

CORNALES (Loasas)

Stickleafs

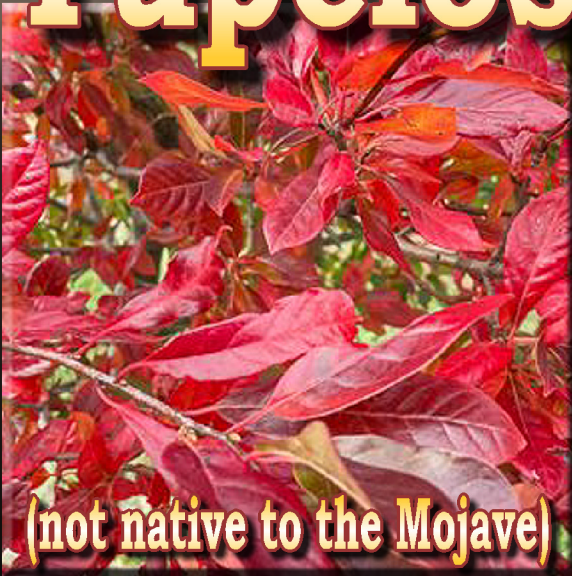


Dogwoods



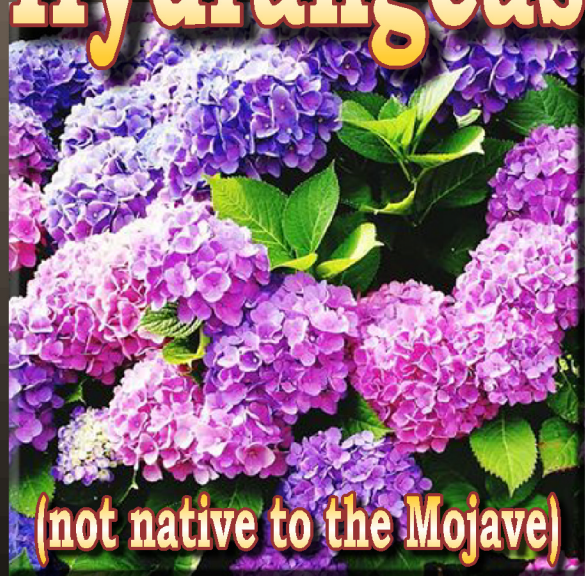
(not native to the Mojave)

Tupelos



(not native to the Mojave)

Hydrangeas

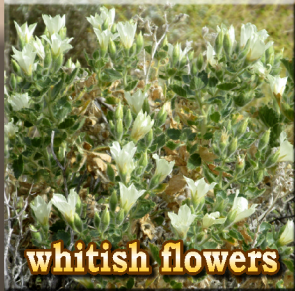


(not native to the Mojave)

(7 Families Worldwide)

Family **LOASACEAE** (Stickleafs)

Rock Nettle (*Eucnide urens*)



whitish flowers

Hoover Dam; Lk Mead NRA



May



toothed margins

Hoover Dam; Lk Mead NRA



dense shrub

Shoshone, California



irritating hairs

Calville Bay; Lk Mead NRA

Calville Bay; Lake Mead National Recreation Area; NV

- Flowers:** rotate; 5 petals; singular on bracted stalks; numerous stamens; cream white; 1-2"
- Stems:** clumped; woody base; branched, shrubby; pale green; hairy; 1-3'
- Leaves:** oval; toothed; alternate; green; fleshy, coarsely hairy; green; 1-2.5"
- Blooms:** April to June
- Range:** desert southwest US; Baja California, Mexico
- Habitat:** gravelly to rocky substrates; washes, cliffs; Lower to Upper Sonoran Life Zones

Notes:

common; perennial shrub; grows to 3' in se US from se CA, s NV, sw UT, nw AZ south into Baja California, MEX, at elevations to 6,500'; inferior ovary with minute seeds; aka **Desert Rock Nettle**, **Stingbush**, **Velcro 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 approach 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:** stellate; 5 narrow petals, 5 sepals; whiskery, 2.25" stamen; solitary, terminal; **yellow**; to 6"
- Stems:** erect; singular; lateral branching; glabrous; **whitish green**; 42"
- Leaves:** lanceolate; lobed/sawtoothed; sessile; alternate; barbed pubescence; **green**; to 6"
- Blooms:** June to September
- Range:** western North America
- 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 shrub in w NA from CA east to CO, s CAN south to s NV 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.)

