

California Phenology Project: species profile for California laurel (*Umbellularia californica*)



CPP site(s) where this species is monitored: John Muir National Historic Site



Photo credit: Bri Weldon (flickr)

What does this species look like?

This aromatic evergreen shrub or tree has greenish to reddish brown bark and can be up to 30 meters tall. The shiny smooth leaves are 3 to 10 cm long. 6 to 8 small yellow-green flowers are arranged in round inflorescences, and each flower has both female and male parts. The solitary fruits are 2 to 2.5 cm and resemble an olive.

When monitoring this species, use the USA-NPN broadleaf evergreen trees and shrubs datasheet.

Species facts!

- The CPP four letter code for this species is **UMCA**.
- Native Americans made tea from the root bark and used the leaves to control biting insects.
- The leaves were used medicinally by Native Americans to treat headaches and rheumatism.
- Bay leaves are sold commercially as a food seasoning.
- California laurel provides cover for deer, black bear, and many species of small mammals.
- Used extensively in restoration projects.



Photo credit: Cliff Hutson (flickr)

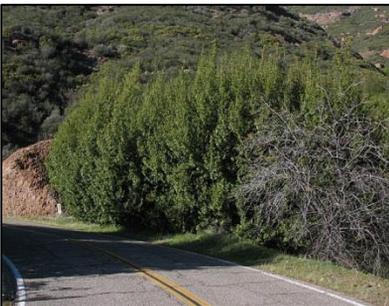


Photo credit: Tony Velois, National Park Service

Where is this species found?

- Occurs at elevations less than 1600 meters.
- Within California, distributed in the following bioregions: Northwestern California, Cascade Range Foothills, Sierra Nevada Foothills, San Francisco Bay Area, Outer South Coast Ranges, scattered in Transverse Ranges, Peninsular Ranges.
- Range extends to southern Oregon.
- Occur in canyons, valleys, and chaparral habitats.

For more information about phenology and the California Phenology Project (CPP), please visit the CPP website (www.usanpn.org/cpp) and the USA-NPN website (www.usanpn.org)

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Frank Crossman

Breaking leaf buds



Bri Weldon

Young leaves



Flower buds

Joshua McDill

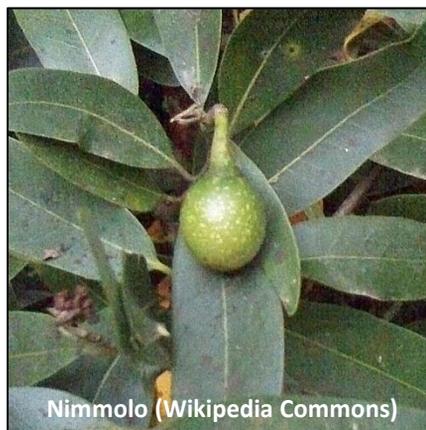
Flowers or flower buds
When monitoring **flower or flower bud abundance** for this species, count each inflorescence as a single flowering structure! For example, if there are two inflorescences with many flowers or buds each, then abundance should be recorded as <3.



Tony Velois

Open flowers
Do you see the anthers and stigma?
Proportion of open flowers should be recorded at the scale of individual flowers, not inflorescences (i.e. estimate the proportion of individual flowers that are open)!

Note: flower phenophases are nested; if you record **Y** for "open flowers" you should also record **Y** for "flowers or flower buds"



Nimmolo (Wikipedia Commons)

Fruits
the fruit is small, fleshy and "olive"-like and changes from green to dark purple or deep brown-purple.



Tony Velois

Ripe fruits
The fruit is considered ripe when it has turned dark purple or deep brown-purple..
Note: fruit phenophases are nested; if you record **Y** for "ripe fruits" you should also record **Y** for "fruits"

Phenophases not pictured: **Recent fruit or seed drop**