

Volume 14
Issue 6-2016
June 2016

NW NATIVE PLANT JOURNAL

A Monthly Web Magazine

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The Wild Garden: Hansen's Northwest
Native Plant Database
www.nwplants.com
Editor: Jennifer Rehm, Webmaster



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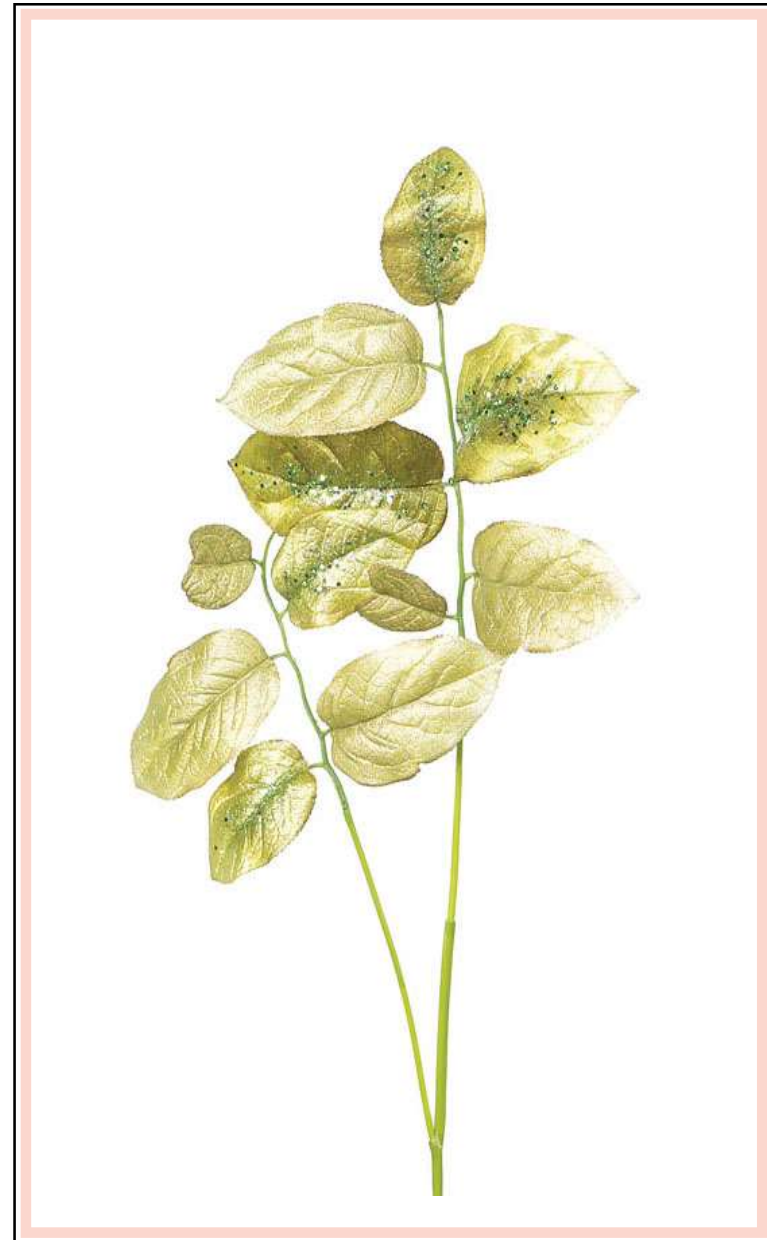
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About this Journal

This Journal was created under the direction of Wally Hansen – a dedicated Grower, Aficionado and Passionate Lover of Northwest Native Plants.

This Journal is not 'commercial.' Our goals are:

- A** — To generate interest, even passion, concerning the magnificent Native Plants of the Pacific Northwest.
- B** — To help you create your own Native Plant Gardens, large or small, for home or work.
- C** — To help you propagate and "grow on" those species that interest you the most.
- D** — To inform both Home Gardeners and interested Professionals of many disciplines concerning trends and news items from my little corner of the world.
- E** — To help the reader enjoy native plants more by understanding the historical and cultural role of native plants (i.e.–use by Native Americans, pioneers, early botanists, etc.).



On the Cover:

Holodiscus discolor

They called it 'Oceanspray,' for the cascades of frothy flowers seem so similar to the foam atop waves in the continuously rolling sea.

Native Peoples called it 'Ironwood' for the strength of its wood, often used for making digging sticks, spears, arrows, bows, harpoons and nails. These were often hardened with fire and then polished using horsetail.

