

134. *ESCHSCHOLZIA CALIFORNICA* Cham. (PAPAVERACEAE) — California Poppy

This handsome ornamental annual or biennial is the state flower of California. West coasters may smoke the leaves and petals when marijuana is scarce.⁵¹ It is said by an anonymous writer⁵¹ to offer a high lasting about 30 min. Amerindians are said to have used the plant as a fish poison.³

Reported to be analgesic, anodyne, diaphoretic, diuretic, soporific, and spasmolytic, the alkaloids present in the roots are said to have feeble narcotic and respiratory effects, but the plant is said to have no therapeutic importance.¹ Mixed with black pepper, the plant has been used for ague, jaundice, and skin ailments.^{32 33}

Dry seeds contain 25% protein, 46.8% fat.²¹ Flowers contain *circa* 5% rutin⁵⁹ and a purple-red pigment eschscholtz-xanthin.¹ According to Watt and Breyer-Brandwijk³ and Duke,⁹¹ the California poppy contains several alkaloids, among them allocryptopine, berberine, bisnoragemonine, californidine, chelerythrine, chelidonine, chelilutine, chelirubine, codeine (report doubtful), coptisine, cryptocavine, cryptopine, escholine, eschscholtzidine, eschscholtzine, fumarine, glaucine, ionidine, lauroscholtzine, morphine (report doubtful), protopine, and sanguinarine.³ A glycoside and succinic acid, sugars, coloring matter, resinous substances, and cyanide occur in the roots, the whole plant containing HCN;¹ KNO₃, fumaric acid, and rutin are also reported.³ Cryptopine is uterotonic in guinea pigs at dilutions of 1 ppm.³³