

Relationships

It was long thought that only moths pollinated the evening-blooming Soap Root. However, further study determined a variety of insects, plus hummingbirds aid in pollination.

Each Soap Root flower booms for just one evening and only for a few hours before fading away.

As each flower's petals unfurl, a faint "plink" sound can be heard.



Seeds that remain are soon eaten by mice, voles and small birds such as the lesser goldfinch, oak titmouse, and bushtit.

Watch for Soap Root in bloom during twilight hours mid-June to mid-July in County Parks and Open Space Preserves throughout Santa Clara Valley.

Take only photos,
leave only footprints.

Resources

Open Space Parks & Preserves

Santa Clara County Parks & Recreation
www.parkhere.org

SCC Open Space Authority
www.openspaceauthority.org

Mid Peninsula Open Space District
www.openspace.org

On-Line Plant, Animal, Insect ID

Henry W. Coe State Park (wildflower ID)
www.coe-park.org/wildflowers/flower-album.html

CalPhotos, UC Berkeley
www.calphotos.berkeley.edu

Natural Resources Database
www.nrdp.org

Books & Publications

Spring Wildflowers of Henry W. Coe State Park
buy online or at the park's visitor center.

Tending the Wild, Native American Knowledge and the Management of California's Natural Resources, by M. Kat Anderson, UC Press

National Wildlife Federation **Field Guide to Insects & Spiders of North America**

Lone Pine Field Guide to Birds of Northern California, David Fix, Andy Bexener

Wavy-Leaf Soap Root



Summer 2012

Native **Ohlone** used the Wavy-Leaf Soap Root plant for a variety of purposes. In addition to preparing the plant to use as food, they distilled the juices of its leaves for skin tattooing. They also crushed the bulb, threw it into creeks to suffocate fish, making them easier to catch. The fibrous outer sheath of the bulb was collected and fashioned into a utility brush much like our modern day whisk broom.



Fresh leaves edible steamed, like spinach.



Leaves wither away after plant blooms.



Tufts of exposed root often seen on trails.



Soap Root cross section.



Blooms evenings in June-July.



Soap Root bulb edible baked.



Bulb sheath made into a brush.