CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARD

A FLORA OF NEVADA. NO. 26.

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ELAEAGNACEAE OF NEVADA

by

F. R. FOSBERG

February 3, 1941.

Issued by

The Division of Plant Exploration and Introduction,
Bureau of Plant Industry,
U. S. Department of Agriculture,
Washington, D. C.

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Work Projects Administration of Nevada,
Projects, O. P. 65-2-04-13, W. P. 658;
O. P. 165-2-04-21, W. P. 752.

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Collaborator

University of Nevada.

Address all queries concerning this publication to the Division of Plant Exploration and Introduction, Bureau of Plant Industry, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

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ELAEAGNACEAE OF NEVADA

By F. R. Fosberg

Shrubs or small trees, conspicuously silvery or brownish lepidote, branchlets often spinose; leaves alternate or opposite, simple, entire, without stipules; flowers perfect or unisexual, with tubular, terete or prismatic calyx, this persistent, accrescent, and closely investing the fruit, becoming fleshy, usually 4 or 2 lobed, lobes valvate; corolla none; stamens as many as or twice as many as calyx lobes, alternating with or alternate and opposite them, inserted in the tube; ovary superior but closely invested by calyx and, especially in fruit, appearing inferior, one celled with one erect ovule, style 1; fruit a drupe, either fleshy and succulent or rather dry and mealy.

Family probably best regarded as composed of one genus (cf. A. Nelson, American Jour. Bot. 22: 681-683. 1935), though three genera are recognized by many botanists.

ELAEAGNUS L.

ELAEAGNUS L. Gen. Pl. ed. 5: 57. 1754.

<u>Hippophae</u> L. Gen. Pl. ed. 5: 449. 1754.

<u>Shepherdia</u> Nutt. Gen. Am. 2: 240. 1818.

<u>Lepargyrea</u> Raf. Am. Monthly Mag. (1818): 176. 1818.

Characters of the family.

Three species known from Nevada, which may be separated by the following key:

Plant with conspicuous brown scales mixed with the silvery ones.

1. E. canadensis.

Plant only silvery, brown scales absent or inconspicuous.

Leaves oblong or elliptic, rounded at apex, branchlets thick and short, fruit red, quite fleshy, about 5 mm. long.

2. E. utilis.

Leaves lanceolate, acute, branchlets slender, flexuous, fruit silvery, not very fleshy, about 1 cm. long.

3. E. angustifolia.

An additional species, E. commutata Bernh., may possibly be found eventually in Nevada, as it is known to the north and east. It may be distinguished by having brownish branchlets and silvery leaves, with fruit silvery.

1. ELAEAGNUS CANADENSIS (L.) A. Nels. Am. Jour. Bot. 22: 682. 1935.

Hippophae canadensis L. Sp. Pl. 1024. 1753.

Shepherdia canadensis Nutt. Gen. 2: 240. 1818.

Shrubs with smooth gray bark, not spiny, branchlets bright rusty brown; leaves opposite, ovate, rounded at apex, green and slightly lepidote above, densely lepidote, mixed brown and silvery, beneath, petiole usually 5 mm. or less long; flowers small, dioecious, in few- (usually 3-) flowered axillary cymules, sessile, densely brown-lepidote, with 4-parted

calyx, 8 stamens; fruit red, juicy, 7-8 mm. long.

The fruits of this buffaloberry are insipid and not usually eaten. It is known from the eastern edge of the state.

Nevada: Elko and White Pine Counties.

2. ELAEAGNUS UTILIS A. Nels. Am. Jour. Bot. 22: 682. 1935.

Hippophae argentea Pursh, Fl. Am. Sept. 115. 1814.

Shepherdia argentea Nutt. Gen. 2: 241. 1818.

Lepargyrea argentea Greene, Pitt. 2: 122. 1890. (not Elaeagnus argentea Pursh, Fl. Am. Sept. 114. 1814.)

Shrub with silvery, short, often spinose branchlets; leaves opposite or subopposite, narrowly oblong or elliptical, rounded at apex, narrowed to a rather short petiole at base, silvery on both sides; flowers dioecious, appearing with or before the leaves, shortly pedicelled in axils or in small axillary cymules, with 4-lobed calyx; stamens 8; fruit red, juicy, about 4-6 mm. long.

The common buffaloberry, with pleasantly acid fruits used in making jelly.

Nevada: Washoe, Storey, Douglas, Lyon, Humboldt, Lander, Churchill, Mineral, Esmeralda, and Nye Counties.

3. ELAEAGNUS ANGUSTIFOLIA L. Sp. Pl. 121. 1753.

Small somewhat spiny tree with slender flexuous silvery branchlets and purplish-brown branches; leaves alternate, silvery, lanceolate and acute, or the earlier ones elliptic;

flowers axillary, on short pedicels, flower as much as 1 cm. long, calyx cylindrical or somewhat prismatic, 4-lobed, lobes acute; stamens 4; fruit silvery, not very fleshy, about 1 cm. long.

The oleaster or Russian olive, native of Eurasia, cultivated and often escaping.

Nevada: Washoe and Churchill Counties.