



# firstbloom

## Native Plant Garden

Planted by the First Bloom Group in April of 2010

Located at the Owens Valley Paiute-Shoshone Cultural Center  
2301 West Line Street, Bishop, California



wiütu



kedgedwi



nupitchi

One of the main goals of the national First Bloom program is for the participants to learn about native plants. The Bishop First Bloom group defines native plant as a plant having a Paiute name. This suggests that the plant is indigenous to the Owens Valley and was used by Paiute people at a time before Europeans arrived to the area.

We welcome you to come and enjoy the garden and the information provided within this packet. These plants are special to the Bishop First Bloom group and to the Paiute people. Please respect them and take only pictures, not flowers, from our garden so that the blooms can be shared by all.

You can check out the Bishop First Bloom group blog at  
<http://firstbloom.nationalparks.org/>

\*The information collected in this document comes from the USDA PLANTS database (<http://plants.usda.gov/java/>), Qwina West (member Bishop Paiute Tribe) and from the ethnobotany resource text: *Native Plants of Southern Nevada* by David Rhode.

# firstbloom

## Native Plant Garden

---

### Grasses of Our Garden

Planted  
April 2010



**#1**

**Scientific name:** [\*Achnatherum speciosum\*](#)

**Common name:** Desert needlegrass

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** *huki*

**Type:** Perennial – Grass

**Height:** 1' – 2'

**Width:** 2' – 3'



**Seeds of this grass were a very important food source for tribes of the Owens Valley. The seeds were harvested for food in late spring. Bunches of grass were cut, tied, and carried in a large burden basket. The grasses were then laid out to dry on rocks, burned and stirred so the seeds could fall out. These seeds were then cooked like rice. The grass was also used to line storage pits for pine nuts.**

**#2**

**Scientific name:** *Leymus cinereus*

**Common name:** Great basin wild rye

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** *waiya*

**Type:** Perennial - Grass

**Height:** 3' – 6'

**Width:** 2' – 3'



**Seeds of the wild rye were a valued food source throughout the Great Basin. In the Owens Valley, the bundles of rye were made into shingles to cover houses in both winter and summer. Sheaves of grass also served as bedding or matting. The sturdy stems could also be used to make cradleboards.**

**#3**

**Scientific name:** [\*Sporobolus airoides\*](#)

**Common name:** Alkali sacaton

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** *hokei*

**Type:** Perennial - Grass

**Height:** 1.5' – 3'

**Width:** 2' – 3'



**This plant is known as bunchgrass. This was used like many other wild grasses; as a grain, though it was not as well used as other forms of grass in the area.**

# firstbloom

## Native Plant Garden

---

### Shrubs of Our Garden

Planted  
April 2010



**#1**

**Scientific name:** [\*Ephedra viridis\*](#)

**Common name:** Green ephedra

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** *tudupi*

**Type:** Perennial - Shrub

**Height:** 2' – 4'

**Width:** 3' – 6'



**Paiute and other Native Americans used the leaves of the green ephedra as a poultice for cuts. Pioneers steeped the leaves and made a black tea. This stimulant was more powerful than coffee and could cause heart problems.**

**#2**

**Scientific name:** [\*Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus\*](#)

**Common name:** Curly-leaf rabbitbrush

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** *sigupi*

**Type:** Perennial - Shrub

**Height:** 2' – 4'

**Width:** 3' – 6'



**Rabbitbrush was used as a cold remedy by the Paiute tribes. A crushed leaf infusion was created and taken for colds.**

**#3**

**Scientific name:** *Atriplex canescens*

**Common name:** Fourwing saltbush

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** *tonoh*

**Type:** Perennial - Shrub

**Height:** 2' – 4'

**Width:** 2' – 5'



**The hardwood of this shrub was used for firewood and to make arrows and arrowheads. The Southern Paiute purportedly used the seeds as a food source and used the leaves to rub sores and heal them. Fresh roots can be boiled with salt to make a general health drink.**

**#4**

**Scientific name:** [\*Purshia tridentata\*](#)

**Common name:** Bitterbrush

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** *unip*

**Type:** Perennial - Shrub

**Height:** 6' – 12'

**Width:** 5' – 10'



**Used by the Paiutes for many things including analgesics, cold remedy, cathartic, dermatological aid, blood and general tonic, pneumonia, and a wash for smallpox, chickenpox, and other maladies.**

