



Flowering Shrubs: Ninebark

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Ninebark is a Native Shrub

Ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*) Low Maintenance Shrub with Peeling Bark

The Ninebark Shrub (*Physocarpus opulifolius*), also known as common Ninebark and eastern Ninebark, is a medium to large deciduous shrub with attractive foliage, peeling bark and white cup-shaped flowers in the late spring. Clusters of reddish fruit are produced that are eaten by a variety of animals. The bush is native to North America.

Ninebark gets its name from the old bark that peels off in loose layers on the mature long curving branches. Several layers of reddish to light brown inner bark are revealed. The bark provides winter interest, since the leaves usually hide it during the growing season. This bush is medium to fast growing and can reach heights of up to 3 metres. Ninebark is often used in shrub borders for privacy, erosion control on banks and to provide cover for birds. It is also deer resistant. Ninebark should not be eaten, as all parts of the plant are known to be poisonous.

Varieties to Plant

One variety of Nine Bark that is commonly planted is Diablo Nine Bark (*Physocarpus opulifolius* 'Diablo'). Diablo Nine Bark features showy clusters of white flowers at the ends of the branches from late spring to early summer, which emerge from distinctive pink flower buds. It has attractive deep purple foliage.

Preferred Conditions

Nine Bark is easily grown in a wide variety of growing conditions. It prefers slightly acidic, well-drained soil, with dry to medium moisture levels, in full sun to part shade. This shrub is also drought tolerant.

Care and Pruning

Nine Bark requires very little maintenance. It should be watered regularly until it is established. It can be propagated from hardwood cuttings. Established shrubs require annual pruning to maintain their shape. Pruning should be done early in spring to remove some of the oldest branches by cutting them off at the base. If the shrub is getting too big, a major cutback of the dormant wood (renewal pruning) can be done in the spring. This pruning will maintain the shrub at a 1-2 m size and also result in the higher production of vigorous shoots with larger, colourful leaves.

Problems you Might Encounter

There are no serious insect or disease problems associated with this shrub. Fireblight and leaf spots may occur. Also powdery mildew infections on leaves and stem tips can sometimes occur.

Learn more about ninebark [here](#)>