

**Oceanspray***Scientific:* Holodiscus discolor (Pursh) Maxim.*Primary category:* Shrub*Habitat:* Forests*Description (by Bosky Dell Natives):*

Oceanspray is a loosely branched, deciduous shrub (to 15 ft.) belonging to the rose family. It is closely related to spiraeas, and has been called 'wild spiraea'. The distinctive triangular leaves are smooth above, soft and woolly underneath. Young twigs are covered with soft hairs. Dainty white flowers appear in late spring or early summer, and grow in long, drooping sprays. Each cluster includes hundreds of flowers, resulting in a dramatic yet soft lacy look among our native understory.

Seed clusters remain all fall and winter, providing continued visual interest and food supply for wildlife.

Bush-tits love Oceanspray's long drooping seed-clusters. In winter you may find a large group foraging, hanging upside down as they search for insect eggs. These birds also often nest in the shrubs, their nests camouflaged by the sprays of seed-clusters. As leaves open, they hide the nest, and the flowers attract insects which the parents feed the nestlings.

Plant oceanspray with conifers for contrast. Part sun/sun, low-regular water, well-drained soil.

**Images of Holodiscus discolor**[bing.com/images](https://bing.com/images)[See all images >](#)*Lewis and Clark's journal entries (by Bosky Dell Natives):*

*Oceanspray was mentioned in Captain Lewis' diary. This shrub, new to the explorers, was first seen near the Clearwater River, in what is now the state of Idaho. The long, straight stems sent up by oceanspray were used by Native Americans to make arrows, hence the common name arrow-wood. Another common name, iron-wood, reflects the very tough and strong nature of the wood. The name 'cream-bush' comes from the color of its flowers.*