

Arbutus menziesii Pursh

Pacific Madrone

Description: Erect shrub to tree to 40 m high, glabrous to hairy, burlled or not, bark smooth at first, then shredding or fissured, brick red, twigs stout. Leaves alternate, evergreen, leathery, blade <12 cm long, ovate to oblong, glabrous, rounded to pointed at tip, entire to minute-serrate, abaxially ± white, adaxially bright green. Inflorescence a drooping panicle. Flowers <8 mm, corolla yellow-white or ± pink, sepals 5, fused at base, corolla urn-shaped, petals 5, fused. Fruit a berry, <12 mm, spheric, orange-red, papillate. Seeds few per chamber. Flowers in spring, March-May.

Habitat: North-facing, shaded slopes, well-drained to heavy soils; 100-1,500 m.

Distribution: Native to northern, central, and northern portion of southern California, in mountainous areas from the British Columbia south to Baja California, Mexico. Not in desert areas.

Landscape Position: Best in mesic, open or shaded, well-drained locations, all aspects of house, especially north. Give plenty of room. Hardy to USDA Zone 7-8.

Landscape Attributes: Provides dark green course texture, attractive shape with erect branch tips. Evergreen requiring a little irrigation in arid areas. Tolerates full sun and shade. Single or few trunks with sensuous smooth brick-red bark. Good specimen tree. Fruit is edible.

