



# “Learn 10” species

Common native deciduous trees and shrubs of  
eastside Cascades riparian, dry forests, and  
shrub-steppe habitats

Photos (unless noted) by Susan Ballinger

Sources for text include:

<http://biology.burke.washington.edu/herbarium/imagecollection.php>

*Flora of the Pacific Northwest* by C. Leo Hitchcock & Arthur Cronquist

*Plants of Southern Interior British Columbia and the Inland Northwest* by Roberta

Parish, Ray Coupe, and Dennis Lloyd

# *Populous trichocarpa* black cottonwood

**WILLOW family**

**Habitat:** moist to wet lowlands & along waterways. Withstands periodic flooding.  
Shade intolerant. **Up to 130 feet tall**

**Bark:** young-smooth & green-gray. Becomes deeply furrowed on lower trunk with age



**Fruits:** smooth, green, & bead-like-split into 3 parts releasing seeds with fluffy white hair

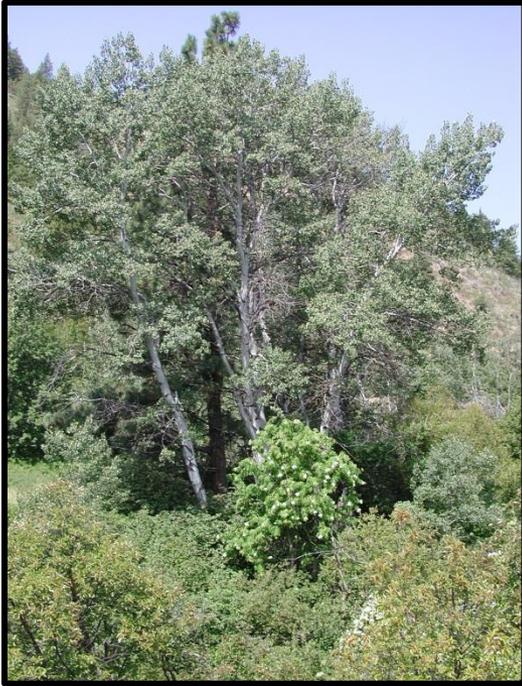
**Leaves:** triangular to heart shaped. Dark green above, silvery green below; pointed tips; Stalk round in cross-section. Turns yellow in fall.



# *Populus tremuloides* aspen (quaking aspen)

WILLOW family

**Habitat:** wide ranging elevations from moist forest to edge of grasslands & shrub-steppe in soils with lateral water flow, but not saturated. Shade intolerant. **Up to 100 feet tall**



**Bark:** smooth green-gray to white, becoming rough and black-scarred with age. Does not peel- lacks horizontal lenticels

**Leaves:** nearly round, pointed tip, finely toothed, deep green above, paler below, stalk flattened in cross-section. Turns yellow in fall

**Fruits:** slender, cone-shaped capsules filled with tiny brown seeds with white fluffy hairs



# *Acer macrophyllum* bigleaf maple

# MAPLE Family

**Habitat:** along waterways in shrub-steppe and montane forests, low to-mid elevations on east-side Cascades. Common on west-side of Cascades. **60-80 feet tall**



**Leaves:** Deciduous, opposite, simple & 5-lobed with terminal lobe . Often 3-lobed, green above, pale below. Leaf 8-12 inches long with stalk 10-12 inches long.



**Bark:** brown-grey with furrows on older trees



**Fruits:** a “maple key” with wings 1-2 inches long , & a hairy seed covering.

# *Cornus serica* (formerly *C. stolonifera*) redboyer (red-twig) dogwood DOGWOOD family

**Habitat:** wet soils in riparian, wetlands and moist forests. Widespread and abundant at low-to-mid elevations.  
**6-20 feet tall**



**Flowers:** small, white, in dense flat-topped clusters

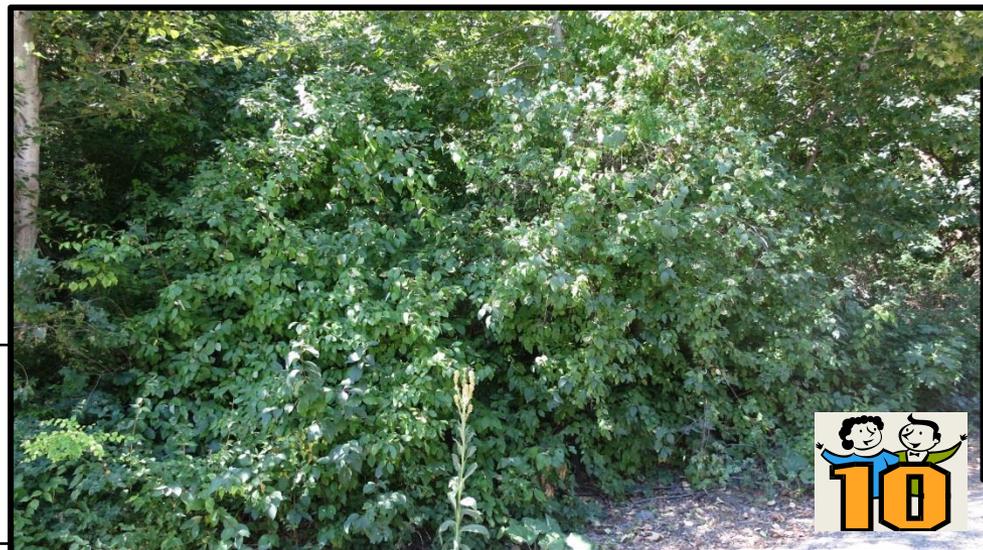
**Fruits:** clusters of berry-like white (often blue-tinged)



