



## *Morella californica*

### CALIFORNIA WAX MYRTLE

#### Outstanding Qualities

*Morella californica* (previously *Myrica californica*) is also called California wax myrtle or California bayberry. It is an easy-to-grow medium-sized shrub that can be used in formal or naturalistic gardens. It can be sheared to produce hedges or other geometric shapes, or it can be left to grow into large, loose mounds, providing a background to other shrubs and perennials. Its small, evergreen, leaves are aromatic when crushed. Clusters of black fruit are held on short spurs in late summer, persisting into midwinter and providing food for wild birds. For a naturalistic buffer plant it with *Calocedrus decurrens*, *Oxydendrum arboreum* and *Pinus parviflora* 'Glauca'.

#### Culture Notes

California wax myrtle grows well in full sun to deep shade. The more sun it receives the denser the growth. It prefers a location with moist to well-drained soil, but will tolerate sand and clay. Once established it is completely drought tolerant. It responds well to pruning and will tolerate shearing. Heavy pruning is best done in the late winter with shaping in early to mid summer. It can be limbed up as a small tree over time.



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#### Quick Facts

**Plant Type:** shrub

**Foliage Type:** evergreen

**Plant Height (10-year):** 10 ft. 0 in. (3.05 meters)

**Plant Width/Spread (10-year):** 10 ft. 0 in. (3.05 meters)

**Plant Height-Mature:** 15 ft. 0 in. (4.57 meters)

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**Hardiness:** USDA Zones 7 to 9

**Sun/Light Exposure:** full sun to deep shade

**Water Requirements:** drought tolerant once established

**Wildlife Associations:** birds

**Resistant to:** deer