

## NATIVE PLANTS ASSOCIATED WITH SUDDEN OAK DEATH (SOD) AND THEIR USE BY CALIFORNIA INDIANS – FACT SHEET No. 24

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 Northern California wildlands and affects several native California plants, including California Wood Fern. 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/](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/ispm/pramorom/)), the California Department Of Food And Agriculture ([www.cdffa.ca.gov](http://www.cdffa.ca.gov)), the California Oak Mortality Task Force (<http://nature.berkeley.edu/comtf>), or contact your local County Department Of Agriculture.

Common Name: California Wood Fern

Scientific Name: Dryopteris arguta



Photo courtesy of Keir Morse

Karuk Name: asak vaatxarakavrûukvuthan

Past and possibly present tribal uses.

Costanoan: An infusion of fronds was used as a hair wash.

Karuk: Fronds were used to clean eels.

Miwok: A decoction of fronds was taken for vomiting and internal bleeding.

Yurok: Fronds were used to clean meat and as a cover to keep flies off. Spores were used to make designs on hands.