

*Juniperus oxycedrus*

[Synonyms : *Juniperus heterocarpa*, *Juniperus oxycedrina*, *Juniperus oxycedrus* var. *brachyphylla*, *Juniperus oxycedrus* subsp. *rufescens*, *Juniperus oxycedrus* forma *viridis*, *Juniperus oxycedrus* var. *wittmanniana*, *Juniperus rufescens*, *Juniperus souliei*, *Juniperus tenella*, *Oxycedrus echinoformis*, *Oxycedrus ericoides*, *Oxycedrus withmanniana*]

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

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

Its heartwood, branches and leaves yield an oil (referred to as Juniper oil, Oil of Cade or juniper tar) used particularly in France and Turkey.

*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.

Prickly juniper is grown in southern Europe as an ornamental plant in parks and gardens.

The oil (Oil of Cade) has been used for centuries in veterinary medicine.

Today the oil (Juniper 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.