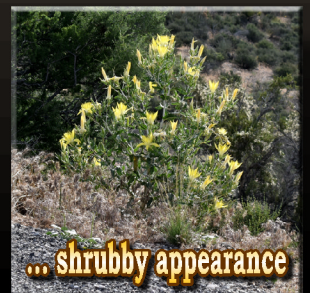
Mojave presence: native

Comments:

This species is common throughout most of its range, but not so in the Mojave region. These specimens were photographed at about 4,000' elevation in the **Red Rock Canyon NCA** in June, 2019.



erect stemmed or ...



... shrubby appearance

Family LOASACEAE (Stickleafs)

White-Bract Blazingstar (*Mentzelia involucrata*)



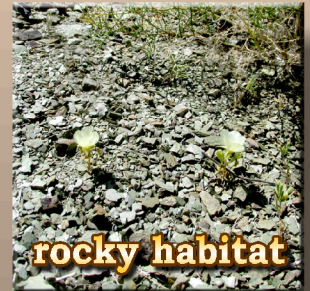
singular flower

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:** cyanthiform; cymose/solitary; 5 petals, orange veins; 1" stamens, orange anthers; yellow white; 3"
- Stems:** erect; singular; branched; thick, pubescent; pale pink to whitish green; to 14"
- Leaves:** linear to elliptical; dentate; alternate; pubescent; **basal:** rosette to 7", **cauline:** sessile; **green;** .75"
- Blooms:** February to May
- Range:** southwestern US; Baja California, 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 from s NV, w AZ west to s CA., south into Baja, MEX, at elevations up to 3,000'; named for its characteristic white, **scarious** (dry, membranous) bracts; 1" cylindrical **capsule** fruit bearing many 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.

Family **LOASACEAE** (Stickleafs)

Whitestem Blazingstar (*Mentzelia albicaulis*)



rocky habitat

Bare Mtn; Beatty, NV



unbranched stems

Bare Mtn; Beatty, NV



May

Bare Mountain; Beatty, NV



capsular fruit

Bare Mtn; Beatty, NV



elliptical leaves

Bare Mtn; Beatty, NV

- Flowers:** epigynous*; cymose inflor.; sessile, 5 petals/sepals; 15-30 long, exerted stamens; **yellow**; .5"
- Stems:** erect/decumbent; unbranched; glabrose to slightly **pubescent**; whitish pink; to 18"
- Leaves:** linear/elliptical; entire to lobed, sessile; cauline alternate; barbed hairs; **green**; 6"
- Blooms:** February to July (varies slightly by region)
- Range:** southwestern US; British Columbia/Saskatchewan, Canada; Baja and northern Mexico
- Habitat:** dry, sandy to gravelly soils; desert flats, washes, slopes, etc.; Lower to Upper Sonoran Life Zones

Notes:

uncommon; annual forb/herb; found in w NA from TX/Wy west to Pacific coast, sw CAN south into MEX at elevations from 1,000-7,400'; 8 subspecies; *epigynous bracts, sepals, petals (attached to top of ovary); 1" club-shaped **capsule** fruit bearing .08" pendulous, wingless seeds; aka **Small-Flowered Blazingstar**, **White Blazingstar**; traditionally used for various purposes by native peoples (seeds for food; plants as tobacco substitute, treatments for snake bite, burns, toothaches, etc.

Mojave presence: native

Comments:

It can be very difficult to distinguish various members of this genus. Confident identification requires close examination of seeds and capsules, which is quite impractical in the field. Otherwise, best guess is acceptable.