Useful to birds and bees who enjoy the nectar and pollen. Appreciated by humans when added to a bouquet for filler and for the light, pleasing perfume. Left on the bush, the dried flowers are useful to birds as a delicious dining experience.



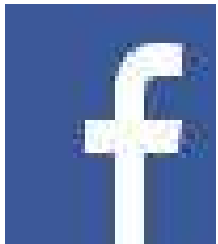
Staying in touch

The Wild Garden is on Facebook

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Send me an email anytime:

nwplants@gmail.com



Wildlife Corner

Out back with the animals

The whole neighborhood is alive with Juncos and Jays and Hummers and Doves!

The squirrels are less active than they've been lately, but no cause for alarm--sometimes they just slow down. It's



related more to weather than anything else. A very confident one scampered up on the porch and started digging in my flower pot. I scattered him away, and Maggie, the ever-faithful sidekick, joined me in this action. She does love to tell everybody what to do. A few sharp words from the Boston is usually enough to get her point sharpened.

The hummers are ever-present in this early summer day. They get such a kick out of the mist I bless the porch herbs with each day. It's just enough to freshen them up but not so much they get blown away by it. I get such a kick out of them, coming right up close to get the best benefit of the misty shower. Hummingbirds are not skittish! My favorite is when the mist is in the sun and those colorful little rascals flit in and out of the rainbows. That's magic.



Garden chores to do now

Pearly bits of wisdom & just plain common sense

Have you looked outside this morning? That is my very favorite place to greet the day. I envision strolling through the gardens in my kimono, cup of tea warming my hands, greeting each bird, butterfly or bee with a smile. The sun shines on my face. Flowers and leaves and blades of grass are still damp with the dew. A little later, when it all warms up and the morning moisture has dried, Maggie and I will take time to appreciate this wonder that has been wrought since yesterday. There must be fairies afoot here when I'm not looking. I can think of no other way this ordinary garden became perfect.

In truth, I'm so energized by the feeling of being completely alive, it is impossible to stroll. These hands, soon covered in dirt, are poking everything, pushing misplaced petals into alignment, tossing sticks off the path and pulling out whatever has the audacity of growing where it was not invited.

That's what we can be doing in the gardens--maintenance. tending. mind-ing. praising.

Go get the gloves, a bucket and maybe a hat if you're prone to oversunning. Take along the kids or the dog--gardens are to be appreciated by everyone. It's a community thing.

Sunscreen is advised where needed. Don't put it off. Keep some handy in your potting bench or by the hook where you hang your hat. Skin cancer is bad.

One more thing to do--water if needed. Do it well for new plants until they get their sea legs. Slack off as you may on those old friends who have populated the place during its life.

That's it. Go!

