

## WACD PLANT MATERIALS CENTER

16564 Bradley Road, Bow WA 98232  
(360) 757-1094

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### Red Flowering Currant (*Ribes sanguineum*)

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#### Distribution

Red Flowering Currant can be found growing throughout the Pacific Northwest at low to mid-elevations.

#### Growth Habit

It is a deciduous shrub that can grow to 12 feet tall and spread approximately 10 feet wide. The mature bush consists of several stems in a loose collection. The attractive pink to deep red flowers bloom early but can persist into May.

#### Adaptability

Red Flowering Currant is found predominantly on exposed, well-drained sites, where it grows very well.

#### Comments

- Red Flowering Currant is a prized species for many reasons. It has not always been that way though. Considerable effort was given to eradicating this plant in the mid 20th century. It is an alternate host for the fungal disease White Pine Blister Rust, which was devastating Western White Pine in the inter-mountain region. The rationale for this was that eliminating the alternate hosts could prevent the disease from affecting these valuable timber trees. It became apparent however that breeding disease resistance into White Pines was a much better long-term solution for both species. Now Western White Pine is returning to the region and Red Flowering Currant can be used as both a conservation species and an attractive ornamental.
- It is an important species for upland soil stabilization in restoration projects. Its rose-pink flowers in February brighten any late-winter garden.
- It is an important species for many of our native pollinators, especially the Rufous hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*).

