



THE PAINTBRUSH

FALL 2003 NEWSLETTER

SAN GABRIEL MOUNTAINS CHAPTER
CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

IN THIS ISSUE:

Notes from My Native Garden	1
New Members	2
Chapter Events	2
Under the Oaks	3
New CD-ROM	3
Other Events	3
CalFlora Is Back!	5
From the President	5
Native.net	6
Plant Profile: Zauschneria	6
Kasili: Medicinal, Mundane, Sacred	7
Chapter Information & Map	8

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sat, Sept. 13, 9:00 am: *Bush Mallow Foray*

Sun., Sept. 14, 9:00 am: *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk* with Eva Morgan

Thurs., Sept. 27, 7:30 pm: *Local Conservation: Preserving the Quality of Life.* An Environmental Roundtable led by Dr. Ann Croissant.

Sat., Oct. 4, 9:00 am: *Weeding & Seeding—Making Something Grow* at Eaton Canyon Nature Center

Sun., Oct. 12, 9:00 am: *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk* with Steve Fischer

Thurs., Oct. 25, 7:30 pm: *California Classics: Tried and True California Natives for the Landscape* by Susan Jett

Sun., Nov. 9, 9:00 am: *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk* with Rick Fisher

Sat., Nov. 15, 9:00 am - 2 pm: *Under the Oaks: Native Plants for Foothill Gardens* at Eaton Canyon Nature Center

Sun., Dec. 14, 9:00 am: *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk* with Gabi & Cliff McLean

Notes from My Native Garden

by Gabi McLean with illustrations from *The Jepson Manual*

It's morning. The cool air greets me as I step out of the house, car keys in hand, purse tucked under my arm, maneuvering carefully so that my business suit won't brush against the carport pillar. I catch a glimpse of the poppy blossoms still all folded up in the hazy morning light. The soft breeze carries the fragrance of white sage. My eagerness to meet my tight work schedule dissolves, and I turn toward the wildflower patch with the promise of bright orange poppies strutting in the midday sun, butterflies dancing on the golden sun cup blossoms, and carpenter bees buzzing in the purple sage. As I stand among the shrubs, a hummingbird stops in midair, eyes me curiously, and then turns its attention to the woolly blue-curls and the showy penstemon. For a brief moment, the hummer and I connect; its world is as busy as mine, and we both find reprieve in the garden. Now I know it's spring. Now I know I can withstand another hectic workday—when it's over, the garden will still be there and offer me a place to let go and put my mind at peace.



Camissonia ovata
SUN CUPS

It's early afternoon on a Saturday and blazing hot. Stuck in the house, paying bills and answering e-mails, I am bursting to take a break, stretch my legs, and escape the four walls. The air conditioner is already in high gear but I decide to step outside anyway. The hot air engulfs me, almost taking my breath away, and I can feel my blood vessels expand and my joints loosen up. I look for our dog who has dug a hole in the shade, between the elderberry and the holly-leaf cherry, enjoying the coolness of the soil. As I stroll over to greet him I discover a drop in temperature so dramatic that I startle. Are the leaves stirring in the breeze? No, everything is as still as before, the air is not moving. The shift in temperature merely comes from the elderberry, cherry, and myrtle trees, forming a green, thick but airy layer of insulation from the glaring light and the stifling heat. Now I understand why the dog hasn't begged to come into the house. I join him in a lazy siesta on the garden bench. As my eyes adjust to the welcomed shade,

(Continued on page 4)

WELCOME! New members

Norman Ackerman
Pamela Allen
Robert Bethel
Jeannette Hammond
Laura Hardt
Nancy Silbermann
Rikki & Kiki Tomlinson
Lisa Wilske-Bache

Thank you to all renewing members.

Please consider upgrading your membership category to a higher one when you do renew. Your support of our native flora is appreciated.



<http://cnsp-sgm.org>

Check our Chapter's website frequently for up-to-date information on our Chapter's events and links to other organizations' field trips and classes. It's one-stop browsing.



The Newsletter of
the San Gabriel Mtns. Chapter
of the California Native Plant Society
is published 4 times a year
and is free to Chapter members.
Non-member subscription is \$5.00.

