

FIELD OBSERVATION REPORT

By Mary Wilson

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California Mule Deer Sighting:



I spotted this this mule deer doe (*Odocoileus hemionus*) driving down Highline Road in Tehachapi. They are called mule deer because of the large, mule-like, ears.

Everything is pretty dry on the valley floor so I decided to drive the Angeles Forest and Angeles Crest Highways. There are buckwheat (white flowers), purple mesa flock, monkey flowers, deer weed, rock roses, Indian paint brush, scarlet bugler and Spanish broom in bloom.



Rock Rose



Purple Mesa Flock



Indian paint brush



Monkey Flowers

Spanish Broom

Spartium junceum



Spanish broom was introduced to the California ornamental trade in 1848 in San Francisco. Beginning in the late 1930s, it was planted along mountain highways in southern California to prevent soil erosion. It has since become invasive in chaparral in southern California, where it was seeded for revegetation after fires in the early 1900s.

It is a decorative plant, helps prevent erosion and recovers quickly after fires. Honey makers appreciate the plants and in the past the plant was used to produce yellow dye, coarse fabrics, ropes, rugs, fishing traps, brooms and even shoes. It has a nice fragrance and was attributed to have seductive and aphrodisiac powers. The seeds are toxic to humans and if the seeds are ingested it can cause nausea, diarrhea, convulsions and respiratory distress.

Spanish broom is a tall shrub, up to 10 to 15 feet tall. It has long slender stems that are rush-like and then mature to woody branches with bark. The leaves are small, up to 1-inch, oval and they remain on the plant for 4-months or less. There are several flowers located on the current year shoots. The flowers are pea-like, up to 1-inch long and grow on short stalks on both sides of the main stem. The flowers are pollinated by bees. Seed production begins when the plants are 2 to 3-years old. One plant can produce thousands of seeds in one season. The seeds can remain viable for at least 5 years. Research is being done that shows Spanish broom may sprout from stumps or root crowns following damage of fire and the seed banks may not be damaged by fire but may stimulate them to germinate.



This plant can grow in tall, dense patches and form large amounts of dead wood and can be considered a fire hazard. After the 2009 Station Fire in the Angeles National Forest two environmental issues emerged—Spanish Broom was an invasive plant species and the lack of water for wildlife. They have specifically targeted Spanish Broom and the plants and seeds are being destroyed to prevent a Broom infestation.

JULY IS NATIONAL ICE CREAM MONTH



There is no known inventor that can be credited with creating ice cream. One of the first mentioned type of ice cream was between 618-97 AD in China. It was made from flour, buffalo milk and camphor. Marco Polo brought back to Italy a recipe for a type of sherbet. In 1660 an Italian named Francesco Procopio Dei Coltelli made a gelato in his café and the recipe blended milk, butter, eggs and cream. The first ice cream in the United States came from a letter written in Maryland in 1744 by Governor William Bladen's guest. The New York Gazette, on May 12, 1777, printed the first advertisement for ice cream and following the American Revolution ice cream became popular.

Thanks to President Reagan, we celebrate National Ice Cream Day every third Sunday in July—the 19th this year. He wanted to commemorate a treat enjoyed by over 90 percent of the US populations. He also proclaimed July as National Ice Cream Month. Americans lead the world when it came to eating ice cream.



As a small child I can remember going to visit my Grandparents and they would get out the old crank ice cream maker. Grandma would make the ice cream mixture and Grandpa would get a block of ice and he and I would use hammers to chop the ice into pieces. The canister with the paddle inside was put in the bucket and we put the ice and rock salt around it. The whole family would take turns at cranking the ice cream and when it got real hard to crank Grandpa would take out the cylinder and remove the paddle. The treat was I got a teaspoon and got to help clean that paddle of ice cream—just a few spoons full to taste. We would then put the canister back in the bucket, pile on more ice and



rock salt and cover it with a burlap sack. What made this so great was I got to taste the ice cream before we ever ate our dinner and then after dinner we would put the ice cream from the canister on top of one of Grandma's fruit cobblers. Life just couldn't get any better than that!

Why not top that ice cream with nuts. Did you know that California has four "State" nuts? It started in a fourth-grade classroom at Margaret Sheehy Elementary School in Merced. The kids were surprised to learn the Golden State did not have its own official nut. The students wrote letters to Assemblyman Adam Gray and nominated the almond, which is a \$4-billion industry for the state. Gray took up the cause and the class of 25 fourth-graders went to Sacramento's Capitol and made their case. The mascots of minor league baseball's Modesto Nuts—Wally the Walnut, Al the Almond, Shelly the Pistachio were there. Also there were the lobbyists for California's walnut, pistachio and pecan growers, who argued that their respective nuts were just as valuable as the almond. The bill was amended to include all four nuts and Governor Jerry Brown signed this into law on July 10, 2017.

California State Nuts:



Almonds



Pecans



Pistachios



Walnuts