

11. Mulefat



Asteraceae – Sunflower Family – *Baccharis salicifolia*

Mulefat, or Seep Willow, is a perennial shrub that is native to California and the western United States. It usually is found in coastal sage scrub and foothill areas, often on stream banks or other wet places. Mulefat can grow up to 12 feet high, and it can bloom year round, though it usually flowers in spring. The plentiful, small, fuzzy, pink or red-tinged white flowers are highly attractive to butterflies such as the Common Buckeye butterfly. Native bees also feed on the pollen.

12. Arroyo Willow



Salicaceae – Willow Family – *Salix lasiolepis*

Arroyo Willow is the most common willow species in Southern California. It is a short-lived, fast growing shrub or small tree that can reach 30 feet in height. It has narrow, asymmetrical leaves. Willows are dependent on occasional flooding for regeneration. Flooding allows seedlings to grow, and dislodged limbs and trunks can reestablish themselves when partially buried. The seeds of the Arroyo Willow are tiny with cottony hairs. It would take 3 million seeds to make one pound! Arroyo Willows have yellow catkin flowers (cylindrical flower clusters) that bloom from February to May. Many species of butterfly use the Arroyo Willow as a host plant, including Dreamy Duskywing, Viceroy, Lorquin's Admiral, and Sylvan Hairstreak. When pruned, willows sprout new branches called wands. These wands have long been used for making boats, baskets, bows, arrows, huts, cradles, and other furniture. Kumeyaay Indians used the bark strips for skirts, other clothing, and bedding. They also chewed the bark as a toothache remedy or boiled it to make tea to treat fevers. The leaves, branches, and bark of Arroyo Willow contain salicin, a chemical component that is similar to the ingredients of modern day aspirin.

13. Toyon



Rosaceae – Rose Family - *Heteromeles arbutifolia*

Toyon, also known as Christmas Berry or California Holly, is a large, evergreen shrub native to Southwest Oregon, California and Baja California. It grows from 6 to 20 feet tall. Toyon is commonly found in chaparral from the coast to the mountains, and is drought tolerant and relatively fire resistant. It is a pioneer plant, and it grows vigorously after a fire or cutting. Toyon's leaves have toothed edges, and it blooms from June to August. The white flowers are small and loosely clustered. In the fall and winter the plant is covered in bright red berries. Toyon can be confused with Lemonadeberry, another evergreen shrub found in coastal canyons and scrubland. The best way to differentiate the two is that Toyon has loosely clustered flowers and berries, and has flowers in the summer and berries in the winter. Lemonadeberry has tightly clustered flowers and berries, and has flowers in the winter and berries in the summer. Lemonadeberry also has a more rounded leaf than Toyon. Toyon is the only California native plant that continues to be known by a Native American name; it is derived from an Ohlone word for the plant. Native bees and hummingbirds feed on the pollen and nectar of this plant. Birds such as northern mockingbirds, American robins and cedar waxwings eat the berries, as do coyotes and black bears. Native Americans dried and stored the berries, and also made tea from the leaves of Toyon as a medicine for an upset stomach. The berries have a bitter taste, and European settlers added sugar when they used them to make jelly, custard, and wine. The berries are bitter because they contain a cyanide compound, which can be removed by mild cooking. It is not recommended to eat significant amounts of the raw berries. In the 1920's collecting Toyon branches became very popular in Los Angeles during Christmas time. A law was passed forbidding its collection on public land to protect it from over harvesting.

14. California Buckwheat



Polygonaceae – Buckwheat Family – *Eriogonum fasciculatum*

California Buckwheat is one of San Diego County's most abundant shrubs. It is found in dry scrub and chaparral from the coast to the desert. It is native to California, but is seen in other parts of western North America as well. It is a very hardy shrub that can tolerate both cold and dry weather. It is also known as Flat-top Buckwheat, as the white flowers that cover the plant from April to September have a flattish top. White flowers bloom in late spring, gradually turn pink over the summer, and then become rust colored in the fall. The flowers, leaves and seeds of California Buckwheat are all used by butterflies, bees, and small birds. A variety of butterflies use it as a host plant, and California Buckwheat has a whole community of insects living on the flowers. It is used as cover by many rodents, which also eat the rusty brown seeds. Kumeyaay Indians boiled Buckwheat to make a medicinal tea for stomach pains and diarrhea in babies. They also ate the flowers, and they would flavor their food with the seeds from this plant.

15. California Sycamore



Platanaceae – Sycamore Family - Platanus racemosa

The California Sycamore is a deciduous tree native to California and the western United States. Sycamores, along with the Torrey Pine and Coast Live Oak, are the largest coastal native trees in San Diego County. Sycamores can be found in pine forest, foothill, chaparral, grassland, and wetland habitats. This plant prefers to live on stream banks or near springs or seeps in canyons and valleys, and is not draught tolerant. Sycamores like sun and moderate water, and can grow up to 75 feet tall, with large spreading branches and a mottled white trunk. They bloom from February to May, and the female flower heads are clustered in hairy, spikey, maroon-colored hanging spheres (see inset photo). Hummingbirds utilize its nectar, and the Western Tiger Swallowtail uses it as a host plant. Many small birds feed on its fruit, and several mammals eat its twigs and bark. It has large, very, very soft, leaves. The wood is very difficult to split, and because of this it is used as a meat preparation block for butchers. Its bark and roots can be boiled for coffee, and Native Americans used it as a cold and cough remedy, as well as for gut and skin problems.