



Ecological Concerns Incorporated  
**Central Coast Wilds**  
*Restoring the habitats that sustain us*



**CCW-Newsletter**

**February 2011**

*"Our mission is to nurture ecological relationships, cultivate community partnerships and build sustainable business practices in order to protect and restore biological diversity."*

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## **Current Sales Flyer**

Be sure to check our nursery highlight list with special prices on plants from our stock of over 320 native species.

[\*February Sales Flyer\*](#)

We can deliver large orders. Fee varies, inquire with our nursery staff.

[www.centralcoastwilds.com](http://www.centralcoastwilds.com)

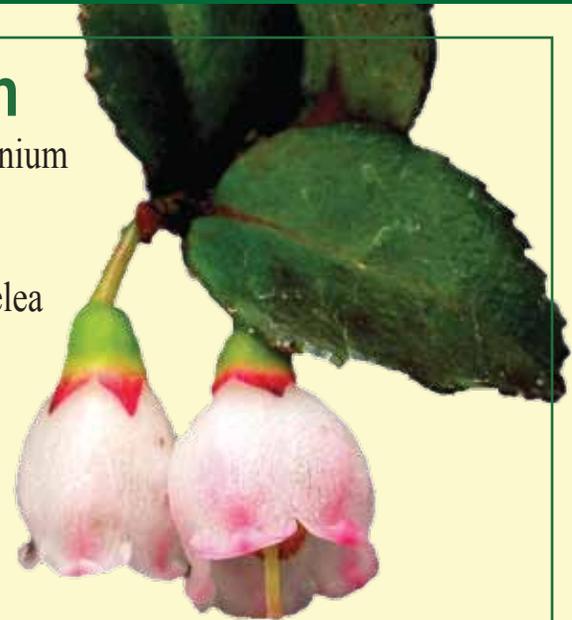
## **Plant of the Month**

**Name/Species:** Huckleberry, *Vaccinium ovatum*

**Family:** Heath (Ericaceae)

**Relatives:** Madrone (*Arbutus*), Azelea (*Rhododendron*), Manzanita (*Arctostaphyllum*)

**Range:** Coastal California with sporadic occurrences in the south and ranging inland in the north.



**Description:** Huckleberry is a compact evergreen shrub growing from 4 to eight feet tall in partial to deep shade. Shrubs will grow tallest under shade, but will produce a greater quantity of sweet berries in partial sun. Small white urn-shaped flowers begin in April and yield shiny dark berries that ripen in August and September. Huckleberries are close relatives of blueberries, and like blueberries require acidic soil conditions, such as the understory of redwood or pine trees.

**Garden Use:** Huckleberry is suitable as a manicured hedge or planted in mass under larger trees. Huckleberry is tolerant of sandy or clay soils and is tolerant of salt spray, so it can be grown along the coast.

## Discount Offer

Through the month of February the nursery will be offering a 10% discount for purchases over \$500 on all regular priced plants in stock. For our wholesale customers this means prices as low as \$3.55/gallon!

**Remember to mention this offer to our sales staff.**

## Coming Events

- [2/19 - Symposium: Beauty & Sustainability With Native Plants](#)
- [4/17 - Going Native Garden Tour](#)
- [5/1 - Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour](#)
- [6/12 - Santa Cruz Native Garden Tour](#)

### Learn More About Us

Office: 831.459.0656  
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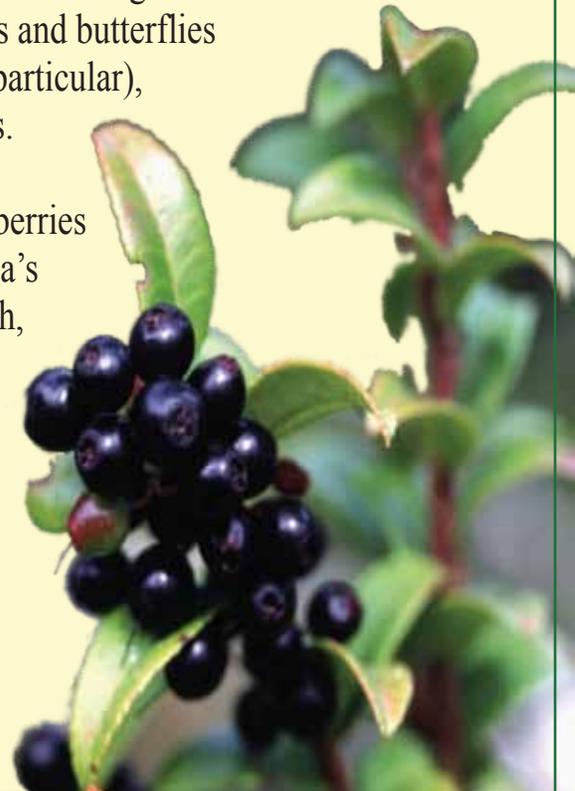
[Driving Directions](#)

