

*Oxalis oregana*

“Oregon Sorrel”, “Redwood Sorrel”

Oxalidaceae Family



The Redwood sorrel (*Oxalis oregana*) is a small herbaceous perennial plant. It can be found in British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and California. Mostly near the coasts of these territories. The redwood sorrel prefers deep shade and moist, acidic soil. It has a low drought tolerance. It can't grow in direct sunlight. The leaves of the redwood sorrel will actually curl and close up when too much light hits them. Soon after the light is gone the leaves will unfold and return to their normal flat position. Redwood sorrel grows in redwood and Douglas fir forests because all the trees provide enough shade for proper growth. Seeds and root cuttings carry out redwood sorrel reproduction. Rhizomes divide in early spring while seeds appear throughout the summer.

The redwood sorrel looks similar to a shamrock. The large shamrock leaves rest upon thin stalks and measure between 2-8 inches long. The leaves are bright green and have a purple underside. In early summer, white flowers are produced that have five petals and ten stamens, which produce the seeds.

Native Americans ate redwood sorrel. It is also said to have a high amount of vitamin C. It can be ingested to help an upset stomach, but it is advised to eat small amounts because it contains a mildly toxic substance called oxalic acid. Too much of this acid can cause health problems to whoever eats it.

Redwood sorrel, along with others in the sorrel family, is an invasive species. It can be hard to control if let grow untended. Redwood sorrel produces a sour taste. That is how it got its name from the Greek word *oxys*, meaning sour.

Kingdom *Plantae* – Plants

Subkingdom *Tracheobionta* – Vascular plants

Superdivision *Spermatophyta* – Seed plants

Division *Magnoliophyta* – Flowering plants

Class *Magnoliopsida* – Dicotyledons

Subclass *Rosidae*

Order *Geraniales*

Family *Oxalidaceae* – Wood-Sorrel family

Genus *Oxalis* L. – woodsorrel

Species *Oxalis oregana* Nutt. – redwood-sorrel

Sources:

<http://www.wolframalpha.com/entities/species/redwood-sorrel/kk/vi/ga/>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oxalis\\_oregana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oxalis_oregana)

[http://www.calflora.org/cgi-bin/species\\_query.cgi?where-calrecnum=6015](http://www.calflora.org/cgi-bin/species_query.cgi?where-calrecnum=6015)

<http://www.helium.com/items/2015944-plant-profiles-redwood-sorrel>

<http://pnwplants.wsu.edu/PlantDisplay.aspx?PlantID=123>

[http://www.sfbotanicalgarden.org/Gardens/bloom\\_11\\_05.shtml](http://www.sfbotanicalgarden.org/Gardens/bloom_11_05.shtml)

Plant Information Sheet By Kyle Destiche (Botany 10, Spring 2011)