

Berberis nevinii A. Gray, NEVIN'S BARBERRY. Shrub, evergreen, sclerophyllous, spinescent, terminal shoots often unbranched and flowering in year 2, in range 125–200(–400) cm tall; shoots with grayish green leaves having sharp points, glabrous, glaucous. **Stems:** cylindric, young stems to 2.5 mm diameter, without spines, with persistent petioles, soon covered with splitting, reddish brown periderm. **Leaves:** helically alternate, odd-1-pinnately compound, in range with 1–5 leaflets and typically lateral leaflets paired, the leaflets sessile (terminal leaflet appearing petiolulate but on rachis extension), petiolate, with stipules; stipules 2 (not distinguishable), fused to petiole margins = spinescent margins; petiole half-sheathing, 5–9 mm long, with spinescent margins having several sharp points to 4 mm long, the longest points next to leaflets, swollen and rimmed at top, red to reddish brown and conspicuously glaucous, abscising above rim and persistent; rachis (petiole rim to terminal leaflet blade) cylindric, to 45 mm long, wiry, rose-colored and glaucous, conspicuously swollen at leaflet attachment; petiolules absent; blades of leaflets narrowly ovate to lanceolate, in range (8–)20–50 × 10–16 mm, terminal leaflet > lateral leaflets, rigid (initially thin and flexible), somewhat crisped, tapered and ± symmetric at base, spinose-toothed and wavy on margins with sharp-tipped teeth, the edge pale green and somewhat transparent, the teeth 8–16 per leaflet and alternately ascending and descending, each tooth terminated by a point 3–4 mm long whitish at base to orange at tip, pinnately veined with the midrib raised on lower surface, with netlike minor venation, glaucous, lower surface minutely papillate. **Inflorescence:** raceme, axillary, lax and loose, arising from dormant bud and having hard bud scales at base, raceme spreading to ascending, in range 3–8-flowered, bracteate; peduncle < 15 mm long, red; bractlet subtending pedicel ovate to lanceolate, 2–5.5 mm long (if pedicels opposite bractlets ± fused), acute to acuminate at tip (3-toothed) and the largest ± spine-tipped, midrib often raised on lower surface, glaucous, persistent; pedicel straight, at anthesis to 13 mm long increasing 2× in fruit, with 1–2 bracteoles subtending flower, the bracteoles spreading, opposite to subopposite, ovate to lanceolate, 1–1.5 mm long, green and often glaucous, persistent. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 7–9 mm across; **sepals** 6 in ± 2 whorls, unequal, progressively larger toward center, deciduous shortly after anthesis; outer 3 sepals ovate, 0.7–1.5 mm long, yellowish green; inner 3 sepals strongly cupped and roundish to broadly obovate, 3–3.5 mm long, greenish yellow, with 5 veins radiating from base; **petals** 6 in 2 whorls, ascending to spreading during midday, cupped-obovate, in range 4–5 mm long, bright yellow, with 2 nectaries on upper surface at base of each petal; **nectaries** = inconspicuous swelling at base on each side of filament; **stamens** 6, opposite petals, ± free but weakly attached to petal bases at nectary, in range ± 2 mm long, sensitive to touch and moving toward stigma; filaments yellow, with 2 reflexed, 3-toothed to truncate appendages at midpoint; anther dithecal, ± 1 mm long, yellow, with anther sacs lateral and subterminal, yellow, opening by valves, the valves spreading to erect, roundish, ± 0.5 mm diameter; pollen pale yellow to whitish; **pistil** 1, spheroid, ± 1.3 mm, greenish; ovary constricted below stigma, 1-chambered with ca. 8 basal ovules; style absent; stigma capitate-discoïd with a depressed center, wider than pistil. **Fruit:** berry, dry at maturity, typically 4–6-seeded, subspheroid, 5–6 × 4–5.5 mm, reddish, with persistent, discoïd stigma to 1.6 mm diameter; pulp absent at maturity; bracteoles persistent. **Seed:** narrowly obovoid to broadly ellipsoid, 3.3–4 × 1.5–2.5 mm, green in dry fruit aging dull light reddish brown, smooth. Mid-February–April.

Native. A spinescent, evergreen shrub known from several localities in Griffith Park on steep canyon slopes. It is impossible to tell which populations are native and which were planted in the 1900s, when Nevin's barberry was available in the horticultural trade. Cultivated selections also tend to have larger inflorescences, with up to thirteen flowers and longer petals and stamens, so some larger reproductive values should be expected. *Berberis nevinii* has a loose, axillary raceme of yellow flowers. Its spheroidal fruits are reddish and air-filled at maturity, although reported to be juicy and fleshy in other accounts; within the hollow fruit are found four to six green, obovoid seeds, which dry brown.

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