



# The Fragrant Garden

This **NATIVE PLANT GARDEN** was created with the help of the **CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY** and the **CHULA VISTA GARDEN CLUB**.

Sixteen years after the opening of the South Chula Vista Library, many of the original ornamental plants had died. Library Board member, Mr. James Balnis, a garden enthusiast and member of the CHULA VISTA GARDEN CLUB, approached Ms. Betsy Cory, a longtime member of the CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY (San Diego Chapter). He suggested something special be planted in the neglected library courtyard. Within months, the Society created the Fragrant Garden.

On November 19, 2012, the garden was dedicated with a Native American blessing ceremony conducted by Tribal Elder Randy Edmonds. The new plants have visual appeal and scent, and are used in Native American traditions.

Since 1965, the California Native Plant Society strives to protect and preserve California's native plant heritage for future generations. Working with community leaders, scientists, and local planners, the society advocates for informative and environmentally friendly policies and land management practices. Nearly 10,000 members promote the organization's research, education, and conservation through five statewide programs and 33 regional chapters in California. [Find out more at cnps.org](http://cnps.org).

## Plants

*Artemisia dracunculus* (Tarragon)

*Artemisia palmeri* (Palmer Sagewort)

*Carpenteria californica* (Bush Anemone)

*Isomeris arborea* (Bladderpod)

*Monardella odoratissima*  
(Mountain Pennyroyal)

*Philadelphus lewisii* (Wild Mock Orange)

*Ribes viburnifolium* (Catalina Perfume)

*Salvia apiana* (White Sage)

*Salvia clevelandii* (Cleveland Sage)

*Salvia sonomensis* (Creeping Sage)

*Satureja douglasii* (Yerba Buena)



# NATIVE PLANT GARDEN

When looking at the collection of native plants, you will see that the bloom colors vary from blues and lavenders, to bright yellows and white. They might be bold and spectacular or they may be small and barely noticeable.

**CARPENTERIA CALIFORNICA**, also known as “Bush Anemone” has gorgeous blooms that appear in the early summer. The flowers are white, with a touch of yellow. This plant is often used in residential landscaping and it can grow large – up to 4 or 5 feet. Deer avoid this one!

In contrast, **ARTEMISIA DRACUNCULUS** produces blooms that are barely noticeable. Although the blooms of this tarragon plant are not spectacular, it makes itself more noticeable by causing a skin rash.

*Artemisia dracunulus* is edible and found widely throughout California and elsewhere.



## Bloom Contrasts





# NATIVE PLANT GARDEN

Did you know that Chula Vista has canyon trails with native plants just like these? Visit one and see for yourself how beautiful they are - perhaps you will see some of our local wildlife! These canyons are home to coyotes, hawks, owls, quail, rabbits, rattlesnakes, possums, hummingbirds, and more.

**RICE CANYON** is located off East H Street with trailheads close to Del Rey Boulevard and Buena Vista Way. For information about this canyon trail and events, contact the Friends of Rice Canyon at (619) 656-8669.

**DEL REY CANYON** is located between East H Street and East J Street at Paseo Ranchero. For information about this canyon trail and events, contact the Friends of Del Rey Canyon at [will@sdcanonlands.org](mailto:will@sdcanonlands.org).

**BONITA LONG CANYON** is located off Otay Lakes Road, at the end of Canyon Drive at the Canyon Drive/Ridgeback Road intersection.

If you would like to find out more about activities and other opportunities that support our local canyons, visit the San Diego Canyonlands website at [www.sdcanonlands.org](http://www.sdcanonlands.org).



## Local Canyons





## Smells Delicious

While not edible, some of these plants are a delight to smell and remind us of favorite foods.

**RIBES VIBURNIFOLIUM** or "Catalina Perfume," as it is commonly known, is identified by red stems and the reddish color of its leaves. As its popular name suggests, it is native to Catalina Island, as well as Baja California. Growing up to three feet in height, it has a scent that is described as wine grapes, currants, or fine wine. You will see this plant's red berries don't look like grapes at all. In fact, birds are the only ones happy to eat them and deer avoid them – a delight for gardeners!

