



Medium Shrub (5—8')  
Deciduous

Native  
Map #60

***Common Ninebark***  
*(Physocarpus opulifolius)*  
*Family: Rosaceae*

**Leaves:** oval with serrations that point upward, leaves are 1 to 3" long and have 3 to 5 lobes. Fall color is moderate at best on this species, usually in varying shades of yellow and bronze with an occasional maroon-purple in late October.

**Buds:** alternate, shingled and press against the stems, brown, with fuzzy tips.

**Stems:** The young red-brown stems are shiny and smooth with mottled patches of brown, but peel into papery strips with age. There are three distinct linear ridges below the leaf scars, giving the stems an angular appearance.

**Bark:** The older stems develop a strong peeling character, with long brown paper-like sheets peeling off in strips to expose an orangish underbark.

**Flowers:** Ranging from white to various shades of pink, the flowers appear in mid-May in 1 to 2" diameter flattened clusters. Each individual flower is about 1/4 to 1/3" in diameter, and has an unpleasant odor.

**Fruits:** Each 1/4" long fruit appears as a reddish, bladder-like 4-parted capsule, and are borne in dense umbrella-like clusters. They turn brown quickly, and persist through winter to provide moderate food support to birds and small mammals.

**Habit:** Rounded and dense with arching branches, can be somewhat irregular and leggy if unpruned. The limited ornamental features and high maintenance requirements make this a difficult species to site properly.

**Culture:** This tough, adaptable species transplants easily due to its shallow lateral root system. It does well in drought or flooded conditions, acidic or alkaline soils, and full sun to partial shade. It should be renewed or pruned regularly. Powdery mildew can be serious and disfiguring. Regular renewal or rejuvenation pruning may help reduce spores present and keep canopy open for better air circulation. Chlorosis is an occasional problem.

**Cultivars:** 'Gold's Dart' 4-5' tall and wide, good yellow in spring and early summer fading later on. 'Luteus' ('Aureus') 8-10' tall and wide, yellow at first fading to green. 'Nanus' - mounding bank cover 2-6' tall and wide with redder fruits. 'Diablo' reddish purple foliage may turn greenish in full sun and heat., fruit turn reddish in late summer. 'Summer Wine' 5-6' tall and wide, neat & compact branching, finely cut burgundy leaves, button-like pinkish flowers in summer, best in full sun. 'Coppertina' - 8' tall x 5' wide, upright, foliage emerges bright copper turning rich red, best in light shade.



'Dart's Gold' Ninebark



'Diablo' Ninebark



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