

CORNALES

(Loasas)

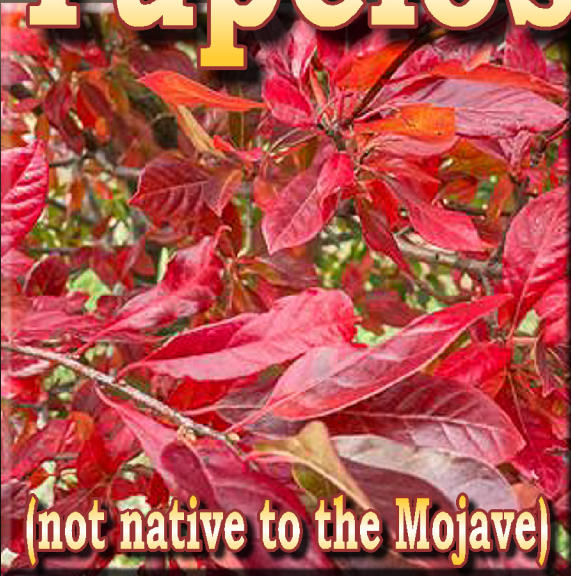
Stickleafs



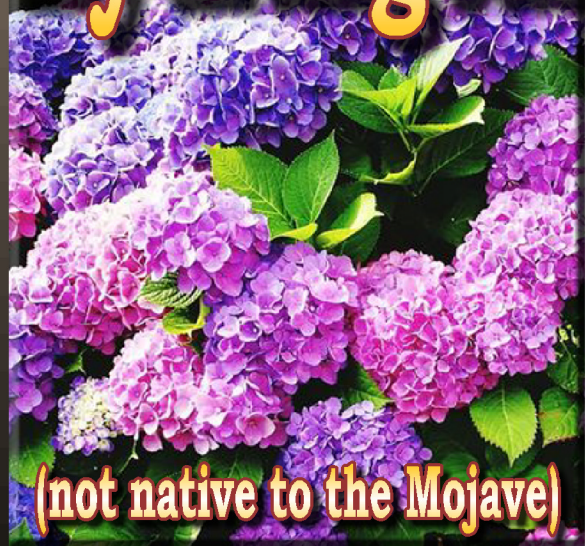
Dogwoods



Tupelos



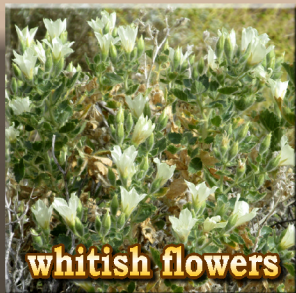
Hydrangeas



(7 Families Worldwide)

Family **LOASACEAE** (Stickleafs)

Rock Nettle (*Eucnide urens*)



whitish flowers

Hoover Dam; Lk Mead NRA



May

Calville Bay; Lake Mead National Recreation Area; NV



toothed margins

Hoover Dam; Lk Mead NRA



dense shrub

Shoshone, California



irritating hairs

Calville Bay; Lk Mead NRA

- Flowers:** 5 petals; singular on bracted stalks; numerous stamen; cream white; 1-2"
Stems: clumped; woody base; branched, shrubby; pale green; hairy; 1-3'
Leaves: oval; toothed; alternate; green; fleshy, coarsely hairy; 1-2.5"
Blooms: April to June
Range: desert sw US (se CA, s NV, sw UT, nw AZ) south into Baja California, MEX
Habitat: gravelly to rocky substrates; washes, cliffs; Lower to Upper Sonoran Life Zones

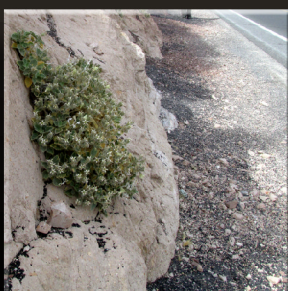
Notes:

common; perennial shrub; grows to 3' in desert washes to rocky slopes and cliffs at elevations to 6,500'; inferior ovary with minute seeds; aka **Desert Rock Nettle**, **Stingbush**, **Velco Plant**, **Vegetable Velcro**; important host plant for **White-Lined Sphinx Moth** (*Hyles lineata*)

