

# WHAT BUCKWHEAT IS THAT?

## Buckwheats in the Mt. Diablo area

### 1. Plants perennial

- a. Plant low growing, often forming mats. Flowers bright yellow.  
.....**Sulfur flower** (*Eriogonum umbellatum* var. *bahiiforme*)
- b. Plants tall with branching stems. Flowers white, pinkish, or pale yellow.  
.....**Naked-stem buckwheat** (*Eriogonum nudum* var. *auriculatum*)

### 2. Plants annual

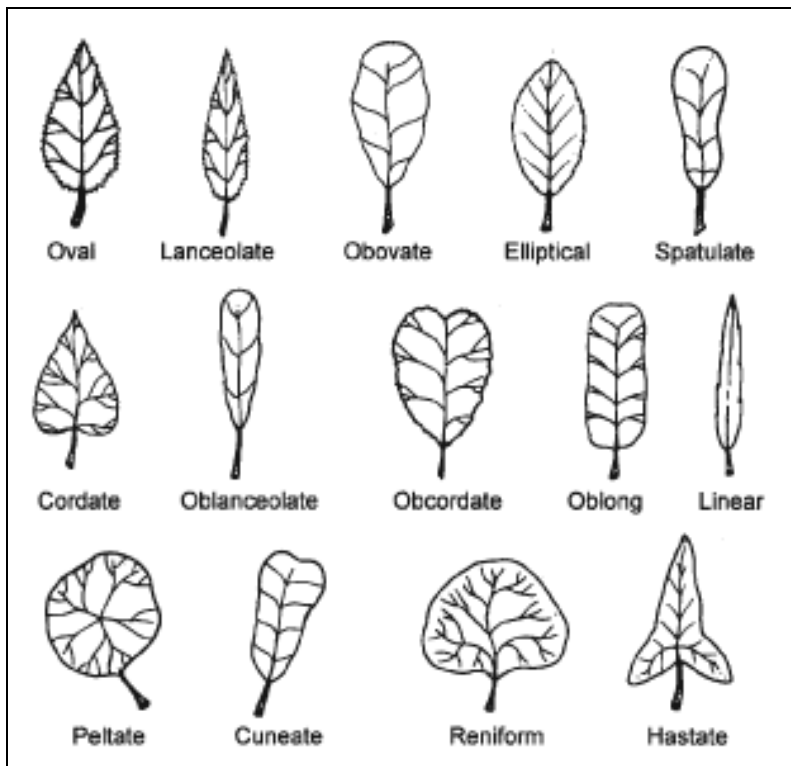
- a. Leaves and stems sticky (glandular), not covered with white hairs. Flowers white or pink. Stems with many branches.....**Unarmed buckwheat**(*Eriogonum inerme*)
- b. Leaves and stems usually covered with fine white hairs. Flower color various.
  - (1) Flowers white to rose pink. Flower clusters spaced along elongate stems (generally < 3 clusters per branch, occasionally 4) or strictly at ends of branches and at the junction of two branches (axes).
    - (a) Leaves at base and often on the stems. Leaves broadest at tip or middle (oblanceolate to elliptic).
      - (i) Stems with lengthwise ridges. Flowers pink to rose in clusters at ends of branches. Flowers and flower cluster sticky.  
.....**Anglestem buckwheat** (*Eriogonum angulosum*)
      - (ii) Stems without ridges. Flowers light rose pink in clusters at ends of branches and at axes of flower stems. Flower clusters sticky. Flowers smooth, not sticky.  
.....**Mt. Diablo buckwheat** (*Eriogonum truncatum*)
    - (b) Leaves rounded with heart-shaped base. Leaves only at the base of stems. Flowers rose to white with red veins in clusters along the stems.  
.....**Coville's buckwheat** (*Eriogonum covilleum*)
  - (2) Flowers white to yellow or red, drying reddish. Flower clusters spaced along elongate stems (generally > 5 clusters per branch).
    - (a) Basal leaves ellipse-shaped, tapering to leaf stem (petiole). Flower cluster with fine white hairs.
      - (i) Flowers white to yellow. Stems with uneven branches.  
.....**Slender wooly buckwheat** (*Eriogonum gracile*)
      - (ii) Flowers yellowish to red. Stems wand-like with few branches.  
.....**Wand buckwheat** (*Eriogonum roseum*)
    - (b) Basal leaves round. Flower clusters and flower stems without fine white hairs. ....**Ear-shaped buckwheat** (*Eriogonum luteolum* var. *luteolum*)



Flower cluster. The structure of fused bracts at the base of the flowers is called the "involucre".

Involucre

Flower structures



Leaf Shapes



Coville's buckwheat  
(*Eriogonum covilleanum*)



Slender woolly buckwheat (*Eriogonum gracile*)



Wand buckwheat (*Eriogonum roseum*)







Anglestem buckwheat (*Eriogonum angulosum*)



Ear-shaped buckwheat  
(*Eriogonum luteolum* var. *luteolum*)



Unarmed buckwheat (*Eriogonum inerme*)

## Photo Credits

### *Eriogonum umbellatum* var. *bahiifolium*

Habit - Brother Alfred Brousseau © 1995 Saint Mary's College of California

*Eriogonum umbellatum* flower head - © 2003 Christopher L. Christie

### *Eriogonum nudum* var. *auriculatum*

Habit - © James Reveal

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### *Eriogonum truncatum*

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### *Eriogonum gracile*

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### *Eriogonum roseum*

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### *Eriogonum angulosum*

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### *Eriogonum luteolum* var. *luteolum*

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### *Eriogonum inerme*

Photographs of herbarium specimen, courtesy of Jepson Herbarium