Native Plant of the Month

Silk Tassel Bush
Garrya elliptica

• The silvery-cream, 6”-12” male catkins give this plant its common name.
• Female plants have shorter tassels and produce the seed.
• The evergreen leaves emit a sweet, spicy odor when crushed.
• The silky tassels produce silky-woolly fruit that attracts birds such as robins.
• This early successional species often appears after fire as seed dormancy is broken by heat.
• Silk tassel bushes fix nitrogen in the soil.

Landscape Value

A highly prized evergreen shrub, silk tassel bush has a glorious display of catkins in late winter and attractive scented foliage.

Silk tassel bush may grow to 20 feet as a small tree, yet remains densely leafy and elegant in form.

Foliage and bloom can be used in making striking floral arrangements.

Silk tassel bush does best in a sunny location, with good drainage, and warm soil. Male plants are preferred, but be sure to include females in naturalized settings for ongoing self-sowing and fruit production for wildlife.

Photo by Heidi Bohan

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