

California huckleberry, evergreen huckleberry

Scientific: Vaccinium ovatum Pursh

Primary category: Shrub

Habitat: Brushfields, Forests

Description (by Bosky Dell Natives):

This slow-growing, evergreen shrub with copper-colored new growth has delicious blue berries in late summer, enjoyed by humans and wildlife alike. Huckleberries ripen with the return of the fall chinook.

Evergreen huckleberry can reach 15 feet, but it can also be kept smaller with pruning & greater sun exposure. A handsome choice for woodland gardens, berry patches, and even containers.

Part sun/shade, regular water, acidic soil.

Images of Vaccinium ovatum

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

On January 26, 1806, Lewis wrote in his journal "this shrub retains its verdure very perfectly during the winter and is a beautiful shrub.-the natives either eat these berries when ripe immediately from the bushes or dried in the sun or by means of their sw[e]ating kilns; very frequently they pound them and bake them in large loaves of 10 or fifteen pounds; this bread keeps very well during one season and retains the moist jeucies of the fruit much better than by any other method of preservation. this bread is broken and stired in cold water until it be sufficiently thick and then eaten; in this way the natives most generally use it."