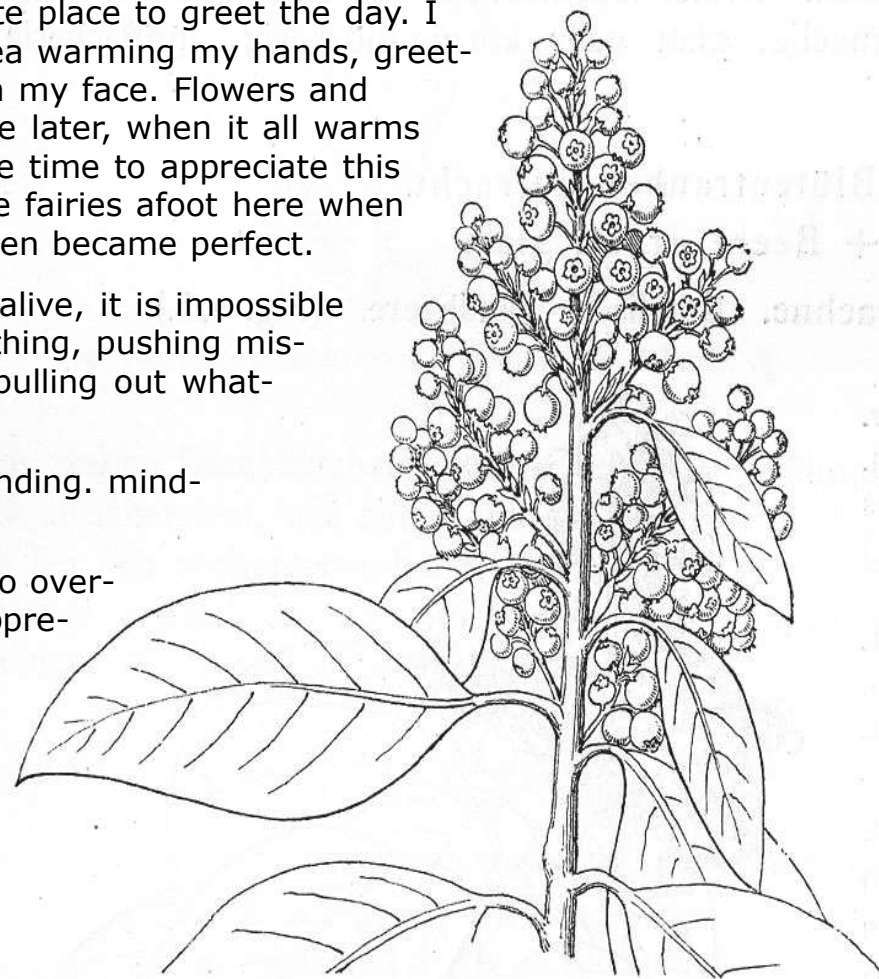


Fig. 226. *Arbutus Menziesii*, n. Nutt. ($\frac{2}{3}$).



Scenic drive up I-5

Passing fancy

Just before the Memorial Day weekend, I rode from northern California to Oregon's capitol city of Salem. First time in a long while since I've had the opportunity to observe fully the world in which we travelled. Pilot on this trip was good friend Scuba and attending us was Maggie Mae the Boston Terrier. I was the 'Miss Daisy.'

The ceanothus are bursting in bloom. Oceanspray (*Holodiscus discolor*) gave frothy white bowers, but too far for us to smell the gentle fragrance. *Cercis orbiculata* (Western Redbud) was expected but we saw no sign of that signature blazing pink.

There was a curious community of plants on the hills right outside of Yreka. It did not appear to be made by man, exactly, but it was way more controlled than might have been expected. The plants were arranged in clusters of varying sizes, each surrounded with a slender area of sand. In some of the islands, there was a blue cast to the central parts.

Perennials were not plentifully seen, except for what looked like Forget-me-not of some variety. Of these, there were more than a few in evidence in small colonies. Twas something akin to a scrap of light blue delicately spun lace drifting on the hills and sides of rocky cuts the road-makers deemed necessary to blast in the hillfaces long ago so that we may traverse the resulting paths -- some call these structures "freeways." More pleasing, we found, with the gossamer frosting, than it seemed when naked.

There were a few lupines beginning what, I'm sure, will be a most generous showing on the hills and in some lower places. Blue was the color du jour, with a smattering of yellow bush lupines.

It was a wonderful day. On the following pages are photos of some plants we saw. Enjoy.



Old botanical watercolor of Buckbrush, *Ceanothus cuneatus*

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Scenic drive up I-5, cont'd

***Ceanothus cuneatus* var. *cuneatus* (Buck Brush)**



A spreading evergreen shrub, rounded to sprawling, reaching 9 - 10' tall at maturity. The evergreen leaves are stiff and somewhat tough and may be slightly toothed along the edges. Abundant white flowers, sometimes tinted blue or lavender. Fruit is a round capsule with horns. Hybridizes easily with similar species, producing varied forms.

Photo courtesy of Miguel Vieira

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Scenic drive up I-5, cont'd

***Ceanothus integerrimus* (Deerbrush, Mountain Lilac)**



A deciduous shrub 3 - 13' tall openly branched. Drought-tolerant. The light green leaves are glossy, 1-3" long, ovate. Flowers are white or blue or (rarely) pink. Fruit is a sticky capsule that ejects seed when split.

Photo credit:
Dawn Endico,
Menlo Park, CA,
Creative Commons
Attribution and Share
Alike license

[⇒More⇒](#)

Scenic drive up I-5, cont'd

***Ceanothus prostratus* (Mahala Mat)**

This evergreen shrub is very low growing, forming a mat up to 8 feet wide. Small leaves are tough and leathery with sharp teeth along the edges. Flowers are small clusters of deep blue to lavender tight to the stems. Very nice groundcover.

