



Photo: by Steven Thorsted

Common Name: White Sage

Scientific Name: *Salvia Apiana*

Kumeyaay Name: Pellytaay or Pestaay

Description: White sage is a bush made of whiteish green leaves that are very fuzzy. It has tall stalks of white or light lavender flowers that bloom in the spring and summer. It has a very strong smell.

The Kumeyaay used white sage leaves in ceremonies. They ground the seeds and toasted them for a food called pinole. They gathered young branches before the flowers formed. Then they dried them, crumbled them and made a tea for chest colds and coughs. They would heat and smell the steam if they were congested. (From *Delfina Cuero* by Florence Shippek, Ballena Press, Menlo Park, CA, 1991)

You can read about this plant in *Indians of the Oaks* on pages: 19 and 63

In the book, when Pion and Kwee-tahk were roasting the mescal, Pion put sweet smelling sage in the bottom of the pit under the rocks before he built the fire. Later, Op-a-chuck asked Kwee-tahk to find some seeds from the white sage for her so they could make a nice mush to eat.

(Close-up of the Leaves. Photo by Linda Foote)



By Jessica