

## *Mahonia aquifolium* Oregon Grapeholly<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

With holly-like leaves, blue fruits, and striking yellow flowers, Oregon holly has much to offer in the landscape. Plants will grow in sun or shade but should be shaded in the winter to prevent the purplish leaves from browning. Transplanting is most successful with either potted or balled and burlapped plants. Oregon holly reaches three to seven feet tall with an equal spread. Plants grow moderately fast, spreading by the suckering root system.

### General Information

**Scientific name:** *Mahonia aquifolium*

**Pronunciation:** mah-HOE-nee-uh  
awk-kwiff-FOLE-lee-um

**Common name(s):** Oregon grapeholly, Oregon hollygrape

**Family:** *Berberidaceae*

**Plant type:** shrub

**USDA hardiness zones:** 5B through 8 (Fig. 1)

**Planting month for zone 7:** year round

**Planting month for zone 8:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** border; mass planting; container or above-ground planter; specimen; accent

**Availability:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

### Description

**Height:** 3 to 6 feet

**Spread:** 3 to 4 feet

**Plant habit:** upright

**Plant density:** open

**Growth rate:** slow

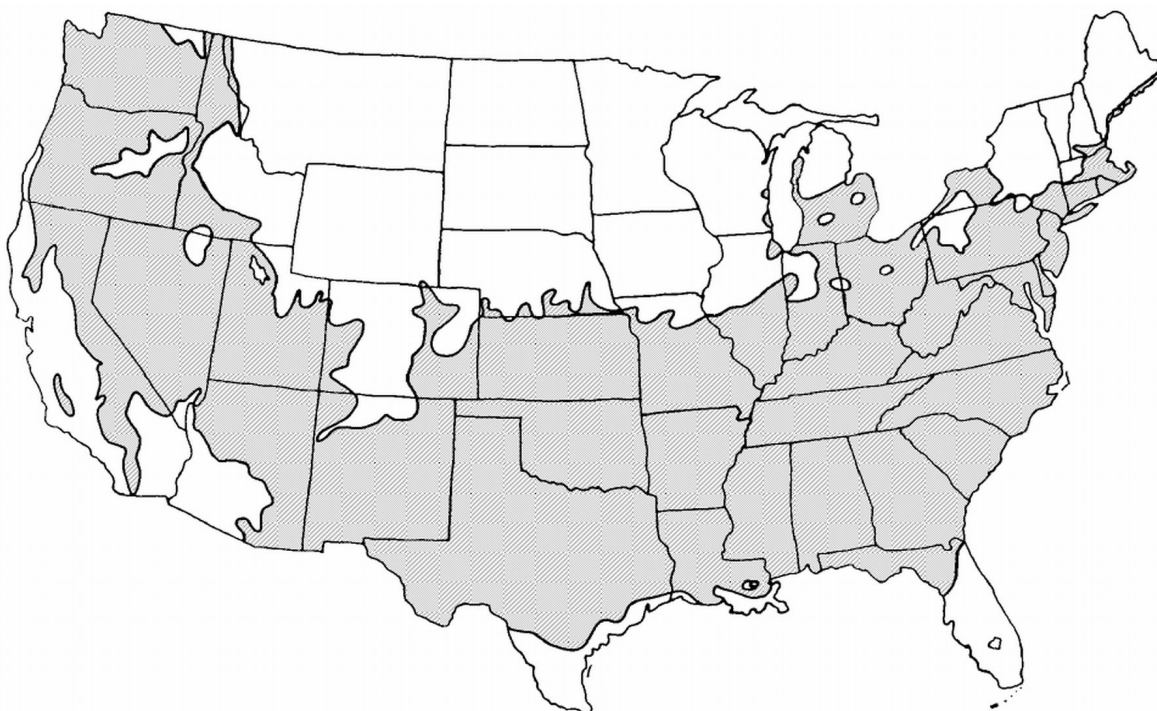
**Texture:** coarse

### Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate

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**Figure 1.** Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Leaf type:** odd-pinnately compound

**Leaf margin:** spiny

**Leaf shape:** ovate

**Leaf venation:** pinnate; palmate

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

**Flower color:** yellow

**Flower characteristic:** winter flowering; spring flowering; pleasant fragrance

**Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** oval

**Fruit length:** less than .5 inch

**Fruit cover:** fleshy

**Fruit color:** black

**Fruit characteristic:** attracts birds

**Trunk and Branches**

**Trunk/bark/branches:** not particularly showy; typically multitrunked or clumping stems

**Current year stem/twig color:** brown

**Current year stem/twig thickness:** thick

**Culture**

**Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun; plant grows in the shade

**Soil tolerances:** slightly alkaline; clay; sand; acidic; loam

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Soil salt tolerances:** unknown

**Plant spacing:** 24 to 36 inches

### **Other**

**Roots:** usually not a problem

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive

**Pest resistance:** no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

### **Use and Management**

Cultivars include: 'Compacta' - about three feet tall; 'King's Ransom' - upright with bluish green leaves that turn bronze-red in winter, somewhat more tolerant of winter weather 'Mayhan Strain' - dwarf with glossy leaves; 'Repens' - can be used as a ground cover.

### **Pests and Diseases**

Several leaf spots may be seen, but infected leaves can be picked off and destroyed.