Mojave presence: native

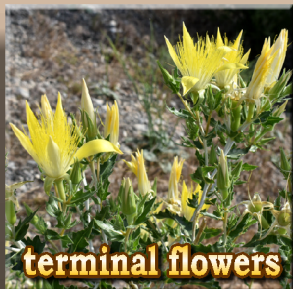
Comments:

These spring bloomers are commonly found adorning cliffs and rocky slopes throughout the Mojave, such as the one at left near Shoshone, CA, and the ones on the right on the approached road to Hoover Dam. Admire, but don't touch...the hairs covering nearly the entire plant can cause serious and painful irritation!



Family **LOASACEAE** (Stickleafs)

Smoothstem Blazingstar (*Mentzelia laevicaulis*)



terminal flowers

Scenic Loop; RRCNCA; NV



June

Scenic Loop; Red Rock Canyon NCA; NV



lobed, lanceolate leaf

Scenic Loop; RRCNCA; NV



blackbrush scrubland

Scenic Loop; RRCNCA; NV



singular stem

Scenic Loop; RRCNCA; NV

- Flowers:** star shaped; 5 narrow petals, 5 sepals; whiskery, 2.25" stamen; solitary, terminal; **yellow**; to 6"
- Stems:** erect; singular; lateral branching; whitish green; glabrous; 42"
- Leaves:** lanceolate; lobed/sawtoothed; sessile; alternate; barbed pubescence; **green**; to 6"
- Blooms:** June to September
- Range:** w NA from CA east to CO, s CAN south to s NV
- Habitat:** sandy to gravelly soils; disturbed areas, roadsides; Lower Sonoran to Transition Life Zones

Notes:

common; biennial/short perennial; grows as singular, erect stem or weedy-looking shrub in w NA at elevations up to 10,000'; flowers mainly nocturnal/crepuscular; woody **capsule** fruit, winged seeds, long bracts; aka **Giant Blazingstar**, **Evening Star**; source of nectar and pollen for bees, butterflies, moths.; numerous uses by Native Americans: seeds for food, roots for treatment of various ailments (arthritis, fever, etc.)

Mojave presence: native

Comments:

This species is common throughout most of its range, but not so in the Mojave region. These specimens were photographed at about 4000' elevation in the **Red Rock Canyon NCA** in June, 2019.



erect stemmed or ...



... shrubby appearance

Lo3

Family **LOASACEAE** (Stickleafs)

White-Bract Blazingstar (*Mentzelia involucrata*)



singular flower

Fr. Mtn; Las Vegas, NV



June

Frenchman Mountain; Las Vegas, NV



rocky habitat

Fr. Mtn; Las Vegas, NV



single, branched stem

Fr. Mtn; Las Vegas, NV



linear, toothed leaves

Fr. Mtn; Las Vegas, NV

- Flowers:** cupped; cymose/solitary; 5 petals, **orange veins**; 1" stamens, orange anthers; **yellow white**; 2.5"
Stems: erect; singular; branched; thick, pubescent; pale pink to whitish green; to 14"
Leaves: linear to elliptical; dentate; alternate; pubescent; **green**; **basal**: rosette, 7", **cauline**: sessile, .75
Blooms: February to May
Range: southwestern US from s NV, w AZ west to s CA, south into Baja, MEX
Habitat: dry, sandy to gravelly soils; desert flats, washes, slopes, etc.; Lower Sonoran Life Zone

Notes:

uncommon; annual forb; grows to about a foot tall in sw US, south into MEX at elevations up to 3,000'; **named for its characteristic white**, scarios (dry, membranous) bracts; 1" cylindrical **capsule** fruit; white, flattened seeds; aka **Sand Blazingstar**; 2 subspecies; produces nectar that attracts insects, especially sweat bees in the genus **Xeralictus**; seeds ground into flour by Native Americans

Mojave presence: native

Comments:

I took these pictures at the base of Frenchman Mountain in the eastern part of the Las Vegas Valley, in April of 2018. They sat unidentified and unattended for over 5 years before I finally stumbled upon a reference that revealed the plants to be White-Bract Blazingstars. Thus far, this is the only time and place where I have encountered this diminutive, but attractive plant.