



By: Lynne Brosch, UCCE Master Gardener of Lake Tahoe

A Few of Our Favorite Natives Focus on Shrubs

Oregon Grape - This native shrub, sometimes called holly grape, is a tough plant that can truly survive with little to no care after it is established. When I first came to Tahoe I owned a home with all native plantings that had been abandoned for some time. I also was gone from April to September. The back yard was loaded with Oregon Grape that received no attention and virtually no water most of the summer except for the occasional shower. It was growing beautifully and actually needed to be cut back after years of neglect. This plant spreads more in width than in height and should not reach more than 3 feet tall. In the spring you will see yellow flowers and then the dark bluish black berries arrive which grow in clusters like grapes. This is an evergreen shrub which makes it even more appealing in the landscape when the deciduous shrubs have lost their leaves. It does well in full sun. Do plan ahead when planting to keep in mind that it will develop considerable width and overgrow anything planted next to it.



Woods' Rose - This fairly quick growing bush develops light pink to pink flowers in spring and then later in the summer forms dark red rose hips. In fall the leaves will turn red-orange. This plant has been described as needing moist environments but I have seen it thrive in empty lots with no care. It would appear to be a tough survivor in our sometimes difficult climate. Be aware that it can spread and grow very large and it can become quite messy if you are not pruning. This may not be what you want in your neatly planned perennial garden. Give it space away from the rest of your garden and let the birds arrive.



Serviceberry - A great meal for the birds, this can be a very tall shrub depending on the variety. If you want to fill a large space under your trees this will work well. It requires part shade especially in our more recent hotter summers. Even better, the critters don't usually bother it, including deer. It has a great flowery display and then develops a bluish purple berry which will be snatched quickly by the birds.

To learn more about these wonderful natives and more great native plants, see the resources listed below.

Tahoe Friendly Garden- Native & Adapted Plant List:

<http://ucanr.edu/sites/mglaketahoe/files/274111.pdf>

Backyard Native Plants: http://tahoercd.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Backyard-Native-Plants-Booklet_High-Quality.pdf

Home Landscaping Guide for Lake Tahoe:

<http://www.unce.unr.edu/publications/files/nr/2006/eb0601.pdf>

Choosing the Right Plants for Northern Nevada's High Fire Hazard Areas:

<https://www.unce.unr.edu/publications/files/nr/2007/eb0701.pdf>