To join the California Native Plant Society,
write to
CNPS, 2707 K St., Suite 1
Sacramento, CA 95816-5113.
Please specify San Gabriel Mtns. Chapter.
Enclose check payable to CNPS.
Membership categories:
Student/Retired/Limited Income -
\$20; Individual/Library - \$35;
Family/Group - \$45; Supporting - \$75;
Plant Lover - \$100; Patron - \$250;
Bristlecone - \$1000.

CHAPTER EVENTS

Meetings are held at Eaton Canyon Nature Center (map on back cover) on the fourth Thursday of the month. **No evening programs in Nov. or Dec.**

Informal plant identification and social time from 7:00 to 7:30 pm; programs start promptly at 7:30 pm.

PROGRAMS

Thurs., Sept. 27, 7:30 pm: *Local Conservation: Preserving the Quality of Life.* An Environmental Roundtable led by Dr. Ann Croissant.

Many heroic efforts are being made in the San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys to preserve, protect and restore native habitat and open space wherever possible. With the purpose of acquiring and stewarding remaining open space properties, local conservancies and land trusts are springing up like mushrooms. At this Roundtable, the San Gabriel Mountains Regional Conservancy (SGMRC) led by Dr. Croissant will join with our chapter to tell about these conservation activities and explain how they affect the quality of life for native plants and wildlife, as well as people.

SGMRC, an "umbrella" conservancy, is taking the lead in the San Gabriel River Watershed to develop a master plan for the watershed above Whittier Narrows and has many other projects in the works that you will learn about. In addition, leaders of other local conservancies throughout the San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys will be invited to tell of their accomplishments and explain how you can help.

Sat., Oct. 4, noonish: *Chapter Board Meeting* following garden work listed below

Thurs., Oct. 25, 7:30 pm: *California Classics: Tried and True California Natives for the Landscape* by Susan Jett, Nursery Manager at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden in Claremont.

Susan will focus on the California Classics plant palette of horticultural selections that RSABG (Bart O'Brien and Bob Perry) has developed representing six Southern California plant communities, along with appropriate selection, planting and care. She will have a preview of some of the choice plants that will be available at the RSABG fall plant sale on the first weekend of November. But remember to support our Chapter's plant sale too.

OUTINGS

Sat, Sept. 13, 9:00 am: *Bush Mallow Foray.* Join our Rare Plants Committee in their next field survey for the rare Davidson's bush mallow in the northeast San Fernando Valley! Contact Steve Fischer for details: (323) 254-0690 or habitathome@msn.net.

Sun., Sept. 14, 9:00 am: *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk* with Eva Morgan.

Sat., Oct. 4, 9:00 am: *Weeding & Seeding—Making Something Grow.* Fall is the time to renew the beauty of the Becky Rothenberg memorial garden at Eaton Canyon Nature Center. Join us for a morning of weeding, soil preparation and re-seeding of wildflowers in this small native plant garden just north of the Nature Center. Help with the Chapter commitment to someone who did so much for our group. With a few extra hands it should take a few hours. Refreshments provided. Bring gloves and hand tools.

Sun., Oct. 12, 9:00 am: *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk* with Steve Fischer.

Sun., Nov. 9, 9:00 am: *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk* with Rick Fisher.

Sun., Dec. 14, 9:00 am: *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk* with Gabi & Cliff McLean



CHAPTER SPECIAL EVENT



Sat., Nov. 15, 9:00 am—2:00 pm: *Under the Oaks: Native Plants for Foothill Gardens* at Eaton Canyon Nature Center; our Chapter's annual fundraiser.

We will have California native plants and seeds appropriate for gardens in the Los Angeles basin, including plants for attracting birds and butterflies to your home garden. Knowledgeable Chapter members will be on hand to answer your questions. There will be free printed materials on native gardening.

This year's special offering will be the debut of Gabi & Cliff McLean's wonderful new CD-ROM: *Common Plants of Eaton Canyon and the San Gabriel Foothills* (see below for a complete description). The introductory price is \$14.95. You'll be able to try it out for yourself at their demonstration.

Cash or personal checks only please.

