

NATIVE PLANTS ASSOCIATED WITH SUDDEN OAK DEATH (SOD) AND THEIR USE BY CALIFORNIA INDIANS – FACT SHEET No. 5

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 Toyon. 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/pramorur/), the California Department Of Food And Agriculture (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: Toyon

Scientific Name: *Heteromeles arbutifolia*



Photo courtesy of Virginia Tech Dept. of Forestry

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| Karuk Name: | pusyîip (bush of Toyon berry or Christmas berry)
pusyaah (Toyon berry or Christmas berry) |
| Kashaya Pomo Name: | budu (toyon berries)
budu q ^h ále (toyon berry plant) |
| Luißeño Name: | 'aatcawut |
| Pomo Name: | but" zā' zā |
| Tongva name: | ashuwet |
| Wappo Name: | unu ciwa hoe (oo noo tsaw'wa hoe) |
| Yokia Name: | kī yī' |
| Yuki Name: | mil kō' chē |

Past and present possible tribal uses.

Cahuilla: Berries were eaten cooked and raw.

Costanoan: Berries were eaten toasted or dried. An infusion of leaves was taken for suppression or regulation of the menstrual cycle. (see back)

Diegueño: Berries were used as food and an infusion of bark and leaves was used to wash infected wounds.

Karuk: Berries were roasted over an open fire, or placed near the fire, in a basket plate until wilted, then they were eaten. Leaves were thrown into fires, by children, for the firecracker-like sound.

Luisseño: Parched berries were used for food.

Mendocino Indians: Berries were eaten fresh, boiled or roasted. A decoction of leaves was taken for stomachaches and other various aches and pains.

Pomo: Berries were wilted in hot ashes, winnowed in a basket plate, and eaten. According to the Kashaya Pomo, the berries were never stored, or eaten raw. The seeds, like manzanita seeds, were always spat out.

Tataviam: Toyon berries were eaten frequently.

Tongva: Bark and leaves were made into a tea to treat stomachaches and other pains. It was also used as a seasonal tonic. Mashed plant parts were used to ease the pain of sores and an infusion of bark and leaves was used on infected wounds. The berries were eaten fresh, roasted or boiled. They were baked in earthen ovens for 2 or 3 days after first boiling them. They were also used to make cider. They were simmered and crushed to make a dye which was sometimes applied to fish nets. Pulverized flowers were steeped into a tea to treat gynecological problems. The wood was used to make arrows, awls, wedges, scrapers, spoons, mashers, stirrers and men's hair pins.

Wappo: Berries were eaten.

Yuki: Tea made from the leaves was used for stomachaches, general aches and pains and as a wash for wounds.

Yurok: Berries were roasted over an open fire and eaten by children.