

Introduction to our Cultural Landscapes, Native Plant Seasonality and Plant Uses

Location: Meet along Hwy 74 at the base of the mountain in Palm Desert at the Santa Rosa-San Jacinto National Monument Visitor Center parking lot. (Idyllwild residents can meet carpool at Idyllwild Arts at 7am)

Address: 51-500 CA-74, Palm Desert, CA 92260

Course description: Plant foods are what sustain life. Knowing where and when to gather is essential. Discussions about Cahuilla knowledge of plants continue as we caravan up Hwy 74 towards Idyllwild, making several stops along the way. A number of stops will be made along the highway to view and review plant seasonality for traditional gathering. Elevations range from 800 feet to 5,500 feet above sea level. Discussions along the way include: Environments, native plant uses for food, medicine, utilitarian purposes, and Cahuilla Indian plant management practices. Students will learn about the Cahuilla Indians, whose ancestral territory we will be located, their seasonal movement across the landscape and how they thrived in this arid landscape. Learning objectives will include understanding the seasonal ecologies of these plant environments, botanical fun facts, sustainability practices, some nutritional information, and the importance of protecting, preserving and sharing cultural heritage and tradition. No plants will be collected.

- 7:15 a.m. Idyllwild Attendees will meet at Idyllwild Arts to Caravan to the desert start.
- 8:30 a.m. All attendees meet at Visitor Center parking lot.
Welcome, introductions, and class overview. Begin discussions about cultural history of area, the plants and their seasonality.
- 9:10 a.m. Depart for higher elevations, making several stops along the way until we reach the Idyllwild area later in the afternoon.
- 12:15 p.m. Lunch, bring a packed lunch.
- 1:00 p.m. Continue field trip.
- 2:30 p.m. Break, as needed
- 4:00 p.m. Idyllwild Arts. End of Day
- 5:00 p.m. Return Desert attendees to Monument Visitor Center

What to bring: Day pack, sensible pants and long-sleeved shirt (seasonal layered clothing), and hiking boots or other sturdy footwear. Folding chair, small ice chest with lunch, snacks, water and other cool drinks, water bottle, hat, and sunscreen. Camera and notebook might be useful.

Conditions/Caveats: Moderate walking required on uneven ground for equivalent of half mile intervals; able to carry day pack with up to 10 pounds of water, snacks, etc.; tolerant of changing climatic conditions (heat, cold, wind, rain) altitude and altitude changes.

Notes: Travel distance is approximately 40 miles one way.