



Project BudBurst

A National Phenology Network Field Campaign for Citizen Scientists



www.budburst.org

Common Name: Creeping barberry, Creeping Oregon grape

Scientific Name: *Mahonia repens*, or *Berberis aquifolium* var. *repens*

Plant Family: Berberidaceae

Identifying Characteristics:

Size: Creeping barberry is an evergreen shrub usually about 80 cm (31 in) in height.

Leaves: Leaves are variable, pinnately compound, with 5 – 7 leaflets, each 2 to 7 cm (0.75 to 2.75 in) long. The leaves are arranged alternately along the stem, attached by 1 to 6 cm (0.4 to 2.4 in) petioles. Each leaf is made up of 3 – 11 round to elongated leaflets with spine-toothed margins.

Flowers: Flowers are borne in branched clusters at the sides or tips of branches. Each flower has 9 sepals produced in 3 tiers and 6 petals produced in two tiers of three petals. The flowers develop into spherical to elliptical, purple-black berries in grape-like clusters.

Bark: On young trees, the bark is smooth, but it develops ridges and furrows in older trees. Young twigs are covered with a waxy coating that appears shiny and green to purple in color.

Habitat: Creeping barberry favors hills, dry slopes, and canyons in coniferous forest, oak woodland, and chaparral, often in partial shade.

Bloom time: Generally flowers from April – June.

Information source:
The Jepson Manual. 1993. University of California Press

Did you know? Creeping Oregon grape is adapted to habitats that have regular wildfires. It regenerates after a fire when dormant buds sprout from the surface of the underground rhizomes.



Photograph by Margaret Williams, Courtesy of Nevada Native Plant Society, @Nevada Native Plant Society.



Photograph by R. A. Howard, Courtesy of Smithsonian Institution

Phenological observation:
Budburst/First Leaf, First Flower

Distribution Area:

