



## ***Rhamnusspp.***

### **Family: Rhamnaceae**

## **Buckthorn**

The genus *Rhamnus* contains over 100 species native to: North America [5], the rest from the north temperate regions, South America and South Africa. Many non-native species have been naturalized in the US. The name rhamnus is an ancient Greek name.

*Rhamnus alaternus*-**Mediterranean Buckthorn** (Europe)

*Rhamnus alpinus*-**Alpine Buckthorn** (Europe)

*Rhamnus betulifolia*-**Birchleaf Buckthorn**

*Rhamnus californica*-**California Buckthorn**, California Coffeeberry, Coast Coffeeberry, Coffeeberry, Pigeonberry, Sierra Coffeeberry

*Rhamnus caroliniana*-Alder Buckthorn, Birch Bog, Brittlewood, Buckthorn-tree, **Carolina Buckthorn**, Elbow-brush, Indian Cherry, Pale-cat-wood, Polecat-tree, Polecatwood, Stinkberry, Stink Cherry, Stinkwood, Tree Buckthorn, Yellow Buckthorn, Yellowwood

*Rhamnus catharticus*-Common Buckthorn, **European Buckthorn**, European Waythorn, Purgin Buckthorn

*Rhamnus crocea*-California Redberry, Coffeeberry, Evergreen Buckthorn, Great Redberry Buckthorn, **Hollyleaf Buckthorn**, Island Buckthorn, Island Redberry Buckthorn, Redberry, Redberry Buckthorn

*Rhamnus frangula*-(Europe) Alder Buckthorn, **Glossy Buckthorn**

*Rhamnus purshiana*\*-Bayberry, Bearberry, Bearwood, Bitterbark, Bitterboom, Bittertrad, Buckthorn Cascara, California Coffee, Cascara, **Cascara Buckthorn**, Cascara Sagrada, Chitam, Chittam, Chittern, Chittim, Coffeeberry, Coffeebush, Coffeetree, Oregon Bearwood, Pigeonberry, Shittimwood, Wahoo, Western Coffee, Wild Cherry, Wild Coffee, Wild Coffeebush, Yellow-wood

*Rhamnus zeyheri*-(Africa) **Pink Ivory**, Red Ivorywood

\*commercial American species

The following is for Cascara Buckthorn:

### **Distribution**

The Pacific Coast region from British Columbia (incl. Vancouver Island), south to Washington, Oregon and northern California in Coast Ranges and the Sierra Nevada. Also in the Rocky Mountain region of British Columbia, Washington Idaho and Montana.

### **The Tree**

Cascara Buckthorn grows in bottom lands, but can be found along fence rows and roadsides. It grows scattered among Douglas fir, maples, western redcedar and hemlock. It grows to a height of 40 feet, with a diameter of 1.5 feet. The bark is thin, thick and smooth, developing brown to gray scales.

## The Wood

### General

The sapwood of Cascara Buckthorn is yellowish white, while the heartwood is similar but with a red tinge. It is without characteristic odor or taste, is hard and heavy.

### Mechanical Properties (2-inch standard)

	Specific gravity	MOE x10 <sup>6</sup> lbf/in <sup>2</sup>	MOR lbf/in <sup>2</sup>	Compression		WML <sup>a</sup> in-lbf/in <sup>3</sup>	Hardness lbf	Shear lbf/in <sup>2</sup>
				Parallel lbf/in <sup>2</sup>	Perpendicular lbf/in <sup>2</sup>			
Green	0.50	0.63	6,300	3,270	670	13.4	730	1,150
Dry	0.52	0.96	8,700	6,080	1,310	7.8	1,040	1,610

<sup>a</sup>WML = Work to maximum load.  
Reference (59).

### Drying and Shrinkage

Type of shrinkage	Percentage of shrinkage (green to final moisture content)		
	0% MC	6% MC	20% MC
Tangential	4.6	–	–
Radial	3.2	–	–
Volumetric	7.6	–	–

References: (59)

**Kiln Drying Schedules:** No information available at this time.

**Working Properties:** No information available at this time.

**Durability:** No information available at this time.

**Preservation:** No information available at this time.

**Uses:** Posts, turnery, furniture parts, novelties, bark and wood extract used for laxative.

**Toxicity:** Bark and fruits are poisonous, sap causes dermatitis (2 & 5)

### Additional Reading and References Cited (in parentheses)

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