

Ceanothus spinosus Nuttall

Greenbark Ceanothus, Redheart

Description: Evergreen, erect-spreading shrub to small tree <6 m high. Leaves are glossy green, simple, and entire, alternate, <5 cm long, leaf blade elliptic to oblong, 1-ribbed from base, firm, thick, upper surface green, glabrous, lower paler, glabrous or hairy, especially on midrib. The bark is greenish and fairly smooth. The flowers are pale blue. The stems are thorny (actually just very stiff twigs), twigs round, ridged, olive-green, glabrous, not changing color. The inflorescence is panicle-like, <15 cm long. The fruit consist of capsules 4-5 mm round, barely lobed, smooth. Flowers in February-May.

Habitat: dry but often shaded slopes, North-facing slopes and canyon bottoms; Ceanothus Chaparral, Coast Live Oak Woodland; <900 m.

Distribution: Native to coastal central and southern California, including Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, southwestern San Bernardino, western Riverside, and San Diego Counties, and northern 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.

Landscape Attributes: Provides a nice green medium texture, attractive rounded shape with erect spreading branch tips, easily pruned to standard shape. Evergreen requiring no irrigation. Tolerates full sun and shade in coastal areas. Single or few trunks with fairly smooth greenish bark. Bountiful sky blue flowers when blooming.

