

## ***Ribes sanguineum*, Red Flowering Currant**

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### **General Botanical Characteristics**

*Ribes sanguineum* is a twiggy deciduous shrub less than 4 meters high. Leaves are irregularly toothed and finely serrate with blade 2 cm to 7 cm. It has bright to pale pink flowers that droop in luscious bunches. Each flower has a short tube at its mouth with five sepals and five reduced sepals spreading out.



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### **Seasonal Development**

It blooms upright from mid-February through early May. Blackish berries appear late spring and summer.

### **Distribution/Habitat**

It grows in open to wooded areas (full sun to part shade), moist to dry valleys (good drainage to drought tolerant), and lower mountains. It is native to the Pacific Northwest. It is distributed from the coast to the eastern side of the Cascades in Washington and northern Oregon.

### **Interesting Facts**

- Native people use them as a food plant.
- Despite their bland taste, Coast Salish people ate them fresh.
- It is also called “White Icicle” because of the white flowering form that blooms before the colored varieties.

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## **References**

Ketzel Levine's talking plants, November 2002,  
<http://www.npr.org/programs/talkingplants/profiles/ribessanguineum.html>

Natural history research paper, November 2002,  
[http://rbcml.rbcm.gov.bc.ca/nh\\_papers/nativeplants/ribes.html](http://rbcml.rbcm.gov.bc.ca/nh_papers/nativeplants/ribes.html)

Photo from Central Washington native plants, November 2002,  
<http://www.cwnp.org/photopgs/rdoc/risanguineum.html>