

NATIVE PLANTS ASSOCIATED WITH SUDDEN OAK DEATH (SOD) AND THEIR USE BY CALIFORNIA INDIANS – FACT SHEET No. 39

The plant disease caused by a fungus-like microorganism, *Phytophthora ramorum*, is referred to as “Sudden Oak Death” because of its association with premature death in tanoak trees. This disease occurs in some California wildlands and affects several native California plants, including Blue Blossom. Susceptible plants can become infected through exposure to water-borne infective agents via rainfall, splash or drainage. In addition to natural spread of the disease, it can also be transmitted by human transport of infected plants and their parts to susceptible new plants in the environment. Good cultural practices and restrictions on the movement of infected material can minimize the risk of spreading the disease. For more information, please refer to website links for the U.S. Department Of Agriculture / Plant Protection And Quarantine (www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/ispm/pramorom/), the California Department of Food And Agriculture (www.cdfa.ca.gov), the California Oak Mortality Task Force (<http://nature.berkeley.edu/comtf>), or contact your local County Department of Agriculture.

Common Name: Blue Blossom, Blue Brush, California Lilac

Scientific Name: *Ceanothus thrysiflorus*



Photo courtesy of Oregon State University Landscape Plants

Kashaya Pomo Name: Se?e kili (‘black brush’)

Yurok Name: Sahsip

Past and possibly present tribal uses.

Kashaya Pomo: The flower was used in dance wreathes at the Strawberry Festival and dried or fresh flowers were mixed with water and rubbed between the hands to produce a lather used to wash the hands, face and body. Also a moth cocoon (*Ceanothus* silk moth) is found on this bush and was used as a ceremonial rattle.