COMMON PLANTS OF EATON CANYON & THE SAN GABRIEL FOOTHILLS CD-ROM

Why you want this Field Guide On CD

- It shows and identifies, in 700 beautiful photos, 124 of the most common plants in the San Gabriel foothills.
- It shows *multiple photos* of all plants: flowers, leaves, fruit, the whole plant, young /mature plants, in different seasons.
- It identifies plants by *Common* and *Botanical Name* and *Family*.

What you can do with the CD

- You can enjoy the pictures by leafing through the plant pages as you would leaf through a book, and *you* choose the sequence by clicking on one of the options, e.g. by flower color, by plant name, etc.
- You can go directly to see multiple photos of any plant, by clicking on its name in an index list.
- You can choose to get more information for any plant, and access plant descriptions in easy-to-read English, with links to plant families, and a glossary of botanical terms.
- You can create your own *Search* with a variety of options: by flower color and flowering month, by plant type, community or a partial name. For example, you can search for red flowers that bloom in May, or for shrubs that grow in Chaparral and flower in January, or for any plant that has "California" in its name.
- You can *Quiz* yourself: test your identification skills, or your botanical knowledge of key features (botanical name, family, flowering months, plant community, etc.).

Technical Features

- Very user friendly; designed for the casual computer user, but nerds will like it too.
- On-screen help.
- Starts automatically and runs from the CD—*no installation required*.
- Adjusts automatically to your monitor resolution.

OTHER EVENTS

Sat., Oct. 18, 9:00 am—4:00 pm
Back from the Brink: Conservation Success Stories

Southern California Botanists and CSU Fullerton Dept. of Biology are co-sponsoring this symposium. It will feature presentations on conservation efforts from New England, Santa Catalina Island, Channel Islands National Park, the San Bernardino Mountains, and the Coachella Valley. The event will be held at The Ruby Gerontology Center at CSU Fullerton, 800 N. State College Blvd.

Early registration is \$35 (due by Oct. 15); \$45 at the door. Please make checks payable to SCB. Send registration fee with your name, address, and e-mail address to:

Southern California Botanists
Dept. of Biology
Calif. State University, Fullerton
Fullerton, CA 92843

For more information, please visit the SCB website at www.socalbot.org.



Sat. & Sun., Nov. 1 & 2 Plant Sale
Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden
1500 N. College Avenue, Claremont

Members' Sale: Sat, 8 am - 11 am

General Public Sale: Sat., 11am - 4 pm

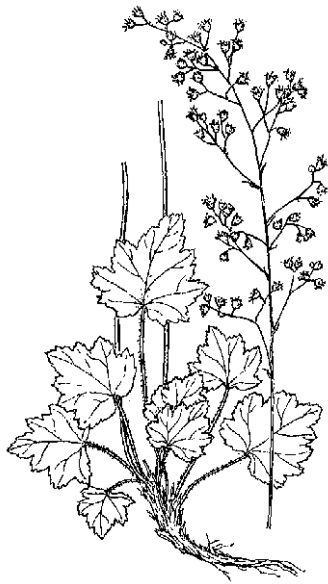
All Access Sale: Sun., 9 am - 12 pm

For information on Membership advantages please contact Louise Webber; Membership Manager, 909-625-8767, ext. 258.

Anyone who would like to help staff the CNPS display at this event, please contact Kathy LaShure, 562-693-5717 or encelia@gte.net. Let's get the word out about our Chapter!

(Continued from page 1)

I marvel at the whirl of twigs and branches, leaves and spider webs. The humming buzz of busy pollinators reminds me that this is summer and I don't need to hide in the house. I've found my refuge.

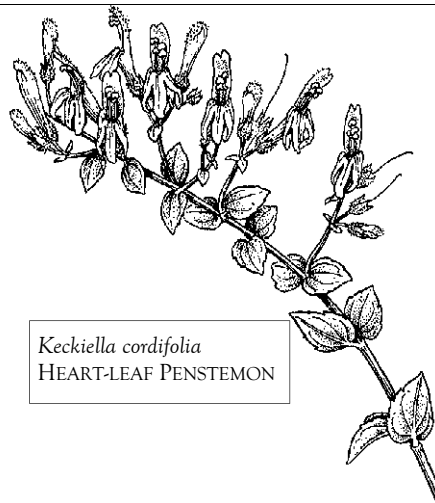


Heuchera micrantha
CORAL BELLS

We sit on the porch and finish up the last of our dinner. The last rays of today's sun fall on a patch of scarlet monkey flowers. The blossoms are small but shine like beacons. There, our daily visitor is back; a female humming bird is visiting the bright beauties just a few feet away from our table, and then settles at a safe distance in the branches of a neighbor's tree. Not for long though, just enough to tease us, for as soon as we get our binoculars up to our eyes, she disappears. I look around hoping she'd return. No luck tonight, but I am not alarmed. I know she'll be back. In winter and spring, the tiny but plentiful rosy flowers of our coral bells attracted her, in late spring and early summer, the humming bird sage was her favorite. Now, the scarlet monkey flowers attract her attention consistently.

