

August 22, 2025

SacValley CNPS Demonstration Gardens

EACH GARDEN IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHOWCASE, SHARE AND EDUCATE!



Traditional Resources

Get inspired, be creative and feel connected to the native plants and nature in the traditional resources garden. Observe wildlife uses of plants and share your observations. Everything can be used in this zone, instead of discarding plant material, when maintaining, share cuttings for starts, collect seeds and share them. The original American peoples used over 2,000 native plants for medicinal purposes.

The sacred wisdom and traditions, of indigenous people, were gained over a millennium of generational experiences. Native plants are not only essential to wildlife, but they provide humans food for nourishment, herbal medicinal remedies, and crafting materials for baskets, strings and more! The traditional resources zone highlights, not only pollinating plants and host plants for little critters and birds, but the potential for a deeper bond between humans and our environment in our own yards and community gardens. The benefits don't end with adults either, this interactive garden design is supportive of multiple development domains for children --- intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, physical, and much more. In nature there is no waste, therefore, in this zone, another important feature includes recycling and using every part of the plant, while protecting the landscape's overall health. As we tend to the earth, it tends to us!



Oak galls can be fun!

Maintenance

Volunteers maximize harvest of seeds and berries while maintaining species health. Propagate plant cuttings. Add trimmed pieces to brush pile or other artful or clever uses.

Common name	Scientific Name	Traditional uses
Dutchmans pipevine	<i>Aristolochia californica</i>	Miwok Medicinal use : steeped and drank to cure colds
California Mugwort	<i>Artemisia douglasiana</i>	California mugwort has a long history of use, as a treatment for arthritis and bronchitis, as an insect repellent and ghost repellent. The Chumash, Native Americans of the Santa Barbara area, used the wool from the leaves to cauterize wounds and they used the leaves as a treatment for poison oak. The Luiseño, from Oceanside and north, made arrows from the stems, while the Kumeyaay people prepared a tea from the leaves for use as a decongestant.
Narrow Leaf Milkweed	<i>Asclepias fascicularis</i>	Tewa speaking people of the Rio Grande still make string and rope from showy milk weed fibers. At Zuni, the silky seed fibers are spun on a hand-held wooden spindle and made into yarn and woven into fabric, especially for dancers.
Showy Milkweed	<i>Asclepias speciosa</i>	Fibers made into cordage, sap applied to warts and skin ailments, root decoction used as cold remedy.
Coyote Brush	<i>Baccharis pilularis</i>	Boiled leaves were applied to skin as a remedy for poison oak rash (Timbrook 2007). <i>Baccharis pilularis</i> is used medicinally for hay fever, sinusitis, and headaches in Mexico.
Indian Paintbrush	<i>Castilleja foliolosa</i>	Cahuilla Food, Sweetener. Flowers picked by children to suck the nectar.
Miners lettuce	<i>Claytonia perfoliate</i>	Also known as Indian Lettuce. This lovely annual groundcover plant, All parts of the plant can be consumed, and it has a delightfully mild, earthy, slightly buttery flavor. Stems, leaves and blossoms have high content of Vitamin C, calcium and proteins.
Sticky Monkeyflower	<i>Diplacus aurantiacus</i>	The Miwok and Pomo Native Americans used the plant to treat minor ailments such as sores, burns, diarrhea, and eye irritation. They used the colorful flowers for decorative purposes.
California Fuchsia	<i>Epilobium canum</i>	The Miwok used a decoction of the leaves as a cathartic. Miwok women used this plant as a treatment for hemorrhages following childbirth. The Karuk would also use it as a nectar source, sucking the sweet nectar from the flowers.
Yerba Santa	<i>Eriodictyon californicum</i>	The Amah Mutsun tribe gathered its leaves and used them to treat a surprisingly broad range of ailments: colds, throat and bronchial affections, grippe, asthma and other respiratory ailments, catarrh, stomach aches, vomiting, diarrhea, aching or sore spots, wounds, abrasions, and the pain and swelling associated with fractured bones.
Pine Bee Flower	<i>Phacelia imbricata</i>	The plant is believed to have anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, and antiseptic properties. The leaves can be made into a tea, while the flowers can be used to make a tincture or a syrup. https://www.botanikks.com/plants/phacelia-imbricata-greene-ssp-imbricata/551081/1
Interior Scrub Oak	<i>Quercus berberidifolia</i>	Acorns eaten and forked branched used for cradleboard
Leather Oak	<i>Quercus durata</i>	Thousands of wildlife species depend on these oaks for food and shelter, and they also provide immense health and environmental benefits to neighborhoods surrounding them.
California Wildrose (planted in container)	<i>Rosa californica</i>	<i>Rosa californica</i> is used in California native gardens and habitat gardens, forming colonies, and attracting wildlife with the bright rose hips in autumn. The rose hips were used during World War II for their high vitamin content. They are dried for tea, or for use in jellies and sauces.

