



Rhus ovata
Sugar Bush

Large shrub
Sun to part shade
Moderate to little water
Origin: California

This tough shrub is easy to find in the coastal mountains and valleys. It grows quickly to over 10 feet high and wide. The dark waxy leaves are folded down the middle. The leaf stems are red giving a subtle hint of color. Tiny flowers bloom in late winter on stout reddish bracts that look like clusters of cheese puffs at the branch tips. The bracts can be soaked in water to make a refreshing drink hence the common name. Prune hard to renew growth and control size. It will re sprout even from the crown with vigor. It is an excellent shrub of erosion control on slopes. It can be pruned up into a small tree.