Some of the shrubs have already changed from the bright green of spring to the muted colors of summer and fall. Others have shed their leaves, and I now can admire the intricate structure of their branches. It's time to trim and prune those shrubs that are resting in summer dormancy, just as the gardeners in moderate climates trim and prune their plants when they retreat to winter dormancy. There is a lot of work to be done. I wonder how these shrubs will do in the next season, if I'll do the right thing by pruning them now and by how much. I am just not sure—each plant seems to be developing differently. One black sage has grown to be taller than I am, and even wider than tall. Should I trim it down? Another black sage, right next to it, is a tender little thing, no more than three feet all around. How can I make it more robust? The barberry has been growing straight up and hasn't branched out at all. Should I top it? Why is it not blooming? Maybe it's not getting enough sun? I wonder and worry. But then a thought comes to my mind that makes me smile. My questions remind me of a mother's worries about her offspring, her search for the balance between letting them grow wild and reining them in to fit the mold of people's expectations.

Watching the garden grow is a little like watching children grow. We learn a lot as we go along. We learn that things don't turn out as perfectly as we'd like. I decide to let go of wanting perfect control and welcome the surprises that are bound to happen: the oak seedling planted by a scrub jay; the elderberry that grows so fast and furiously that I can't keep up with trimming and pruning; the heart-



Keckiella cordifolia
HEART-LEAF PENSTEMON

leaf penstemon that barely survived for two years and now is showering us with orange-red flowers. Each season finds a different way of pleasing the eye, of providing for our feathered visitors, and of making a home for our insect friends. I discover the richness of life in the many perfect imperfections of nature, the surprises and disappointments that make the web of life so interesting and so worth living. I deeply enjoy today and, like a child, yearn for tomorrow's wonders in my native garden.

Editor's Note:

I hope that Gabi's evocative story will inspire some of you to try your hand at gardening with native plants this year. Come to the Oct. 25 program to gather ideas for a plant palette and then return on Nov. 15 to pick out plants from the selection at our fund raiser *Under the Oaks*.



Earth Verse

Wide enough to keep you looking
Open enough to keep you moving
Dry enough to keep you honest
Prickly enough to make you tough
Green enough to go on living
Old enough to give you dreams

—Gary Snyder

from *Mountains and Rivers Without End*
(Counterpoint, 1996)

CALFLORA IS BACK!!

After some down time due to financial difficulties this valuable on-line botanical resource has returned with a leaner business plan and 315 new species reports. Check it out at www.calflora.org. Here's what you'll find:

- comprehensive and searchable information on all 7,660 wild California plant species (names, photos, plant communities, elevation, life form, distribution, links, endangered status, etc.)
- an integrated library of over 850,000 plant observations from herbaria, Federal & State agencies, conservation organizations, and private individuals
- over 15,000 relationships of California plant names, past through present (locate obscure and rarely used synonyms, translate old plant names to nomenclature in present use in California)
- an interactive observation contribution system providing real-time interactivity and updates, carefully documented for quality control

Both professionals and amateurs interested in California's varied flora will find a wealth of information literally at their fingertips. Having color photos and efficient search functions make research far faster and more pleasureable. Amateurs trying to identify a specific plant might want to check out the "Frequently Asked Questions" feature first, then the "Take a Tour" feature.

