

*Garrya* Lindl. SILK TASSEL BUSH

*Garrya veatchii* Kell., SOUTHERN SILK TASSEL. Shrub, evergreen, sclerophyllous, much-branched, 150–350 cm tall; dioecious; shoots conspicuously tomentose on young growth; resprouting after fire. **Stems:** young stems cylindrical or elliptic in  $\times$ -section, green becoming reddish, short-tomentose. **Leaves:** opposite decussate, simple, petiolate with pair connected by 2 ledges across node, without stipules; petiole 5–9(–14) mm long, flared at base; blade lanceolate-ovate to elliptic, typically 20–70  $\times$  15–40 mm, flat or  $\pm$  saddle-shaped, roundish to tapered at base, entire and slightly inrolled under or wavy on margins, acute to obtuse with short point at tip, pinnately veined with midrib raised on lower surface, upper surface dark green, with irregular pale spots (from brachysclereids), when very young tan pubescent with curly hairs but becoming glabrous, lower surface whitish gray with felty tomentum. **Inflorescences:** unisexual, catkinlike, pendent, solitary at tip of shoots or several and forming a paniclelike array of catkins, many-flowered, bracteate, conspicuously tomentose. **Staminate inflorescence:** catkin (ament) 30–100 mm long, with 3 flowers per bract, with short pedicels; bracts opposite decussate, ovate, 4.5–6 mm long, fused at base with pair  $\pm$  bell-shaped around rachis, stiff-acuminate at tip, green, densely tomentose; pedicel < 1.5 mm long, the longest of the central flower. **Staminate flower:** radial,  $\pm$  budlike because tepals not fully opened,  $\pm$  3 mm across, densely tomentose, dehiscence of anthers from basal flowers to tip; **tepals** 4, elliptic, 2.5–3 mm long, light green, tomentose on outside, interlocking hairs joining tips, glabrous on inner surface and on margins; **stamens** 4, free, alternate with tepals; filaments short, < 0.5 mm long; anthers basifixed, dithecal, 1.5–2.5 mm long, greenish yellow becoming orange-tinged on outer surface and at tip, longitudinally dehiscent, appearing 4-winged after dehiscence; pollen light yellow; **pistil** absent. **Pistillate inflorescence:** catkin 15–50 mm long, < 60 mm long in fruit, with 0–3 flowers per bract, flowers sessile or with short pedicels; bracts opposite decussate, 6–15 mm long, green, pubescent, the lowest 1–3 pairs without flowers or flower buds aborted, lanceolate, the other bracts broadly triangular and acuminate to highly reduced with minute reddish tips, when fertile 1–3-flowered but 3-flowered in mid-inflorescence; pedicel of central flower < 0.5 mm long, lateral flowers sessile. **Pistillate flower:** **tepals** 2, at base of style, vestigial; **stamens** absent; **pistil** 1; ovary inferior, hemi-ellipsoid with flattened side appressed to axis, densely tomentose, 1-chambered with 2(–3) pendulous ovules from placentae near the top of chamber; styles 2(–3), spreading, conic, 1 mm long becoming 2–3.5 mm long and curved or handlebarlike in fruit, dark red, sparsely hairy. **Fruit:** berrylike capsule, irregularly dehiscent, typically 2-seeded, subspheroid to ovoid and slightly compressed front-to-back, 7.2–9  $\times$  4–8 mm, green maturing purplish or reddish brown beneath silvery, woolly tomentum, initially  $\pm$  leathery later brittle, with persistent styles. **Seed:** hemi-ellipsoid, 4–6.5  $\times$  3–4 mm, greenish becoming purplish and hard, enveloped by a colorless arilloid structure initially fleshy but at maturity thin, wrinkled, and membranous. Late December–late February.

Native. Sclerophyllous shrub of chaparral occurring uncommonly at higher elevation where dominated by *Ceanothus oliganthus*. This shrub has leaves that are reminiscent of manzanita (*Arctostaphylos*) but are instead arranged in pairs and are densely hairy on the lower surface. Local populations begin to form male and female inflorescences (on

separate plants) generally in November, but *G. veatchii* does not flower every year; when it does become reproductive, southern silk tassel is one of the earliest flowering native shrubs. To find mature fruits, you need to wait until at least mid-April, and must look closely to observe purplish fruit wall beneath dense hairs. Fruits of *Garrya* are generally described as berries, but the fruit wall is thin and not fleshy, although pigmented, and dehisces irregularly to expose the arilloid seeds, and so this is more appropriately termed a type of 2-seeded capsule.

B. A. Prigge & A. C. Gibson