

The following twenty plants are not identified by markers, though they can be found throughout our local canyons.

1. **Eucalyptus or Red River Gum**



Myrtle Family - Myrtaceae - *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*

The River Red Gum or Eucalyptus is not native to California. Like all Eucalyptus, it comes originally from Australia. It is one of 800 tree species in this genus. It is very fast growing, and is grown in lumber plantations around the world. This tree can grow very tall, up to 150 feet, and it has smooth bark that can range in color from white to grey to brown. Red River Gums, like many species of Eucalyptus, have the nickname “Widow Maker”, because these trees often drop large branches. So be careful if you are resting beneath a tree like this, and keep an ear out for big cracking noises!

2. Holly-leaved Cherry



Flower photo by Curtis Clark; Cherry photo by Graham Bothwell

Rosaceae – Rose Family - *Prunus ilicifolia*

The Holly-leaved Cherry is a tree or shrub with dark, glossy leaves that is native to California and Baja California. It is found in chaparral and foothill woodlands, and can grow from 8 to 30 feet tall. The Holly-leaved Cherry can resprout from the stump after fires, like many other plants adapted to the chaparral. It has shiny, toothed leaves that smell like almonds when they are crushed. It blooms from February to April, and it has small, white flowers that grow in clusters. The cherries it produces in September and October are sweet and edible, and Native Americans used the cherries to make a fermented drink. Though the fruit is edible, the pits inside the fruit and the leaves of this plant produce small amounts of hydrogen cyanide, and should not be eaten. Native bees are attracted to the Holly-leaved Cherry and feed on the pollen and nectar, and deer and birds eat the fruit. Many butterflies use it as a host plant, including Lorquin's Admiral, Pale Swallowtail, Two-tailed Swallowtail, Western Tiger Swallowtail, and Coral Hairstreak.

3. Fennel



Apiaceae – Carrot Family – *Foeniculum vulgare*

This non-native perennial herb is very common in disturbed areas, usually in non-wetlands. Fennel is indigenous to the Mediterranean but has become widely naturalized in many areas, particularly in dry soils near the coast, a common habitat found in San Diego. The California Invasive Plant Council classifies it as high impact invasive plant on native ecosystems. Fennel grows erect, and can reach up to 8 feet tall. It has many fine, feathery, green leaves, yellow flowers, and blooms from May until September. The Anise Swallowtail butterfly uses this plant as a host for its larvae. The leaves and seeds have an aroma of licorice and are edible. Fennel is a highly aromatic and flavorful herb, and is used in cooking in Europe, the Americas, India, and the Middle East. It also has medicinal uses, and has been used to treat hypertension, colic in babies, flatulence, coughs, to improve sight, and to increase the milk supply of breastfeeding mothers.

4. California Aster



Asteraceae - Sunflower Family - *Lessingia filaginifolia* or *Corethrogyne filaginifolia*

The California Aster, Beach Aster, or Common Sandaster is a perennial herb native to California. It is very robust, and can grow up to 3 feet high, and has very dense, woolly leaves. California Aster plants bloom from May to August. The flowers are interesting in that they are composite flowers. This means each individual petal is a ray flower. The petal color of the flower can be highly variable, from purple to pink to white. California Aster grows in coastal scrub, chaparral, woodland, and grassland habitats, and it is very drought tolerant. Many beneficial insects are associated with this plant, including several types of butterflies.

5. **Horehound**



Photo by H. Zell

Lamiaceae –Mint Family – *Marrubium vulgare*

Horehound is a perennial herb that is not native to California, though it is now found in the wild here. It is not considered to be an aggressive non-native, and has a small impact on native plants and animals. Horehound can often be found in disturbed areas. It blooms from May to August with pale grey-blue flowers, and is used by Great Copper and California Hairstreak butterflies for its nectar. Horehound was originally cultivated in Europe, where it was used to make tea. This plant is also used to make Horehound Drops, which are a candy/cough medicine, and Horehound beer or ale, which is a carbonated soda.