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Juniperus oxycedrus

[Synonyms : *Juniperus oxycedrus* subsp. *rufescens*, *Juniperus rufescens*]

PRICKLY JUNIPER is an evergreen shrub or tree. Native from the Mediterranean to Iran, it has glossy reddish-brown berry-like fruit.

It is also known as Brown-fruited juniper, Cade, Cade juniper, *Enebro* (Spanish), *Jalovec červenoplodý* (Czech), Juniper, *Kado* (Esperanto), Large brown-fruited juniper, Large juniper, Medlar tree, Phoenician juniper, Prickly cedar, Sharp cedar, *Stech-Wacholder* (German), *Wacholder* (German), and *Zeder Wacholder* (German).

Its heartwood is distilled to yield an oil.

Oxycedrus is derived from Greek *oxy-* (sharp, acute) and the genus name *Cedrus* components meaning ‘pointed cedar’.

Some authorities suggest that prickly juniper is the ‘heath in the desert’ referred to in the *Bible*. Remains of the berry-like cones were found in the tomb of the Egyptian boy-king,

Tut’ankhamun (died c.1340 BC).

Its durable wood decays slowly and was used for many of the classical Greek statues. It makes good charcoal and has also been used for cabinetmaking and the outer casing of pencils.

The oil (referred to as Juniper oil, Oil of Cade or juniper tar) has been used for centuries in veterinary medicine.

Today the oil from the heartwood is a commercial ingredient found in ointments and soaps. Medicinally, Juniper oil has been used to treat toothache and for centuries various skin diseases, including chronic eczema.