The smell of orange groves and blossoms is copied by one of the plants in the garden. Look for **PHILADELPHUS LEWISII** or "Wild Mock Orange." This attractive plant blooms in May-June and its flowers give off a beautiful scent. This plant has quite a range, as it grows in San Diego County, the Sierra Nevada, British Columbia, Idaho and Montana. As its name suggests, it also has a link to the Lewis and Clark expedition - explorer Meriwether Lewis was the first person to collect and record *Philadelphus lewisii*.





# NATIVE PLANT GARDEN

## Fog Grabbers

Two of the plants featured in the garden prefer a wetter climate. So how do they survive in sunny Chula Vista?

**ARTEMISIA PALMERI** or “Palmer Sagewort,” usually grows in washes and ravines where rain collects. However, coastal San Diego County provides another way for this plant to get the moisture it needs to grow – fog! When fog rolls in from the ocean *Artemisia palmeri* uses the extra humidity instead of rainfall. It also takes advantage of dew when it forms. This plant is particularly favored by gold finches and quail, who eat the small seeds it produces.

Likewise, **SATUREJA DOUGLASII**, also known as “Yerba Buena” prefers shade and moisture too. So how does a plant that needs 15 inches of rainfall a year survive in San Diego County? As well as using fog and dew, it tries to grow underneath other plants, using their shade to create the perfect spot. Can you identify *Satureja douglasii* by its shape? Look for a creeping flat plant that thrives in the shade. It can be used to make a refreshing tea drink.

Plants that use the extra moisture in fog and dew are aptly called “Fog Grabbers.”

Have a drink of...fog



## Native People and Plants

Native plants are valued by Native Americans.

Native Americans have used plants for many purposes. The seed from *SALVIA APIANA* was a main ingredient in "Pinole," a staple food. The Chumash Indians ate the plant's leaves and stems, and the Cahuilla Indians made tea from its roots. Its foliage was often gathered into a special bundle that Native Americans called a "Smudge Stick" which they would burn to purify people and places.

*PHILADELPHUS LEWISII* could also be used in a variety of ways. The hard wood was useful for making hunting and fishing tools, snowshoes, pipes, and furniture. The leaves and bark were mixed in water to use as a mild soap.

How do we use plants today? Plants are used to manufacture modern medicines, fuel for automobiles, fabric and other products.





## Sage Sisters

**SALVIA SONOMENSIS** is also known as “Creeping Sage” because rather than grow tall, it grows low to the ground – no more than 12 inches in height. It has blue/violet flowers from May through June. Can you spot this plant as it creeps across the flowerbeds?

**SALVIA APIANA**, has a white flower with a touch of lavender/blue. This plant grows up to four feet tall and favors the more southerly regions of Baja California and Southern California. “Apiana” is from the word, “apian,” meaning bees. Sometimes it is called “Bee Sage” because bees find it very attractive. As you look for *Salvia apiana*, are there bees?

**SALVIA CLEVELANDII**, like *Salvia apiana*, grows in Baja and Southern California – and below 3,000 feet elevation. This plant was named after a plant collector, Daniel Cleveland, in 1874. Mr. Cleveland was a lawyer, amateur botanist, and co-founder of the San Diego Society of Natural History. He founded the San Diego Natural History Museum herbarium and sent many Southwestern specimens to the Harvard University herbarium. *Salvia clevelandii* forms spikes, blooms in stages over the summer months, and can grow up to four feet high. Its blue/lavender flowers are also appreciated by bees and hummingbirds.





## Scent Contrasts

The plants in the Fragrant Garden were selected because of their scent. As you enjoy the plants in our garden, how many smells can you identify?

**MONARDELLA ODORATISSIMA** is also known as "Mountain Pennyroyal." This plant mostly grows at an altitude of 2,000 feet or more, but sometimes it makes the lower elevations of Chula Vista its home. This plant only grows about 12 inches tall and its full, round flowers are a blue/violet color and smell like mint. They attract butterflies and hummingbirds, and *Monardella odoratissima* extract is used for aromatherapy.

**ISOMERIS ARBOREA** also thrives in this garden. It should be easier to spot among the blue, lavender, and white shades of the other garden inhabitants as *Isomeris arborea* has bright yellow flowers. Later in the year, it produces pale green pods, giving it the common name, "Bladderpod." Don't be fooled by its bright, cheery appearance because when *Isomeris arborea*'s foliage is crushed or bruised, it produces a pungent scent! The "Harlequin Beetle" finds this plant lovely, even if you don't care for it. When the wind blows through the canyons, the Bladderpod can sound like a baby's rattle.

