

## Plant Data Sheet

### Species

Oregon boxwood, *Paxistima myrsinites* (Pursh) Raf.



### Range

Occurs from British Columbia and Alberta south to Mexico and east through the Rocky Mountains. (FEIS database)

### Climate, elevation

Oregon boxwood is a cool-season, evergreen shrub that grows at highly variable elevations from sea level to subalpine regions. Elevations range from 1200 m (3950 ft) to 3353 m (11000 ft). (FEIS database)

### Local occurrence

Oregon boxwood is a dominant shrub in many forested and shrubland community types throughout western North America. Locally, it occurs in coniferous forests, rocky openings or on dry mountain slopes from low to mid elevations. (Pojar and MacKinnon 1994)

### Habitat preferences

Very wide tolerance for environmental conditions: grows in sun or shade; grows from sea-level to subalpine; and grows in dry or moist soils.

### Plant strategy type/successional stage

Oregon boxwood can be a colonizer or increase cover after disturbances by root sprouting. It is generally considered to be a climax, dominant shrub in most vegetation types in which it occurs and is an indicator species of dry to moist, cool sites with well-drained soils. (FEIS database)

### Associated species

Some associates of Oregon boxwood include Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*), Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), subalpine fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*), white fir (*A. concolor*), red fir (*A. magnifica*), hemlock (*Tsuga* spp.), western redcedar (*Thuja plicata*), lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), Gambel oak (*Quercus gambelii*), golden chinquapin (*Chrysolepis chrysophylla*), Port-Orford-cedar (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*), quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*), Rocky Mountain maple (*Acer glabrum*), mountain snowberry (*Symphoricarpos oreophilus*), bunchberry dogwood (*Cornus canadensis*), huckleberry (*Vaccinium* spp.), mallow ninebark (*Physocarpus malvaceus*), lupine (*Lupinus* spp.), mountain sweetroot (*Osmorhiza chilensis*), queencup beadlily (*Clintonia uniflora*), heartleaf arnica (*Arnica cordifolia*), columbine (*Aquilegia* spp.) groundsel (*Senecio* spp.), meadowrue (*Thalictrum* spp.), and pinegrass (*Calamagrostis rubescens*). (FEIS database)

### May be collected as:

Can be propagated from seeds or vegetatively by cuttings or layering. (FEIS database; Wick, et al.

2001)

**Collection restrictions or guidelines**

Fruiting period is June through September. Softwood cuttings can be taken in the spring when juvenile growth is becoming slightly rigid (the timing will vary depending on elevation and seasonal variation). (FEIS database)

**Seed germination**

Seed dormancy can be broken by a period of after-ripening or by a period of cool, moist stratification for several months. (Wick, et al. 2001)

**Seed life**

Up to 10 years. (Wick, et al. 2001)

**Recommended seed storage conditions**

Cool, moisture controlled storage conditions.

**Propagation recommendations (plant seeds, vegetative parts, cuttings, etc.)**

Seeds can be successfully germinated and grown in containers for outplanting. Softwood cuttings are also very successful. Wick, et al. (2001) used soilless rooting media, 2000-3000 ppm IBA rooting hormone and supplied bottom heat and top misting during rooting.

**Soil or medium requirements (inoculum necessary?)**

For cuttings, one study used peat, perlite and vermiculite for rooting after an application of rooting hormone. (Wick, et al. 2001)

In the wild, Oregon boxwood occurs on variable soils from well-drained, shallow, gravelly soils, to clay and silt loams, and cobbly clay. (FEIS database)

**Installation form (form, potential for successful outcomes, cost)**

Container grown cuttings or seedlings are most successful for restoration plantings. Transplants can be installed in spring or fall. (Wick, et al. 2001)

**Recommended planting density**

3' to 5' centers.

**Care requirements after installed (water weekly, water once etc.)**

Water regularly at least during the summer following installation. On sunny or very dry sites, water regularly for 2 growing seasons following installation.

**Normal rate of growth or spread; lifespan**

Oregon boxwood is a low growing shrub, reaching 0.3-1 m (1-3 feet) at maturity. Continual lateral vegetative spreading is common.

**Sources cited**

FEIS database: Accessed on 4/29/03, <http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/shrub/paxmyr/>

Wick, Dale; Johnson, Kathy; Luna, Tara; Evans, Jeff; Hosokawa, Joy. 2001. Propagation protocol for vegetative production of container Paxistima myrsinites (Pursh) Raf. plants (800 ml containers); Glacier National Park, West Glacier, Montana. In: Native Plant Network. URL:

<http://www.nativeplantnetwork.org>

(accessed 29 April 2003). Moscow (ID): University of Idaho, College of Natural Resources, Forest

Research Nursery.

**Data compiled by (student name and date):** Anne Andreu