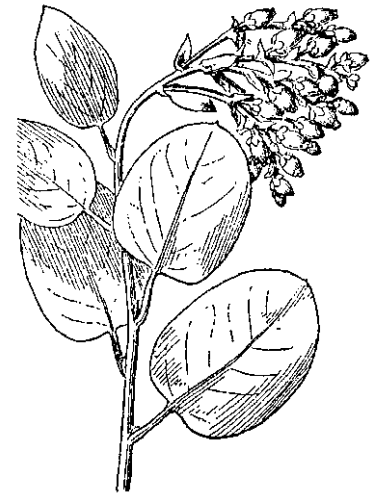
In order to keep this site up and running smoothly with all the information correct and current, additional funding is needed. Grant proposals are being submitted but contributions from individuals are certainly welcome. CalFlora is a not-for-profit, 501(c)3 organization. See the website's main page for details on making a

ACT LOCALLY!

by Lyn McAfee, Chapter President with illustrations from *A Field Guide to the Rare Plants of the Angeles National Forest* (USDA & Rancho Santa Ana Bot. Garden)

Conservation, according to Webster, is defined as "the official care and protection of natural resources, as forests" and "protection from loss, waste." Even in Los Angeles County, where most of the natural landscape has been obliterated, there are many opportunities to protect the remaining natural resources from loss and waste.

An editorial in the latest issue of the journal *Conservation Biology* puts forth the idea that social factors can make the difference between success and failure in conservation action and environmental policy. Although we have extensive biological knowledge about species and ecosystems, there is often a disconnect between that knowledge and the human decision-making process. Scientists are beginning to recognize that conservation success is dependent upon human behavior, and realize that information from the social sciences can affect that behavior.



Arctostaphylos gabriellensis
SAN GABRIEL MANZANITA

Those of us who really care about preserving and protecting our local open space and natural resources understand this. We know that in order to persuade decision-makers, the public has to be aware of the importance of conservation and be able to express their concern to elected representatives. Without public support, conservation science cannot make much progress.

And this is where *you* come in. Your involvement can make a big difference right here in LA County. Act locally! Get involved in CNPS activities and actions. Come to board meetings and express your opinions about the focus of our chapter. Lend a hand with rare plant or conservation efforts. Help develop an education program. Join with a local conservancy or land trust to preserve open space. Get on Cliff McLean's mailing list for CNPS Action Alerts. Write a letter to your legislator.



Monardella macrantha ssp. *hallii*
HALL'S MONARDELLA

There is much you can do. By joining together and acting locally, we can protect natural resources in our little corner of the world—and in doing so, can do our share to preserve the planet.

NATIVE.NET

Emily B. Roberson, Senior Policy Analyst with the California Native Plant Society has announced a new Web Feature for the CNPS website. It's at www.cnps.org/federalissues. Or go to www.cnps.org and click "Eye on the Bush Administration."

This new CNPS website section features information on the Bush Administration's environmental agenda as it affects California. The page contains

1. Lists of Administration policy proposals and actions affecting science and the environment, both in California and nationally
2. Sample letters to Congress and the media that you can use as templates or sources of ideas. We need to let our elected officials and the press know that we are aware of this Administration's appalling contempt for science and the environment and that we are not going to accept their agenda quietly.
3. A sign-on letter to President Bush from California scientists discussing his administration's misuse of science and its effect on California resources. (Scientists feel free to sign on! Just send Emily an e-mail) This is a collaborative project with the Sierra Club, Defenders of Wildlife, Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations, California Trout, NRDC, and other groups.

The page will be updated as often as can be managed to keep you current on each new policy initiative and on ways you can get involved in the struggle to protect California's native plants and their habitats from this unprecedented attack.

Feedback is welcome. Send Emily an e-mail with any suggestions or corrections.

PLANT PROFILE:

Epilobium canum Zauschneria or California Fuchsia Onagraceae; Evening Primrose Family

by Kathy LaShure with illustration from Parson's *The Wildflowers of California*



If you want an easy to grow plant for your home garden, one that will provide splashy seasonal color when other natives are looking drab and sad and one that will please any hummingbirds in your neighborhood, try a fiery Zauschneria.

This is a plant that taxonomists have been moved around in the various California floras. Munz listed four species with 2 subspecies under the genus *Zauschneria* (the name which horticulturalists and most of the public still use for these delightful plants). However the Jepson treatment moved all of them into the genus *Epilobium* with most ending up in the species *E. canum* and one in *E. septentrionale*.

