

Pacific Dogwood

Cornus nuttallii

Distribution: Pacific Dogwood is found from southwest British Columbia, western Washington, and Oregon and on the west slopes of the Californian mountain ranges. There is also a disjunctive population in northern Idaho.

Growth: Pacific Dogwood usually grows to about 20-30 feet (7-10m) but can grow to be 90 feet (30m). It may live to be 150 years old.

Adaptability: Pacific Dogwood likes to be planted in cool, rich, deep and well-draining soil, in part shade, preferably among smaller companion plants, so as it matures it can reach its branches out into direct sun. Provide occasional summer water until established, then stop all supplementary irrigation. Avoid disturbing the soil within a few feet of the trunk.

Comments: The Pacific Dogwood leaves have the veining pattern typical of all dogwoods, where the nearly parallel secondary veins branch from the midvein and curve towards the tip as they near the leaf edge. Like most dogwoods, they have opposite leaf arrangement. The tiny, greenish, purple-tinged flowers are pressed into tight hemispheric clusters. These clusters are surrounded by 4-6 white (sometimes pink-tinged) bracts, creating a showy inflorescence with the appearance of one large flower. Each flower cluster develops into a bumpy ball of hard, red fruits in the fall.