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Blue Elderberry	<i>Sambucus nigra ssp. caerulea</i>	Fruit skins used for treating poison oak, wood used for flute and clapper sticks. The Ohlone people used the berries for food, and a decoction of the leaves as a purgative and to treat new colds. A decoction of dried flowers were taken by the Kashaya Pomo people to break a fever. Look for many Sambucus products at your local drug stores.
Narrowleaf Mule Ears	<i>Wyethia angustifolia</i>	The Ohlone, a native tribe of Northern California, who made a thick lather from its roots. The solution was rubbed on the chest as a cure for various respiratory conditions.

A few additional plants of interest

- Brodiaea – bulbs eaten raw or roasted
- Buckeye - Blooms late spring Leached and eaten only in times of famine. Shoots used for arrows, sticks for fire drill, to stupefy or kill fish, and tea from leaves for lung congestion and varicose veins. (California buckeye seeds are toxic to humans in their raw state, and flowers poisonous to honey bees, do not plant near apiaries https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/nrcs144p2_063807.pdf)
- Buttercup – seeds parched and eaten
- Cattail – Young shoots eaten like asparagus, fluff used as diaper material in cradleboard, dried stalks used as fire drill, can be used to make flour.
- Cedar – Root peeled and eaten raw- wood used as a fire hearth – boughs used to line pits for acorn leaching (flavoring) -bark shredded and used as cradle paddling. Seeds boiled for tea – canoes made from trunks – limbs for bows – bark burnt and used as dye for tattoos, bark for cedar homes by the Mt. Maidu.
- Clover – eaten raw or boiled
- Coffeeberry – berries eaten as a laxative, root heated and placed on tooth for toothaches, used externally for poison oak
- Deer Grass – used in basketry
- Madrone – berries eaten – for digging sticks- good coals in fire.
- Maple – Leaves used to wrap food for earthen oven, wood for bows, basketry
- Mistletoe – used as a medicine for colds, rheumatism, dizziness, to prevent pregnancy and hasten delivery
- Pine – Seeds eaten, pitch for glue and gum, as laxative
- Redbud – Shoots used for basketry – flowers eaten and used in garlands for girls puberty ceremony
- Sedge – Roots used in basketry and rope
- Soap Root -used as soap, fish stupefier, eaten in famine, heated and used to heal old sores, fibers and bulb used to make a brush, bulb mashed and applied to relieve sores and poison oak.
- Tule – Stalks used in construction of home-cordage and rope – canoes, seeds ground into flour, roots eaten like potatoes
- Vetch - used in basketry, bark and leaves medicine for headaches
- Yarrow – used in a treat a fever, as poultice to cure sores and impetigo, leaves used on open sores.

Features

California Rose is planted in a container because it spreads aggressively. It is a wonderful plant for wildlife and people!

Rose hips have many uses!

Another resource:

https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/486/files/plantreferenceguide2014_03_03_14.pdf

