

16. Curly Dock



**Polygonaceae – Buckwheat Family – *Rumex crispus***

Curly Dock is a non-native perennial herb that blooms from May to August. It is an upright plant that grows from 3 to 5 feet tall. It is also known as Clustered Dock, Green Dock, or Coffee-Weed, and is a rhubarb relative in the Buckwheat family. Curly Dock likes to grow by lakes, fields, forest edges and streams, and often is found in disturbed areas. When green the leaves have curled edges, but the plant turns dark brown when it goes to seed. The seeds are dark brown, and each plant can have up to 40,000 seeds! Butterflies such as the Great Copper, Purplish Copper, and Ruddy Copper use it as a host, and the Great Copper butterfly feeds on its nectar. The leaves and stalks of Curly Dock are edible for humans, but it is toxic to animals and can cause kidney disease and death. Also, the seeds can be roasted and used for a coffee substitute. The plant originally came from Europe, and the root has been used since 500 B.C. to treat ailments such as iron-deficiency, viral infections, and constipation. The leaves can be used as an astringent to treat wounds and bleeding, or applied to irritated skin to relieve itching.

17. **Western Ragweed**



**Asteraceae – Sunflower Family – *Ambrosia psilostachya***

Western Ragweed is a perennial herb that is native to California and is also found in many other places in North America and beyond. It blooms from July to November, and is found both in wetland and non-wetland areas, particularly in open fields and disturbed places. The leaves have a distinct look, with a ragged, toothed edge. Many creatures make use of this plant. Rabbits and grasshoppers eat the leaves, birds eat the seeds, and Bordered Patch butterflies use it as a host for their larvae. The pollen from this plant can cause hay fever in humans who are allergic to it. Affected people get allergic rhinitis, which causes them to sneeze, cough, and get itchy eyes. Up to half of the cases of allergic rhinitis in North America are caused by Ragweeds. A single Western Ragweed plant can produce up to a billion grains of pollen per season. If you are an allergy sufferer, and you didn't already hate Western Ragweed, after reading that fact you probably do now!

18. Tarweed



**Asteraceae – Sunflower Family – *Deinandra conjugens***

Tarweed is a native herb of California, and is found in rangelands, pastures, and roadsides. This plant can be erect or spreading, and mature plants reach 2 feet in height. It blooms in May and June, and has bright yellow or white flowers and sticky, heavily scented leaves. Tarweed grows only in clay soils of grassland and coastal sage scrub in San Diego County and Baja California. Some tarweeds, like the Otay Tarplant, are considered endangered by the State of California and the federal government. This is mainly due to habitat destruction.

19. **Cleveland Sage**



Flower photo by Lisa Cox, U.S. Fish and Game Service

**Lamiaceae – Mint Family – *Salvia clevelandii***

Cleveland Sage, also known as Fragrant Sage, is a native to Southern California. It grows in sage scrub and chaparral, and can reach 4 feet tall. Cleveland Sage is an evergreen shrub with flowers that run from lavender to blue, and blooms from May to August. The leaves are blue-green and are very fragrant. Cleveland Sage attracts bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and other birds that consume the pollen and nectar. The ground seeds were a traditional food for Native Americans such as the Luiseno, who used them to make meal. Other Native American tribes chewed the green leaves to relieve gas pains, or made a poultice out of them and applied it to the outside of the ear for earache pain or to the neck for a sore throat. The stalks and leaves of Cleveland Sage have a very pleasant flavor and can be used in cooking to season food.

20. **San Diego Sunflower**



Photo by Wynn Anderson

**Asteraceae – Sunflower Family – *Bahioopsis laciniata***

This native, perennial shrub likes to grow in rocky, dry coast scrub habitats and on the edges of foothill chaparral. It is also known as Tornleaf Goldeneye. San Diego Sunflower is found in California and Mexico, and is listed as a rare or threatened plant, though some think it is too common in San Diego County to have this listing. San Diego Sunflower is a rounded shrub that can reach up to 5 feet in height. The leaves have a distinctive puckered, cut edge. It blooms with yellow, showy flowers in the late winter and spring, from February to June. Its flowers look like delicate sunflowers, and the plants produce many blooms. Many beneficial insects make use of the pollen and nectar from this plant's flowers.