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Berberis haematocarpa

[Synonyms : *Berberis nevinii* var. *haematocarpa*, *Mahonia haematocarpa*, *Odostemon haematocarpa*]

MEXICAN BARBERRY is an evergreen shrub. Native to south-western North America it has scented, pale yellow flowers.

It is also known as *Algerita* (Spanish), Barberry, Red barberry, Red-fruited barberry, Red-fruited mahonia, and Red Oregon-grape.

Haematocarpa is made up of Greek *haemato-* (bloody) and *carpo-* (fruit) components meaning ‘with blood-red fruit’.

The small berry-like, pleasantly acid-tasting, bright red fruit are used locally both raw and in jams and other preserves.

A yellow dye has been obtained from the bark and a green one from the leaves. The fruit can produce purple and green dyes.

Mexican barberry is grown in some areas as an ornamental plant.

Medicinally, local herbalists have used the roots to treat dysentery.