CRYSTAL COVE STATE PARK
PLANT WALK GUIDE

California Buckwheat
Eriogonum fasciculatum

Pollination
Bees are busy pollinators; can you think of any other ways plants are pollinated?

Bush Sunflower
Encelia californica

Seasonal Dimorphism
The sunflower sheds its large leaves during the dry summer months replacing them with smaller leaves. How do you think that benefits the plant?

California Sagebrush
Artemisia californica

Summer Dormancy
The California Sagebrush, nicknamed cowboy cologne, smells strong after rain because of oils in its leaves. Have you ever smelled this before?

Toyon
Heteromeles arbutifolia

Transpiration
Notice the thick, waxy leaves. Any idea how these help reduce water loss and allow the shrub to stay green all year?

Laurel Sumac
Malosma laurina

Adaptations
The Laurel Sumac has taco-shaped leaves that fold in heat. Why might a plant curl its leaves?

Black Walnut
Juglans californica

Biocontrol
The California Black Walnut releases chemicals that limit nearby plant growth. Why should a tree block competing plants?

California Sycamore
Platanus racemosa

Exfoliation
The California Sycamore has patchy peeling bark. Why might a tree shed it's bark (Hint: Why does a snake shed its skin?)

Blue Elderberry
Sambucus Mexicana

Wildlife Attractant
Song birds love the berries; the shrub provides nesting habitat for birds and rabbits; ground squirrels, mice and rats eat bark. Deer will browse the foliage. What do we call animals that only eat plants?

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Coyote Brush
Baccharis pilularis

Fire Resistant
There are high concentrations of fire-retardant compounds in the leaves that stay green year-round. What do we call plants that have green leaves throughout the year?

Branching Phacelia
Phacelia ramosissima

Trichomes
With fierce-looking hairs covering the plant and a chemical secretion that serves to trap pesky insects branching phacelia has a couple of superpowers to ward off hungry organisms. How do you think organisms know not to touch or taste a plant?

Mule Fat
Baccharis salicifolia

Riparian Species
Always found near a fresh water source the roots of this plant create a network within the soil to help reduce erosion. Mule fat is an evergreen as opposed to a deciduous plant, do you know the difference?

Black Sage
Salvia mellifera

Aromatic Attractant
Having a strong, pungent minty odor serves as a defense against pests including aphids and slugs or herbivores like rabbits and deer. What is another reason why plants have aromas?

Poison Oak
Toxicodendron diversilobum

Pioneer Species
This species is often one of the first plants to inhabit an environment recovering from a disturbance like a flood. What other environmental events could destroy a plant community?

Lemonade Berry
Rhus integrifolia

Fruit Bearing
The red hard seed is covered with a sticky sour gelatinous coating and is eaten by birds and mammals. What do we call animals that eat only fruit?

ANSWER KEY

California Buckwheat
Wind, water, self-pollination, other organisms like bats and birds.

Bush Sunflower
Require less energy to grow, lose less water to evaporation.

California Sagebrush
Smells like sweet mint.

Toyon
A thick waxy cuticle prevents water movement which prevents evaporation.

Laurel Sumac
Curling leaves help reduce the surface area exposed to the sun which limits water loss through transpiration.

Black Walnut
More water, space, nutrients and sunlight for the tree.

California Sycamore
The tree is "growing out of its skin!"

Blue Elderberry
Herbivores.

Black Sage
To attract pollinators.

Mule Fat
Deciduous plants lose their leaves annually as opposed to evergreen plants that stay green throughout the year.

Branching Phacelia
It hurts! One attempt is all they need.

Coyote Brush
Evergreen.

Lemonade Berry
Frugivore.

Poison Oak
Fires, soil damage, deforestation.