

16. Western Cottonwood



Salicaceae – Willow Family - *Populus fremontii*

The Western Cottonwood is a deciduous tree native to California and the western United States. It lives in forests, grasslands, chaparral, scrub, and wetland habitats. It is also known as Fremont or Alamo Cottonwood, and it can grow up to 60 feet tall. It grows faster with regular watering. This tree has very smooth bark when young, but it becomes cracked and fissured as it ages. It blooms from February to March; its flowers are long, drooping catkins (cylindrical flower clusters). The seeds are wind dispersed, are white and feathery, and look like patches of cotton hanging from the tree. These white, cottony seeds are what gave the tree its name. Western Cottonwoods are important plants for both birds and butterflies. Many butterflies such as Viceroy, Dreamy Duskywing, and Lorquin's Admiral use it as a host plant. Many Native American tribes made use of different parts of the tree. The bark and leaves could be used to reduce inflammation and treat wounds, twigs were used to weave baskets, and the Cahuilla people of southern California used the wood for tool making.

17. **Bushmallow**



Flower photo by Stan Shebs

Malvaceae –Mallow Family – *Malacothamnus fasciculatus*

Bushmallow is common native shrub in California and other parts of far western North America and Baja California, where it is found chaparral, coastal scrub, and foothill habitats. Bushmallow grows in openings in the chaparral and scrub, and can reach 6 feet in height. It blooms from April to July, and has clusters of many pale pink, cupped flowers. The leaves are triangular, and feel thick and felty. Butterflies such as the Large White Skipper use Bushmallow as a host plant.

18. **Chapparral Broom**



Asteraceae – Sunflower Family - *Baccharis sarothroides*

Chapparral Broom, Broom Baccharis or Desertbroom Baccharis, is a shrub that is native to California and other parts of western North America. It is equally likely to occur in wetlands and non-wetlands in both coastal sage scrub and creosote bush scrub habitat. The plant's height at maturity can be up to 12 feet. Chapparral Broom blooms in January and February, and you can tell the difference between female and male plants with the saying, "White bride, yellow fellow". Many species of beneficial insects make use of this plant, including the Common Buckeye butterfly. It has long, straight, rod-like branches, which Kumeyaay Indians bundled together to use as a broom to sweep the floors of their shelters. They used smaller bundles to brush their gums and teeth, and also chewed the leaves to relieve toothaches.

19. **Coast Goldenbush**



Flower photo by Wintertanager

Asteraceae – Sunflower Family – *Isocoma menziesii*

This plant is also known as Menzie’s Goldenbush and Green-Leaved Dune Goldenbush. It is native to California. Coast Goldenbush is a shrub frequently found along trails and in dry, open areas in sage scrub and chaparral habitat, but it can also be found in wetlands. When not in bloom, Coast Goldenbush is a low shrub with narrow, green-gray leaves. It really earns its name when it is in bloom from April to November, and it is covered with dense clusters of yellow flowers. Many beneficial insects utilize this plant for pollen and nectar, and the Coast Goldenbush is also an important hunting ground for predatory spiders and insects.

20. Laurel Sumac



Anacardiaceae – Sumac Family – *Malosma laurina*

Laurel Sumac is the only species in the genus *Malosma*. It is also commonly known as Lentisco (in Spanish) and Taco Leaf Plant, as its leaves have a distinctive taco shape. It is found along the coasts of Southern California and Baja California. Laurel Sumac is a large evergreen shrub, which can reach 20 feet in height. The tips of the stems, leaf veins, and leaf edges are all tinged with red. In addition to their distinctive taco shape, the leaves are very fragrant, and appear moist all year round. They are also highly flammable. Laurel Sumac blooms from February to May, has large bunches of small, white flowers which smell like green apples, and small red fruits. It is sensitive to cold and does not tolerate freezing conditions. Laurel Sumac has adapted to frequent fires in the chaparral areas where it grows, and after a fire burns its above ground parts, a large burl underground resprouts new stems and leaves. Chumash Indians made flour from the dried fruits of this plant, and they used the root bark to make a tea for treating diarrhea. Laurel Sumac is related to Poison Oak, and can cause dermatitis in some people because of the volatile oils in its leaves.