

## ***Philadelphus lewisii*, Mock Orange**

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### **General Botanical Characteristics**

*Philadelphus lewisii* is a native, deciduous, erect to spreading shrub that grows 3 feet to 10 feet (1m -3 m) tall. The showy flowers occur in clusters of three to fifteen.

### **Seasonal Development**

Lewis' mock orange buds tend to open in early April and leaf April through May. Flowering occurs from May through July. Fruit matures in late summer and seeds are dispersed in September or October. Leaves fall in late September through November.



### **Distribution/Habitat**

Lewis' mock orange occurs in the northwestern United States and southern Canada. It occurs from extreme southern British Columbia south to California, and east to central Idaho, western Montana, and southwestern Alberta. *Philadelphus lewisii* ssp. *Californicus* occurs from the southern Cascade Range of southwestern Oregon south through the Sierra Nevada to Tulare County, California.

Lewis' mock orange commonly occurs in open coniferous forests and at forest edges and in douglas-fir forests on the western slope of the Cascade Range in Oregon. It is usually associated with other shrubs like ocean spray, baldhip rose, and bearberry.

### **Interesting Facts**

- Native Americans used the strong, hard branches of Lewis' mock orange for bows, arrows, combs, tobacco pipes, cradles, and netting shuttles.
- Lewis' mock orange is the Idaho state flower. It is illegal to collect Lewis' mock orange in Idaho for export or sale.

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### **References**

US Forest Service Fire Effects Plant Database, November 2002,  
<http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/shrub/philew/index.html>.

Photo from Br. Alfred Brousseau, Saint Mary's College, November 2002,  
<http://elib.cs.berkeley.edu/photos/>.