veined. Produces pompom-like flower cluster in the late spring. Grows best from hardwood cuttings, and is easy to propagate and can be live-staked. Can also be grown from seed but germination is spotty.

Habitat: Streambanks, swamps, moist woods, and occasionally on drier shrubby sites. Sun to shade, best in acid soil, requires some watering. Propagates easily from cuttings. Common along stream banks, lake margins, swampy areas and in moist woods.

Wildlife Uses: Has excellent soil-binding qualities as well as providing cover and nesting sites. Other species like deer and elk graze on the twigs and bears eat the berries.

Oregon Grape (Tall)

Latin Name: ***Mahonia aquifolium (tall) & Mahonia nervosa (short)***

Description: Evergreen shrubs with multiple erect, unbranched stems; alternate, pinnately- compound leaves with prickly, holly-like leaflets; and yellow bark, wood, and roots. Tall Oregon grape can grow to over ten feet tall (usually under five feet) and short Oregon grape grows to about two feet tall. Flowers are yellow, clustered, and appear March through May (through June for short Oregon Grape). Fruits are waxy blue berries that appear in grape-like clusters.

Habitat: Grows in dry to moist, well-drained soils, in sun or shade.

Wildlife Uses: Flowers attract butterflies. Fruits are coveted by birds and mammals.

Blue Elderberry

Latin Name: *Sambucus cerulea* var. *cerulea*

Description: This leggy deciduous shrub grows up to 20 feet tall, and has soft, pithy stems. Leaves are composed of long, narrow leaflets divided into five to nine leaves. The creamy-white flowers are arranged in dense, flat-topped clusters and mature into waxy, blue to dark-blue (sometimes black) berries.

Habitat: Grows mostly in clearings, in moist to dry soils. Full sun to partial shade.

Wildlife Uses: Twigs and leaves are preferred by deer and elk and flowers attract hummingbirds and butterflies. Berries are eaten by numerous small mammals and birds.

Red Flowering Currant

Latin Name: ***Ribes sanguineum* var. *sanguineum***

Description: This erect, thorn-less, deciduous plant grows three to twelve feet tall, with reddish- brown bark. Leaves are alternate, rounded, one to three inches wide (occasionally larger), and lighter in color. Flowers are light-pink to deep-red, tubular, and held in upright to drooping clusters of 10-20 flowers. Dark-blue to black berries.

Habitat: Dry to somewhat moist, wooded or open sites, from the coast to the Cascades. Intolerant of saturated soils. Full sun to partial shade, but may get leggy in shade.

Wildlife Uses: Flowers attract hummingbirds and butterflies. Berries are persistent and do not ripen all at once, providing a longer term food source for numerous birds, small mammals, deer, and elk.

Red Osier Dogwood

Latin Name: ***Cornus sericea spp. Occidentalis***

Description: This many-stemmed, deciduous shrub grows up to 15 feet tall. Leaves are opposite, two to six inches long, elliptical and pointed. In autumn, leaves turn a deep red before falling off. Twigs and stems are often reddish or purple. Small, greenish-white flowers grow in dense, flat topped clusters at the ends of branches, and produce a bluish-white berries in the fall.

Habitat: In moist, well drained soil, especially along stream banks and in swamps. Full to partial shade. Tolerates seasonal flooding.

Wildlife Uses: Possess excellent soil building qualities. Red stems make it attractive with or without foliage. Provides excellent wildlife cover, and is browsed by rabbits, deer, and elk. Hosts butterfly caterpillars. Buds and fruit provide food for numerous birds, small mammals, and black bear.

Snowberry

Latin Name: ***Symphoricarpos albus* var. *laevigatus***

Description: This low-growing (two to six feet tall) deciduous shrub has very slender, opposite-branching stems, and a dense system of rhizomes. Leaves are deciduous, opposite, small (¾ - 2½ inches long), and dull green in color. Flowers are small (¼ inch or less), pink to white, bell-shaped, and appear in short, dense clusters. Berries persist through winter and are white, up to ½ inch in diameter, and grow in tight clusters.

Habitat: Dry to wet sites. In forests, shrub thickets, open slopes, dense woods, along roadsides, on sandy river banks, in deciduous uplands, and under Pacific madrones. Full sun to partial shade.

Wildlife Uses: Deer and elk browse foliage. Flowers attract butterflies. Fruits are eaten by many birds, and may be an important food source for wildlife at winter's end.

Twinberry

Latin Name: ***Lonicera involucrata* var. *involucrata***

Description: This deciduous, fast-growing shrub grows 2-7 feet high and has elliptical, pointy, bright green leaves. The paired flowers are small, yellow, and tubular. They mature into small, glossy, black berries framed by burgundy colored bracts.

Habitat: Moist, open sites usually near streams or other bodies of water. Grows in partial to full shade, rarely in full sun. Tolerant of shallow flooding early in growing season, prefers loamy soils.

Wildlife Uses: Flowers provide a nectar source for hummingbirds. Birds and other wildlife eat berries and twigs; leaves are browsed by deer.