

## ***Oemleria cerasiformis*, Osoberry**

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### **General Botanical Characteristics**

*Oemleria cerasiformis* is a deciduous shrub or small tree and grows between 5 feet and 10 feet high. Its leaves are alternate, light green, and grow 2 inches to 5 inches long. Its flowers are separate for male and female plants. Both male and female flowers have white petals. Male species flower with 15 stamen while female species flowers with 5 carpels. The 1 to 5 fruits per flower are bean shaped and orange to yellow colored when young and blue to black when mature.



### **Seasonal Development**

Osoberry is often one of the earliest understory shrubs to flower in March and continues throughout April.

### **Distribution/Habitat**

*Oemleria cerasiformis* is distributed in British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest. In Washington and Oregon it can be found from the coast to the west slope of the Cascades. It commonly grows in dry to moist, open woods, stream banks, open areas, and coastal plains at low elevations.



### **Interesting Facts**

- Native Americans made a bark tea from the Osoberry as a purgative and tonic.
- In flowering season, its fruits are quickly eaten by birds and the seeds of Osoberry are spread by birds as well.



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### **References**

Washington State Department of Transportation, Environmental Affairs, December 2002, <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/eesc/environmental/>

Dendrology at Virginia Tech, December 2002, [http://www.cnr.vt.edu/dendro/dendrology/fall/biglist\\_frame.htm](http://www.cnr.vt.edu/dendro/dendrology/fall/biglist_frame.htm)