

Cascade barberry, Dull / cascade oregon grape

Scientific: Mahonia nervosa (Pursh) Nutt.

Primary category: Shrub

Habitat: Forests, Grasslands

Description (by Bosky Dell Natives):

Also referred to as dull Oregon grape, this low evergreen shrub thrives in shady places in our westside forests. 2-3 ft. tall, it has dull green leaves with a purplish tinge, which contrast nicely with the yellow flowers & edible, blue berries.

Part sun/shade, low-regular water, well-drained soil.

Images of Mahonia nervosa

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Lewis and Clark's journal entries (by Bosky Dell Natives):

Meriwether Lewis compared two species of Oregon grape in his journal entry of February 12, 1806, from Fort Clatsop. "There are two species of ever green shrubs which I first met with at the grand rapids of the Columbia and which I have since found in this neighbourhood also . . . the stem of the 1st [Shiny, or Tall, Oregon Grape] is from a foot to 18 inches high . . . and erect. it's leaves are cauline, compound and spreading. the leaflets are jointed and oppositely pinnate, 3 pare & terminating in one . . . each point of the their crenate margins armed with a subulate thorn or spine . . . they are also veined, glossy, carinate and wrinkled . . . resembles the plant common to many parts of the U'States called the mountain holley. . . the stem of the 2nd [Cascade, or Dull, Oregon Grape] is procumbent. . . jointed and unbranched. it's leaves are cauline, compound. . . the leaflets 2 1/2 inches long and 1 inch wide. greatest width 1/2 inch from their base . . . they are jointed and oppositely pinnate, consisting of 6 pare and terminating in one, sessile serrate, or like the teeth of a whipsaw, each point terminating in a small subulate spine, being from 25 to 27 in number; veined, smooth, plane and of a deep green." Lewis again referred to Tall Oregon Grape on April 9, near the present-day Bonneville Dam on the Columbia River. "the dogtoothed violet is in blume as is also both the species of the mountain holley."