**#5**

**Scientific name:** *Ribes cereum*

**Common name:** Wax Currant

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** *wiaapühiya*

**Type:** Perennial - Shrub

**Height:** 4' – 6'

**Width:** 3' – 5'



**Gooseberries, or currants, were widely collected during the summer months by the Great Basin tribes. These berries were usually cooked in small amounts of water. The berries were eaten fresh in June and July, or dried and stored for later use. Jelly was made when the berries were boiled with sugar.**

**#6**

**Scientific name:** *Salvia dorrii*

**Common name:** Purple sage

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** *tibishkono*

**Type:** Perennial - Shrub

**Height:** 2' – 3'

**Width:** 3' – 5'



**The leaves of this plant are a valued medicine. The tea boiled from the leaves is useful for stomach troubles, colds, sore throats, and other ailments. The dried leaves were smoked for medicinal purposes. The tops of the plant were boiled and the solution was an external wash for swollen leg veins. Some groups of Southern Paiute preferred the branches of this plant as thatching material for brush houses.**

BISHOP PAIUTE TRIBE

# firstbloom

## Native Plant Garden

### Herbaceous Plants of Our Garden

Planted  
April 2010



The information collected in this document comes from the USDA PLANTS database (<http://plants.usda.gov/java/>), Qwina West (member Bishop Paiute Tribe) and from the ethnobotany resource text: *Native Plants of Southern Nevada* by David Rhode.

**#1**

**Scientific name:** [\*Achillea millefolium\*](#)

**Common name:** Yarrow

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** wiütu

**Type:** Perennial - Herb

**Height:** 1' – 4'

**Width:** 1' – 3'



**Indians such as the Shoshone, Chumash, Paiute, Wasco, and others, applied a poultice of boiled or chewed leaves as a treatment for sores, burns, bruises, sprains, swellings, and even broken bones. The leaves and roots were chewed for tooth and gum aches, and a piece of leaf could be rolled and inserted into the cavity of a painful tooth to bring relief.**

**#2**

**Scientific name:** [\*Apocynum cannabinum\*](#)

**Common name:** Indian hemp or dogbane

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** *wishibü*

**Type:** Perennial - Herb

**Height:** 2' – 6'

**Width:** 0.5' – 1'



**This was one of the most important plants for creating fiber. It was used to make twine and cordage for many purposes. After the stems were soaked in water, the fibers and bark were easily removed. Long nets used in rabbit drives were made from this twine. The translation of the Owens Valley Paiute name refers to something that is used to make string.**

**#3**

**Scientific name:** [\*Stanleya pinnata\*](#)

**Common name:** Desert prince's plume

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** *ter-water*

**Type:** Perennial - Herb

**Height:** 1' – 5'

**Width:** 1' – 2'



**This plant was an important source of dietary greens in the spring. These plants were intensely managed by the Native populations to ensure their successful return in following years. These greens are similar to spinach in nutritional value.**

**#4**

**Scientific name:** *Oenothera elata*

**Common name:** Hooker's evening primrose

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** *kotoba*

**Type:** Perennial - Herb

**Height:** 2' – 3'

**Width:** 0.5' – 1'



**The Owens Valley Paiute collected seeds of this plant, which were then ground to a meal, and eaten raw. This was a very important food source for the Paiute tribes.**

**#5**

**Scientific name:** [\*Asclepias speciosa\*](#)

**Common name:** Showy Milkweed

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** *whishibü'üp*

**Type:** Perennial - Herb

**Height:** 2' – 4'

**Width:** 0.5' – 1'



**This plant was mostly used for making fiber. The dried stems were treated to remove the outer bark and inner pith. Then the remaining fibers were rolled together on the leg to create a soft, strong, 2 or 3 ply string. The milky latex was also useful for medicine and a chewing gum. This latex served as an antiseptic and healing agent for sores and cuts. Hot tea made from the roots was used for respiratory diseases.**