Photo credit: Robert H. Ruf Provided by National Agricultural Library. Originally from U.S. Forest Service, United States NV 1960



Photo credit: 2010 Keir Morse. Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 (CC BY-NC-SA 3.0) License

[⇒More⇒](#)

Scenic drive up I-5, cont'd

***Ceanothus sanguineus* (Red Stem Ceanothus)**



A deciduous shrub growing to 9 feet at maturity. Native to western North America from British Columbia to Montana to far northern California; it is also known from Michigan. As do some other Ceanothus, this one requires fire for reproduction and proliferation. The seeds become active with heat and the plants quickly fill in spaces left by wildfires. Clusters of white flowers are about 4 inches long. An important food source for elk and also browsed by livestock. Seeds are also enjoyed by many kinds of animals.

Photo credit: podiceps

[⇒More⇒](#)

Scenic drive up I-5, cont'd

***Ceanothus thyrsiflorus* (Blueblossom, California Lilac)**



The queen of wild evergreen lilacs, Blueblossom reigns with grace and majesty from southwestern Oregon to southern California (USDA zones 8-10).

When mature, it often reaches 20 feet tall in its native habitat of chaparral.

Quite tolerant of shade, the blue flowers are outstanding.

Their blooms can also vary from pale blue to white and many shades of blue.

Photo credit:
A. Barra

[⇒More⇒](#)

Scenic drive up I-5, cont'd

***Ceanothus velutinus* (Snowbrush)**



A medium-tall evergreen shrub, a colonizing plant which tangles together to make an almost impenetrable thicket. Aromatic leaves and plentiful long clusters of white flowers, this is an excellent choice for tall hedges. The three-lobed seed pods snap open and shoot the three seeds into the soil where they can lie in wait for centuries until a wildfire comes along to scarify them.

Photo credit: Albert F. W. Vick

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Scenic drive up I-5, cont'd

***Holodiscus discolor* (Ocean Spray, Oceanspray, Creambush, Ironwood)**



A shrub common in the Pacific Northwest found in open spaces and as understory at low to moderate elevations.

Fast-growing, deciduous shrub with cascading clusters of sweet, sugary scented white flowers.

Photo credit:
Dave Powell,
USDA Forest
Service (retired),
Bugwood.org

UGA1214022

[⇒ More ⇒](#)

Scenic drive up I-5, cont'd

***Dasiphora fruticosa* (Shrubby Cinquefoil, Golden Hardhack, Bush Cinquefoil, Tundra Rose, Widdy)**



It grows upright to sprawling or prostrate. The bark becomes shreddy with long thin strips. Densely leafy, covered in fine silky, silvery hairs. The flowers are buttercup-shaped, pale to bright yellow. Flowering is typically from early to late summer. It is normally found growing in moisture-retentive soils in swamps and rocky areas.

Previous name: *Potentilla* [⇨More⇨](#)

Scenic drive up I-5, cont'd

***Arbutus menziesii* (Pacific Madrona, Madrone, Bearberry, Strawberry Tree)**



Arbutus menziesii is native to the western coastal areas of North America, from British Columbia to California.

In this photo, hiker Scott Jones found a madrone growing among other trees in a wilderness area. It was in such an environment that I first noticed a group of these trees as we travelled along the highway just above Sacramento where we entered the I-5 corridor.

A little later there was a smattering of individuals, but just as we were leaving California into Oregon, they were very much in evidence.

See page 23 for more.

Photo credit: Scott Jones released to Public Domain

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Scenic drive up I-5, cont'd

Lupines, many different species



A perennial common in the Pacific Northwest found in open areas, predominantly grassy meadows or hillsides

I took this photo years ago along a highway in Oregon.

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Scenic drive up I-5, cont'd

Important note: See page 20

***Lupinus arboreus* (Yellow Bush Lupine)**



An evergreen shrub growing to 3–7 ft tall.

It has green to gray-green palmate leaves, with 5–12 leaflets per leaf. The leaflets are often sparsely covered with fine silky hairs.

In spring it bears many fragrant, soft yellow (or sometimes lavender) pea-like flowers. Requires fast draining soil and prefers full sun. It prefers to grow on bluffs, dunes and slopes, and grows quickly and aggressively.



Yellow Bush Lupine

Today's Trojan horse



***Lupinus arboreus* (Yellow bush lupine)**

Once the native darling of southern and central California, now fast becoming a new thug bullying less aggressive lupines and other native plants that require a lower nitrogen rate.

How did that happen?

It began innocently enough, with a desire to make the sandy beaches along the mighty Pacific Ocean more hospitable to people. Can't develop a plot of stabilized land at the ocean's edge so someone thought to try a new idea: Yellow bush lupine (*Lupinus arboreus*) can do that job! Get some seeds...

Introduced repeatedly to many dune systems as a sand stabilizer during the early to mid-1900s.

