

NATIVE PLANTS ASSOCIATED WITH SUDDEN OAK DEATH (SOD) AND THEIR USE BY CALIFORNIA INDIANS – FACT SHEET No. 14

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 Pacific Rhododendron. 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: Pacific Rhododendron

California Rose-Bay

Scientific Name: Rhododendron macrophyllum



Photo courtesy of Virginia Tech Forestry Dept.

Karuk Name: mahaxyámsurip

Kashaya Pomo Name: bíca?

Past and possibly present tribal uses.

Karuk: Plants were used in the “getting-luck” ceremony of the sweathouse.

Pomo: Flowers were used for dance wreaths, particularly for the Strawberry Festival.