



Photo: by Joseph Dougherty at <http://www.ecology.org>

Common Name: Poison Oak

Scientific Name: *Toxicodendron Diversilobum*
(formerly known as *Rhus diversiloba*)

Kumeyaay Name:

Description: The leaves grow in groups of three leaflets. They usually are a little bit serrated. They are green in the spring and red in the fall. The poisonous substance is a yellowish oil. The plant can grow like a bush or vine. It can grow from 4 to 20 feet.

The Kumeyaay used a liquid made from the leaves of this plant as an eyewash. Full-blooded Kumeyaay (and other full-blooded Native Americans) seem to be immune to the rash that can develop from contact with this plant.

(From: *Roadside Plants of Southern California*, by Thomas J. Belzer, Mountain Press Publishing Company, Missoula, Montana, c. 1984)

You can read about this plant in *Indians of the Oaks* on pages: 102

In the book, the Kumeyaay avoided the bush.

By Alisha