[Online Native Plant Inventory](#)  
(call to confirm availability)

In a shady spot, consider combining with the shrub Ocean Spray (*Holodiscus discolor*), and a ground cover such as Inside-Out Flower (*Vancouveria hexandra* or *planipetala*). In a sunnier spot, interplant with the edible Blue Elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*) and Holly-Leaf Cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*), whose taller forms will provide a bit of shade. Add California Lilac (*Ceanothus thyrsiflorus*), for colorful flowers.

**Habitat Value:** Flowers are pollinated by native bees, and the whole plant attracts a variety of local wildlife throughout the seasons: hummingbirds, caterpillars and butterflies (Spring Azure and Brown Elfin in particular), squirrels, and other small mammals.

**Food & Medicinal Value:** Huckleberries are some of the tastiest of California's native berries and can be eaten fresh, dried, or preserved. Some Native American peoples reportedly traveled up to 30 miles to harvest them as they ripened in the fall, eating them mixed with oil or drying them for use in the winter months, when their Vitamin C content was particularly valuable.



## Native Plant Horticultural Tips

### Dormant Season Pruning

Winter is a busy time in the native garden. Even more so when Spring like conditions prevail! An important task to take care of this month is the winter (dormant) pruning. When cold wet winters prevail, pruning can extend until February or March. However, with the current warm weather conditions throughout the Central Coast, pruning needs to occur BEFORE plants start to sprout out their new growth.

## Featured CCW Products

**Native Sod:** Six Drought Tolerant Blends to Choose From @ \$1.99 SF

**Custom Native Seed Blends** for Landscape & Erosion Control

**Root Guard:** Gopher Protection Plant Baskets: 1 - 15 Gallon Sizes

**Organic Fertilizer and Mycorrhizal Packets** @ \$0.50/packet

### Other Services

#### Available from Ecological Concerns Incorporated:

- Complete Landscape Design & Installation Services
- Irrigation System Design, Installation & Service
- Erosion Control Plans: CPESC on Staff
- Grey Water Treatment Systems: Certified Installers on Staff
- Sustainable Landscape Maintenance Service

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The main purpose of pruning is to clear away dead, diseased stems and branches. Another goal is to remove crossing branches, especially if they are touching.

Finally, corrective pruning for larger trees and shrubs may be necessary in order to achieve a desired form.



Plants have a predictable response to winter pruning which includes:

- promotion of leafy, vegetative growth, not flower buds.
- development of new branches from dormant buds
- stimulation of rapid branch growth.

Despite the unseasonable warm weather, the region can still be hit by a significant late winter frost such as we experienced in December and early January. The first thing to realize after a frost is that many plants that look like they are dead will come back. Yet beware that the second and third nights of a freeze generally cause more damage than the first night because the protecting outer foliage has already been damaged.

When frosts occur, additional winter pruning may be part of the strategy for recovering plant health. However, it is often best to wait until the plants start to show signs of recovery before pruning. Pruning too early after a frost can expose the core of plant to greater damage during later frost periods.

The following is a small sample of plants and their winter pruning requirements:

**California Fuchsia-** Cut entire plant back to 1" tall

**Brittlebush-** Cut to 4" stub for bushy plant next year

**Snowberry-** Rejuvenates old patches that have gotten woody

**Coyote Bush-** Selectively prune in summer; coppice every 3rd-4th winter to renew

**Bush Poppy-** Selectively prune outer branches and tip upper shoots; coppicing risky but produces beautiful plant when it works

**Wild Rose-** Can be selectively pruned to thin or control, or coppiced