**#6**

**Scientific name:** [\*Xylorhiza tortifolia\*](#)

**Common name:** Mojave aster

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** tonikupü

**Type:** Perennial - Herb

**Height:** 1' – 2'

**Width:** 1' – 2'



**The stems of this plant were crushed to make a topical dressing for cuts or wounds, and are still used for medicinal purposes today. This plant was a very important tool for many groups.**

**#7**

**Scientific name:** [\*Penstemon eatonii\*](#)

**Common name:** Firecracker penstemon

**Southern Paiute name:** toxo'awatsip, toxopui'bimp

**Type:** Perennial - Herb

**Height:** 1' – 3'

**Width:** 2' – 3'



**Various penstemon species were used as medicine for burns, swelling, sores, and toothaches. This particular penstemon was boiled and the solution was used to wash burns. It was known to ease the pain and promote the growth of new skin.**

**#8**

**Scientific name:** [\*Aquilegia formosa\*](#)

**Common name:** Red columbine

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** *ker-ger-win*

**Type:** Perennial - Herb

**Height:** 1' – 2'

**Width:** 0.5' – 1'



**The ripe seeds of this plant were mashed, moistened, and then rubbed vigorously into the hair to discourage head lice. The plant was also used to stop diarrhea, treat stomachache, cure coughs, ease aching joints, and counteract dizzy spells. In the Owens Valley, the spring shoots were eaten as a salad green.**

**#9**

**Scientific name:** [\*Asclepias fascicularis\*](#)

**Common name:** Narrow-leaf milkweed

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** *uump*

**Type:** Perennial - Herb

**Height:** 1.5' – 3'

**Width:** 0.5' – 1'



**This plant was used for its fiber. The fiber could be used to create string for many purposes including net and basket making. The exterior material from the stems, picked in winter, was stored until they were used for string making. This was a string making staple for the Shoshone.**

**#10**

**Scientific name:** [\*Stanleya elata\*](#)

**Common name:** Panamint prince's plume

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** n/a

**Type:** Perennial - Herb

**Height:** 3' – 5'

**Width:** 1' – 3'



**The Panamint Prince's Plume was used very similarly to the Desert Prince's Plume. The leaves were used as greens in the spring time. These greens are also similar to spinach in their nutritional value.**

**#11**

**Scientific name:** [\*Anemopsis californica\*](#)

**Common name:** Yerba Mansa

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** nupitchi

**Type:** Perennial - Herb

**Height:** 1.5'

**Width:** spreading



**Yerba mansa is an important medicinal plant that is widely used by Native peoples. The roots are aromatic with a peppery taste. The roots were boiled as a tea for use in relieving colds, coughs, treating stomach aches, or as a laxative. The plant was boiled as a tea to treat venereal disease. Mashed and boiled leaves or roots were used externally as a poultice to treat swelling and served as an antiseptic wash. Locally, the roots were boiled and asthma sufferers could breathe the vapors under a cloth for relief.**

**#12**

**Scientific name:** [\*Salvia columbariae\*](#)

**Common name:** Chia

**Owens Valley Paiute name:** patsida

**Type:** Annual - Herb

**Height/Diameter:** 3 cm – 60 cm (varies widely dependent on moisture availability)



The seeds of this plant are valued for food and medicine. The brilliant purple flowers grow in abundance along sunny slopes, and once dried, produced thousands of the tiny seeds. Nüümü (or the Paiute people) are just one group of Southwestern indigenous peoples who use *patsida* for food and medicine. Cahuilla, Kawaiisu, Mojave, Pima, Pomo, Tohono O’odham, Tübatulabal and Yavapai use it for seed mush made into porridge, a poultice of seed mush can be applied to infections, soaked seeds can be used to remove foreign objects from the eye, seeds kept in the mouth and chewed during long journeys on foot give strength and provide energy, and seeds can be used to render water palatable by removing alkali. Today *Patsida* is known to be a “power food” and one of the best plant sources for Omega-3 oils, which support cardiovascular health, joint mobility, immune system function and overall cellular energy. *Patsida* is high in magnesium, potassium, phosphorus, and is a natural antioxidant. It is an excellent source of soluble fiber and slows the digestion of carbohydrates – preventing a spike in blood sugar. *Patsida* contains poly-mucosaccharid, a natural preventative and treatment for diabetes (which did not exist among Nüümü before the introduction of Euro-American food).