Appreciated for its beauty and its unique capability of spreading rhizomes rapidly through sand, it was used to make solid ground out of sand dunes as the desire for stable properties on which to expand humanity.

It was truly native in the southern coasts and seemed to be the perfect natural foil for the shifting sands. It should cause no harm to utilize this natural element just a little more north in the exact environment from whence it comes, seemed like.

That's where we went wrong. Second-guessing nature. Great Spirit was astounded.

Photo credit: Daisie Huang near Oceano, CA

[⇒ More ⇒](#)

Yellow Bush Lupine, cont'd

Just the facts

This is, as far as I know, a true historic account of how a couple of assumptions turned this strong player into a bad character. The introduction of Yellow bush lupines to Humboldt Bay dune system was traced by Miller (1988):

In 1908 the operator of a fog signal station on the north spit of Humboldt Bay gathered seeds of yellow bush lupine from the Presidio (where it had previously been introduced) and planted them around the station.

In 1917 seeds from the new signal station population were collected and scattered beside railroad tracks along the spit.

From these and later plantings, the extent of yellow bush lupine has increased from 244 acres in 1939 to over 1,000 acres (Pickart and Sawyer 1998). Yellow bush lupine now dominates 28 percent of the total vegetation cover on Humboldt Bay dunes (Pickart and Sawyer 1998).

Because it is an effective fixer of nitrogen in the soil, thereby changing the chemistry of the soil which allows other exotics to establish themselves, to the detriment of native plants adapted to low nitrogen levels.

*Also, it hybridizes with other lupine species outside its range, such as *Lupinus littoralis* (seashore lupin) and *Lupinus rivularis* (riverbank lupin), further endangering the survival of those native ecosystem integrated species.*

Photo credit: Fran Cox



⇒More⇒

Yellow Bush Lupine, cont'd

Lupines were once believed to be wolf-like, devouring soil nutrients (the genus name comes from Latin lupus, meaning wolf). In fact, they prefer poor soil, which they do not further deplete. Tree Lupine, one of the most handsome species in the genus, grows rapidly, and its deep roots make it an effective and beautiful stabilizer of shifting coastal dunes; portions of San Francisco that were once unstable sand were reclaimed by Tree (or Bush) Lupine.

The California Invasive Plant Council has declared Tree Lupine an invasive species outside its native range which is south of Marin County.



We can stop this invasion, guaranteed.

If the plant is in Marin County or points north, chances are it is invasive: see <http://www.cal-ipc.org/ip/management/ipcw/pages/detailreport.cfm?usernumber=60&surveynumber=182.php>

www.cal-ipc.org/ip/management/ipcw/pages/detailreport.cfm?usernumber=60&surveynumber=182.php

If the plant is south of Marin County, it is in its native range, therefore it is not invasive: leave it alone.

Photo credit: John M. Randall, The Nature Conservancy, Bugwood.org



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"Strawberry tree"

Arbutus menziesii (Pacific Madrone)

Such a beautiful thing:
Glossy green leaves +
clusters of creamy white
blooms + bright red fruits =
exquisite characteristics.

But the most famous of the
Madrone's features is the
cinnamon brown/red bark.
The trunk and branches of
this Northwest Native
evergreen are wrapped in
bark of an extraordinary
color that peels away in
summer to reveal lighter tan
underneath.

Long favored by landscape
artists, no two Madrone's
are alike. Each trunk bends
and twists in a style all it's
own. Plant a group of three
perhaps 2 feet apart—an
excellent focal point in the
landscape.



Photo credit: jbrew (one of a growing number
of generous photogs sharing works via flickr)

⇒ More ⇨

"Strawberry tree" cont'd

Wally suggested using stakes during the early years to keep these contortionists from going 'too much' horizontal. A fine tip on growing Madrone from our favorite native plant grower!

This handsome evergreen tree is a delight to birds year-round. The blooms are veritable honey-pots that attract hummingbirds by the score.

Leslie L. Haskin in his book, Wild Flowers of the Pacific Coast, writes:

"During the season of 1919, I slept beneath the sheltering branches of a wide-spreading madrona, and every morning at the first break of dawn, I was awakened by the humming and twittering of the rufus and caliope hummingbirds, which arrived in swarms and contended noisily among themselves for the coveted nectar. A little later in the morning would come flocks of brilliant purple finches to feed greedily on the corollas of the fresh blossoms, showing their appreciation by stopping to warble loudly between mouthfuls."