Our local San Gabriel Mountains contain the two subspecies of *Epilobium canum*. *E. canum* ssp *canum* is the lowland subspecies found at San Dimas, Glendora foothills and Arroyo Seco. It is a perennial or subshrub with clustered linear grayish leaves, growing up to two feet tall. *E. canum* ssp *latifolium* is the high country subspecies found at Dawson Saddle, Mt. Gleason, Horse Flats, and Swartout Valley in the Wrightwood area. It has opposite, widely lance-shaped to oval green leaves. Both sport bright red-orange trumpet-shaped flowers, the main attraction for hummingbirds. According to Jane Strong, Chapter field trip coordinator, "In reality, that is, speaking from experience, it is not always easy to distinguish between the two subspecies and there are probably intergrades where the ranges meet." Horticulturalists have developed many named selections (and in colors other than the typical red-orange) for the home gardener to choose from, further complicating matters.

When planting in your home garden, remember that California Fuchsias often make their native homes on rocky slopes with good drainage. So give them a sunny, mostly summer-dry spot in your landscape, perhaps in front of drought-tolerant chaparral shrubs like ceanothus, manzanita, sugar bush or lemonade berry. They grow rapidly in the summer but die back or look ragged in winter (the time to give them a close trim).

I don't worry too much about their taxonomically correct names, but just call them all Zauschnerias and love having them and their hummingbird attendants brightening up my late summer/fall garden.

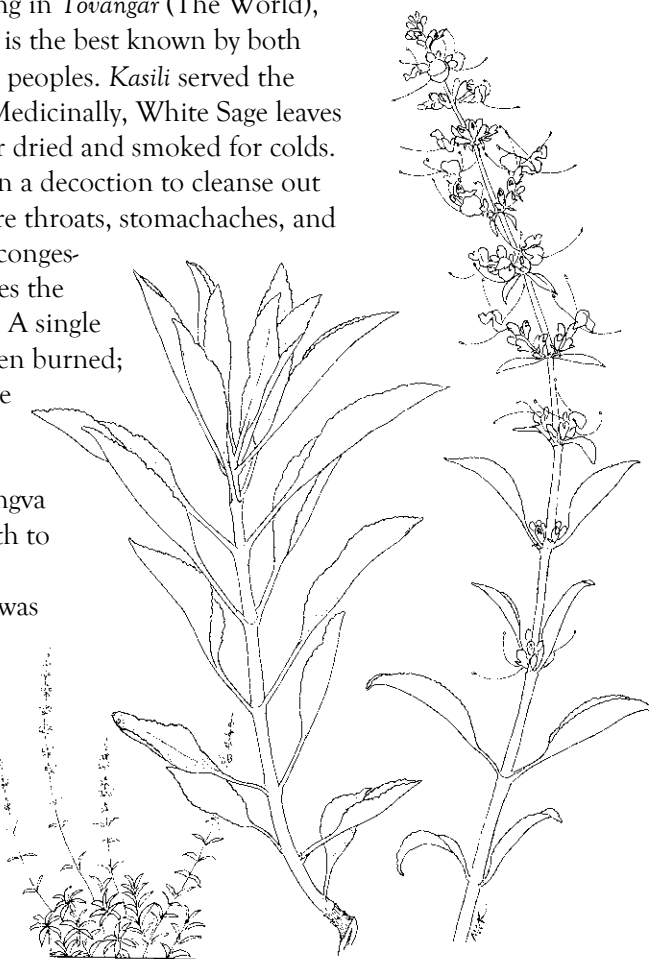
Kasili: Medicinal, Mundane, Sacred

Salvia apiana; White Sage

by Mark F. Acuña, Gabrieleno-Tongva

Illustration by Mimi Kamp from *Medicinal Plants of the Pacific West*

Of all the plants growing in *Tovangar* (The World), perhaps it is *Kasili* that is the best known by both Indian and non-Indian peoples. *Kasili* served the people in many ways. Medicinally, White Sage leaves were made into a tea or dried and smoked for colds. Leaves were also used in a decoction to cleanse out wounds, as a tea for sore throats, stomachaches, and sinus, throat and lung congestion. Some say it soothes the central nervous system. A single leaf was rubbed and then burned; its fumes used to alleviate asthma and bronchitis. An infusion from the roots was drunk by Tongva women after giving birth to promote healing. A single seed from *Kasili* was used to cleanse the eye or to cure eye inflammation. If poison oak had entered the blood, a decoction of *Kasili* was made and drunk in place of regular water until the irritations had ceased. Hypochondriacs were given a mixture of *Kasili* and Pearly Everlasting to calm them.