**Leaves:** Opposite, oval, sharp-pointed 5-7 prominent parallel veins, curving up near the margins.

Many stemmed deciduous shrub, spreading; layering branches on ground often root

Thin, young stems bright red; older stems brown



# *Ceanothus velutinus* snowbrush (snowbrush ceanothus, buckbrush)

## BUCKTHORN Family

**Habitat:** Dry to moist forests and rocky slopes, preferring open sunny sites and burned areas at low to subalpine elevations. **2-10 feet tall**



**Flowers:** tiny, white; borne in dense pyramidal clusters along side branches

**Seeds:** small, shiny. Can remain viable in Soil for at least 200 years. Germination stimulated by fire.

Bacteria in root nodules fixes nitrogen.



**Stems:** green & Smooth. Shrub is spreading & heavily scented

**Leaves:** Evergreen, alternate broadly oval with finely toothed edges. Upper leaf sticky & glossy (appearing varnished), underside paler & velvety below. 3 main veins.



# Amelanchier alnifolia serviceberry (Saskatoon)

# ROSE Family

**Habitat:** In moister shrub-steppe gullies and ravines and at edge of talus slopes, up to dry open forests and rocky sites from low to subalpine elevations. **Up to 30 feet tall**



## Leaves:

Deciduous, thin, round to oval, and toothed above the middle. Finely hairy on underside



**Flowers:** 5 petals, white, showy, linear to oblong petals. In short leafy clusters of 3-20 flowers at branch tips

**Stems:** Smooth with bark grey to red. Spreads with underground stems forming dense colony



**Fruits:** purple to nearly black, apple-like, with a whitish film (glaucous).



# *Holodiscus discolor* oceanspray

## ROSE Family

**Habitat:** In open dry forests and clearings, often on sandy or rocky soils at low to subalpine elevations.

**3-12 feet tall**

Re-sprouts after wildfire



**Leaves:** Deciduous, alternate, 1-3 inches long. Broadly triangular with lobed or toothed edges. Hairy on both sides. Dull green

**Flowers:** tiny, cream-colored in dense Terminal clusters that persist over winter, Turning brown with age

**Stems:** clustered and arching upward & outward from base. Bark is gray-red and strongly ridged on young stems.



# *Purshia tridentata* bitterbrush

ROSE Family

**Habitat:** in hot dry environments. Most abundant on sandy soils up to 4,000 feet.

Usually killed by Summer & Fall wildfires, but some can sprout after being burned in a light spring fire

2-6 feet tall.



**Leaves:** Deciduous, alternate. Wedge-shaped with 3-toothed tip. Hairy to wooly. Silver-green on upper leaf, grey-wooly below. Commonly, edges rolled under

**Flowers:** Bright yellow & numerous. Funnel-shaped. Solitary on short, leafy branches. 5 petals.



**Fruits:** Seeds are pyramid-shaped. Small rodents cache seeds for later food use.



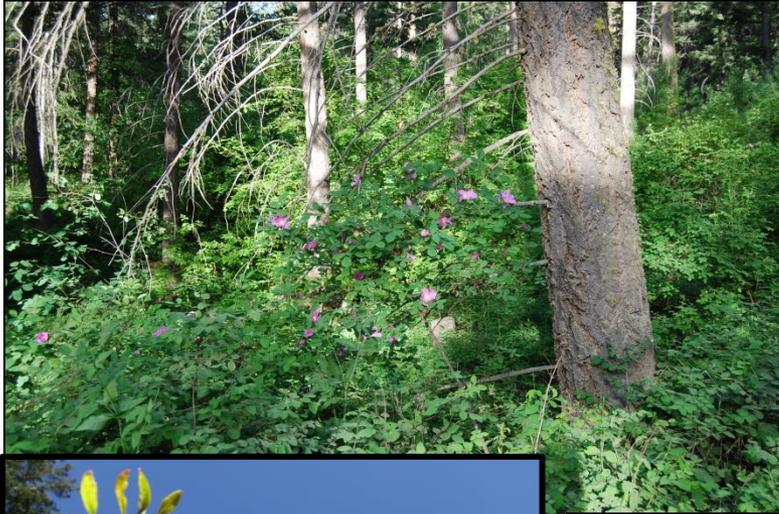
**Stems:** Rigidly branched with grey or brown bark and twigs covered in dense hairs.



