

Mahonia aquifolium

Botanical Name: *Mahonia aquifolium*

Common Name: Oregon grape

Morphological Characters

Mahonia aquifolium is an evergreen shrub that is native to rocky woods and coniferous forests in the Pacific Northwest from British Columbia to northern California. It is known by a large variety of different common names including Oregon hollygrape, Oregon grapeholly or Oregon grape. This is a suckering, evergreen shrub with a spreading to upright habit that typically grows 3-6' tall and to 5' wide, although it can be trained to grow taller. It is noted for its yellow flowers in spring, edible blue-black berries in late summer, pinnately compound evergreen foliage and ability to grow well in shade. Each compound leaf (to 10" long) typically has 5-9 spiny, ovate to oblong-ovate leaflets (each to 3" long). New leaves emerge red-tinted in spring, maturing to glossy dark green by summer. Foliage acquires purplish hues in fall and burgundy-bronze tones by winter, sometimes suffering from winter burn.



Growing season and Type

- 1) *Mahonia aquifolium* is an evergreen Shrub. Bright yellow flowers (to 2.5" long) bloom in terminal inflorescences (racemes) in April.
- 2) Flowers are mildly fragrant. Flowers are followed by edible berries that ripen to blue-black by early fall.
- 3) Berries are somewhat sour fresh off the plant, but make excellent jellies. Berries in clusters look like small grapes, the foliage is holly-like in appearance and the flower is the State Flower of Oregon.



1



2



3

- 1) Flower of *Mahonia aquifolium*
- 2) Leaf of *Mahonia aquifolium*
- 3) Tree of *Mahonia aquifolium*

Source: www.pfaf.org/user/plant.aspx