Imagine the delight of this young botanist to discover the wondrous beauty of hummingbirds serving such a sweet wake-up song!

Photo credit: Bri Weldon



"Strawberry tree" cont'd

The name "strawberry tree" (*A. unedo*) may also be found in relation to *A. menziesii* (though it has no relation to the strawberry fruit). In the United States, the name "madrone" is used south of the Siskiyou Mountains of south-



ern Oregon and Northern California and the name "madrona" is used north of the Siskiyou Mountains, according to the "Sunset Western Garden Book."

The Concow tribe calls the tree dis-ta'-tsi (Konkow language) or kou-wät'-chu.

In British Columbia it is simply referred to as arbutus.

It is also known as the madroño, madroña, or bearberry.

Its species name was given it in honour of the Scottish naturalist Archibald Menzies, who noted it during George Vancouver's voyage of exploration.

A whole bunch of "strawberries"

Photo credit: bobrpics via Flickr.
Pacific Madrone, Jacksonville Woods

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"Strawberry tree" cont'd

The Madrone has no rules.

The more individualistic the tree's appearance, the more interesting the specimen.

Funny how this works.

We desire to be unique, to be trend-setters, to avoid being "one of the Joneses."

Yet other times, we long to "fit in." We strive toward the acceptance of likeness.

Curious.

Photo credit: Clayoquot



[⇒More⇒](#)

"Strawberry tree" cont'd

This photograph of the Madrone's flowers taken from the playful perspective of bottom to top is lovely. Each flower and bud can be seen separately, rather in a bunch. Delectable.

Photo credit: The
unique perspective
of Elaine with Grey
Cats



[⇒More⇒](#)

"Strawberry tree" cont'd

This individual was growing beside the road along the Willamette Valley. Because there were no other plants or structures to block even a smidge of sunlight, the flowers celebrated the unfettered exposure.

Flowering Madrone on
a Monday morning.



⇒ More ⇒

"Strawberry tree" cont'd

These unripe fruits are growing exactly where a blossom reigned just weeks ago. Soon they will ripen to brilliant red and call all who dare to harvest them.

The humans can eat them raw or cooked. Reports vary on palatability. Bland, very sour according to another report. After boiling the fruit can be dried for later use.

Native American peoples ate wild Madrone berries growing in the Northwest U.S. and Canada.

They can be eaten right from the tree, blended with other foods or dried. It is always good to have a wild ingredient with your meals and drinks.

Wild edibles give us something you can not find in cultivated foods. They may be included in smoothies and desserts quite successfully.

"I used these berries in a Madrone berry raw cheesecake recipe using raw nuts, Irish moss (to thicken), and other superfoods like maca root and bee pollen. VERY Yum!"

These ideas come from the website, Superfoods for Superhealth, "Extraordinary Foods for Everyday Living," <http://www.superfoods-for-superhealth.com/madrone-berries.html>

We neither endorse nor recommend eating any food from the wild unless positive identification has been made.

Photo credit: Jina Lee



⇒More⇒

"Strawberry tree" cont'd



This tree is confined to a measured range along the Pacific Northwest coastline.

The map at left illustrated this area in green and shows the red thread of Interstate highway I-5 accompanying the represented trees in their natural habitats.

Once identification is made, look across the panorama to pick out easily those tree tops with just the shade of green of the individual identified. At the end of May 2016, this was the perfect piece to see how thickly the madrones grow there!

Closeup of Pacific Madrone bark
Photo credit: Mlouns



⇒More⇒

"Strawberry tree" cont'd



The name "s

The cinnamon-coloured bark in combination with the dark green of the leaves and the whiteness of the blossom is absolutely stunning.

As the flowers are spent, red and orange and yellow fruit, usually in the same cluster, appear and by autumn are mature.

Hardy, uncomplaining, drought-resistant, a thing of beauty all year round.



Photos by Professor Wilbur Bluhm



This & That

Notes from Jennifer



Aquilegia formosa, Red Columbine
Photo credit: J & J

Where did all these kids come from? Days have been quiet and calm. You could go to the store any old time before noon and have a very pleasant experience. Now the place is full of fidgety short people with pocketsfull of change and every one of them is either talking or jumping up and down.

They are not quiet. They seem to have no concept of outside and inside voices. I bet not one of them has washed his hands since he got up this morning.

That does it. I'm going to get my ice cream at the store instead of from this

guy in the little cart. It's very convenient to have him come by every day but the clientele is too active for me.

Maybe I'd better take another nap.



Until next time,
Jennifer