# *Rosa nutkana* Nootka rose

# ROSE Family

**Habitat:** Open habitats, seepage areas, along waterways & in floodplains at low to mid-elevations.  
**3-7 feet tall**



**Leaves:** Alternate & pinnately compound with an odd number of leaflets (5-7). Leaf edges both single & double serrated & often gland-tipped. Green above, paler below.



**Fruits:** round, purplish-red, with persistent sepals

**Stems** armed with large pair of straight (to somewhat curved) thorns at each branch node.



**Flowers:** usually solitary (sometimes in groups of 2-3). Our largest common rose: flowers 2-3 inches across



# *Sambucus cerulea* blue elderberry

# HONEYSUCKLE Family

**Habitat:** Moist to dry sites in valley bottoms, along rivers & streams, on in open forests.

**7-10 feet tall.**

**Fruit:** clusters of juicy, round, powder-blue, berry-like (edible)



Multi-stemmed, grows singly, does not form stands.



**Flowers:** small, white, in flat-topped clusters, up to 10 inches across



**Leaves:** opposite, compound with 5-9 sharply serrate leaflets. Smooth & hairless; 2-6 inches long

# *Ribes cereum* wax current (older name, squaw current) CURRANT Family

**Habitat:** lowest zone of dry forest in open, hot, & rocky sites.

**Up to 6 feet tall**



**Stems:** new branches finely hairy, becoming gray-brown with age

Very branched, no prickles (un-armed) deciduous.



**Fruits:** small red berries



**Leaves:** numerous & small, fan-shaped, weakly 3-5 lobe. Sparsely hairy and often glandular on both sides. At branch tips



**Flowers:** green-white to pink, urn-shaped. In clusters of 2-8 hanging on a drooping stalk. All are sticky & finely hairy

# *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* kinnikinnick

# Heath Family

**Habitat:** widespread & common at low to alpine elevations on sandy well-drained sites, dry rocky slopes, & dry forest clearings. Trailing evergreen shrub

<5 inches tall

**Leaves:**  
alternate,  
oval to  
spoon  
shaped,  
smooth  
edged,  
leathery,  
dark-green  
& somewhat  
shiny above,  
paler below,  
hairless



Brownish-red bark on long flexible rooting branches.



**fruits:** bright red berries



**flowers:** small, urn-like, pinkish-white drooping in few-flowered clusters

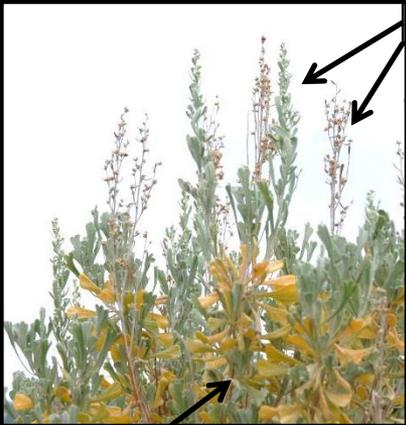
# *Artemisia tridentata* big sagebrush

# ASTER Family

**Habitat:** widespread and common in deep soiled (>12 in.) shrub-steppe up to 7 feet tall

Prior fall's flowering stalks.

**Leaves:** wedge-shaped, most with 3 toothed-tip. Dense gray hair on both sides. **Most leaves persist through winter.**



Yellow in photo are long thin leaves, that dry up & die in summer. Smaller hairy, thick leaves remain year-round



**Flowers:** small, yellow, born in composite heads of 3-5 disk flowers. Very small.

Evergreen aromatic shrub. Grayish shredding bark on older branches.

Flowers in fall. Does not resprout after wildfire but regenerates from seed.



# *Ericameria* (formerly *Chrysothamnus*) *nauseosus* rabbit brush ASTER Family

**Habitat:** widespread & common in shrub-steppe, especially in sandy soils, & low-elevation dry forests.  
**up to 3-4 feet tall**

**ID tip:** If you scrape any stem, a brighter green shows, distinguishing it from the similar species, green rabbitbrush, *Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus*.

**Leaves:**  
long,  
narrow, &  
linear.  
Stems &  
leaves  
covered  
with dense  
gray velvety  
hairs on  
both sides.



Fall blooming      deciduous  
Re-sprouts vigorously after wildfire



**Flowers:** small, yellow, born in small composite heads of 5 disk flowers at branch tips. Blooms in late summer.