But there were other everyday uses for *Kasili* as well. The leaves could be eaten and were often dried and smoked as a tobacco. The leaves were also used as a hair wash, a hair dye, a hair straightener, and were rubbed on the body as a deodorizer. They were also massaged into the scalp for dandruff. The leaves were a major deodorizer for hunters to eliminate “human” odors. Leaves were also used to prevent bad luck if a menstruating woman accidentally touched a man's hunting equipment. Mixed with Mugwort leaves, White Sage made a fine relaxing soak. In fact, *Kasili* was often mixed with most plants to accentuate the other plant's potency.

In sacred ways, *Kasili* was a major plant. Branches were bound into loose bundles and dried for use in purification ceremonies, for spiritual cleansing, tribal focusing on spiritual or serious matters, and “blessing” ceremonies.

Kasili was maintained by both women and men. It was carefully grown and tended. A trench would often be dug around a large “grandmother” plant and

menstrual blood was poured into the trench for power storage; men would urinate around the plant for the same purpose. Body fluids were considered powerful and sacred and were treated with great respect and veneration, much to the dismay of the Spanish missionaries who immediately attempted to stop such practices.

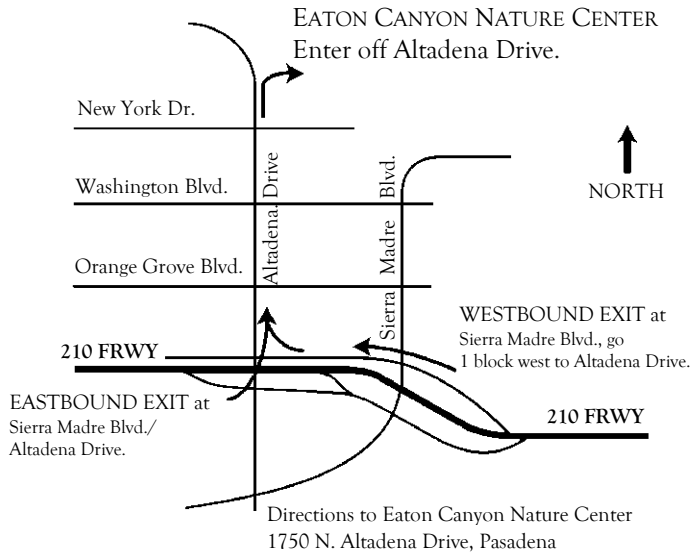
The gathering of *Kasili* (leaves or seeds) was considered a sacred journey. Both men and women danced and sang to grandmother *Kasili* as they went about their collecting. The seeds were gathered from July to September, parched and ground into a mush. *Kasili* blossoms from April to July and can be found on dry slopes mostly below 5000 feet in Coastal Sage Scrub, Chaparral and in Yellow Pine forests.

AUTUMN in California is a *mild*
And anonymous season, hills and valleys
Are colorless then, only the sooty green
Eucalyptus, the conifers and oaks sink deep
Into the haze; the fields are plowed,
bare, waiting;
The steep pastures are tracked deep by
the cattle;
There are no flowers, the herbage is brittle.
All night along the coast and the
mountain crest
Birds go by, murmurous, high in the
warm air.
Only in the mountain meadows the aspens
Glitter like goldfish moving up swift water;
Only in the desert villages the leaves
Of the cottonwoods descend in smoky air.

KENNETH REXROTH
Autumn in California, 1940

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Website: <http://cnps-sgm.org>

Dedicated to the Preservation of the California Native Flora

The California Native Plant Society is a statewide nonprofit organization of amateurs & professionals with a common interest in California's native plants. The mission of the Society is to increase understanding & appreciation of California's native plants & to conserve them and their natural habitats, through education, science, horticulture & advocacy. Membership is open to all.

Membership includes the quarterly journal Fremontia, the quarterly Bulletin which gives statewide news & announcements of Society activities & conservation issues, & the chapter newsletter.



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED