



Swimmer Medicinal Plant Garden

Plant List and Medicinal Uses

***Do not attempt to use native plants for any medical purpose without the supervision of a licensed medical practitioner. Careless use of any native or garden plants can be TOXIC, especially for children, the elderly, and pregnant women.**

***Do not harvest any plants from the garden or the wild – this is poaching and illegal.**

Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*) – The large shrub with whitish-yellow flowers in spring and purple berries in summer. Many tribes in California, including the Tongva, use a tea made from the flowers to treat colds and fevers.

California-Fuchsia (*Epilobium canum*) – The low growing plant with red flowers in late summer and fall is loved by the hummingbirds. The Northern California tribes make a tea from the leaves for kidney and bladder ailments. The dried, powdered leaves were applied to the skin for sores, cuts, wounds, and poison oak rashes.

Woolly Blue Curls (*Trichostema lanatum*) – This low growing plant in the foreground has fuzzy blue flowers. The Cahuilla use a tea of the flowers and leaves to cure stomach aches. A tea of the leaves is used by Chumash women after childbirth to help expel the placenta.

Mugwort (*Artemisia douglasiana*) – The colony of plants with lobed leaves dark green on top and white on the bottom. The Tongva, Chumash, and other tribes use it to treat a variety of ailments including toothache, menopause, colds, and urinary problems. The juice of the fresh leaves or a tea of the boiled leaves is used by the Chumash to treat poison oak rash.

Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) – The white flowers next to the path. Yarrow grows all over California, and many tribes use a tea made from the flowers to treat inflammation and as a pain reliever for tooth ache, arthritis, headache, and colds. The dried stems and leaves are used to stop bleeding and swelling.

Buckwheat (*Eriogonum giganteum*) "St. Catherine's Lace" – This buckwheat from Catalina Island has large flower heads. The Island Chumash made a tea from the leaves and stems to treat colds, headaches, and urinary infections. A tea from flowers of other Buckwheat species is used by several tribes as a laxative and mouthwash.

Cottonwood Tree (*Populus fremontii*) – Many tribes use the leaves and bark in a poultice for cuts and bruises. Unopened flower buds are used to make an ointment to treat burns.

Purple Sage (*Salvia leucophylla*) – The small shrub with grayish-green leaves and purple flowers that are a springtime favorite of butterflies. The leaves of Purple Sage are used to prepare a foot soak to treat arthritis pain and drunk as a tea for colds and sore throats.

Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) – The large shrub on the top of the hill with red berries in late fall and winter. The berries are used by the Chumash to treat senility and were eaten in olden times to stave off hunger during famines.

California Poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*) – The official State Flower, it grows wild all over California. The Tongva apply the mashed roots to toothaches and also use it to induce sleep. A boiled tea of the flowers is used to kill hair lice.

Yerba Mansa (*Anemopsis californica*) – The low growing herb along the path with cone-shaped white flowers. A tea made from the roots is used as a cleansing wash for cuts and sores and as a tea for coughs.

Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* species 'Luis Edmunds') – The large shrub in the background with smooth reddish-brown bark. The leaves of some of its many species are known to relieve urinary tract infections. Another is used to control diarrhea and others are used to treat skin sores, rashes, bronchial problems, and headaches.

Lemonade Berry (*Rhus integrifolia*) – The large shrub in the background. Called sorah by the local Tongva tribe, a tea is made from the tart berries and leaves to treat colds and congestion.



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White Sage (*Salvia apiana*) - The medium size shrub with whitish-gray leaves is one of the most important plants in Tongva and Chumash cultures. Both tribes use it as a daily tonic to strengthen and purify the body. The leaves are used to treat sore throats, colds and as a deodorant. The Cahuilla prepare a cleansing shampoo with the leaves.

Catalina Cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia* subspecies *lyonii*) - The small tree on the hill with shiny leaves and cherry-like fruits. For rashes, sores, and wounds, a bath is prepared with the leaves. An infusion of the bark is used for coughs.

Redberry (*Rhamnus ilicifolia*) - The large shrub in the background with shiny leaves and small red berries. The roots and bark are used mainly as a laxative.

California Sunflower (*Encelia californica*) - The shrub on the hill with many small yellow sunflowers. The leaves, flowers, and stems are mashed and boiled by the Tongva to be applied as a poultice for pain or a paste for toothaches.

Black Sage (*Salvia mellifera*) - The green and yellow leafed shrub with small purple flowers favored by the bees in the spring. The leaves are very aromatic and are used to prepare a foot soak to treat arthritis pain and as a tea for colds and sore throats.

California Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*) - The large shrub with thin grayish-green leaves and inconspicuous flowers in late summer. A tea of the leaves is important as a women's medicine for the Tongva, Chumash, Cahuilla and other tribes. A liniment for pain is made with the leaves.

Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*) - The dark green shrub at the top of the hill with small, fuzzy purple flowers. The leaves are used in a tea and as a steam inhalation for coughs, colds, sore throats, and asthma. The leaves are also applied to the skin to stop bleeding.

Scouring Rush (*Equisetum hyemale*) - The medium sized, leafless, wetland plant in the background. The Tongva called it popoot, and used the whole plant as a decoction to treat gastrointestinal disorders. A tea is used for kidney and bladder disorders.

Basket Rush (*Juncus textilis*) - The tall, leafless clump in the background with small clusters of seeds at the tips. The Tongva, Chumash, and most California tribes use the stems to make coiled baskets for storing medicinal herbs and other foods.

Blue-Eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*) - The small grass-like plant in the foreground with blue flowers is in the Iris family. The Tongva tribe make a decoction of the entire plant to treat stomachaches and cramps. It is called 'tupukar ahen' in their language.

Scarlet Bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) - The plants in the foreground with red tubular flowers. The Tongva make a wash from this plant to treat burns. A poultice from the roots and flowers treats sores and swollen limbs.

Mountain Lilac (*Ceanothus* species) - The large shrub in the rear with small shiny leaves and blue flowers in the spring. The flowers and young seedpods are used to make a lather for soap to wash off poison oak oils or cleanse wounds. For itches, sores, and skin irritations, a wash made from the entire plant is applied.

Wild Rose (*Rosa californica*) - The large shrub with prickly stems, pink flowers and red rose hips. The petals are used for colic and teething in babies. The roots are used for colds and the rose hips are used to treat pain, fevers, and sore throat.

Monkey Flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) - The small shrub with orange-yellow flowers that resemble a monkey's mouth. California tribes use the leaves, stems and flowers to treat kidney and urinary problems, diarrhea, and fevers.