

TWINBERRY HONEYSUCKLE

Lonicera involucrata Banks ex
Spreng.

Plant Symbol = LOIN5

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Center



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Alternative Names

twinberry, black twin-berry, four-line honeysuckle,
bearberry honeysuckle

Uses

Warning: Twinberry honeysuckle is considered
toxic and should be used with caution.

Ethnobotanic: The Quileute and Kwakwaka'wakw
people used these berries as a black pigment (Pojar &
MacKinnon 1994). The Haida rubbed the berries on
the scalp to prevent hair from turning gray (Ibid.).
A decoction of the bark has been applied to a
woman's breasts to encourage milk flow (Moerman
1998). An infusion was used to treat chest and
stomach complaints and to cleanse the body (Ibid.).
The Carrier boiled the leaves and used the liquid to
bathe sore eyes, or applied the crushed leaves as a
poultice to open sores (Pojar & MacKinnon 1994).

Status

Please consult the Plants Web site and your State
Department of Natural Resources for this plant's

current status, such as, state noxious status and
wetland indicator values.

Description

General: Honeysuckle family (Caprifoliaceae).
Twinberry honeysuckle (*Lonicera involucrata*) is an
erect clustered shrub one to three meters high with
freely exfoliating bark (Peck 1961). The leaves are
opposite, short-stemmed, somewhat elliptical to
broadly lanced shaped, pointed often hairy beneath
(Pojar & MacKinnon 1994). The flowers are yellow,
tinged with red, and cupped by a large pair of green
to purplish bracts. The fruits are roundish or oval,
blackish berries, paired on long axillary stalks and
distinct; ripening August or September (Grimm
1993).

Distribution: *Lonicera involucrata* is widely
distributed across North America from Quebec
westward to Alaska and British Columbia and
southward into California, Colorado, Utah, and
Arizona (McMinn 1939). For current distribution,
please consult the Plant profile page for this species
on the PLANTS Web site.

Adaptation

Twinberry honeysuckle is typically found in moist
forests, clearings, riparian habitats, swamps and
thickets (MacKinnon, Pojar & Coupe' 1992). It
prefers a good moist soil but can succeed in any
fertile soil. This species grows best and produces
abundance of fruit in open sunlight compared to a
lost of fruit when grown in the shade.

Establishment

Propagation by Seed: *Lonicera involucrata* seeds
should be collected from isolated plants and extracted
by maceration in water (Dirr & Heuser 1987). Sow
the seeds as soon as they are ripe in a cold frame.
When the seedlings are large enough, plant them
directly into their permanent positions in late spring
or early summer.

Management

Twinberry honeysuckle berries has been noted as
poisonous. The fruit is bitter and sour and are eaten
by some. Since the European species of honeysuckle
species are regarded as emetic and cathartic, they are
better avoided in favor of something less dubious
(Mozingo 1987).

Cultivars, Improved and Selected Materials (and area of origin)

Somewhat available from native plant nurseries. Contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly Soil Conservation Service) office for more information. Look in the phone book under "United States Government." The Natural Resources Conservation Service will be listed under the subheading "Department of Agriculture."

References

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