

Native American Plant Uses

Information

Date/ Time: Sunday, March 15, 9 am – 4 pm

Meet at: [Big Morongo Canyon Preserve](#) (click on link for a map of the meeting site)
11055 East Dr., Morongo Valley, CA 92256

Instructor: Daniel McCarthy, M. S., Anthropology, Director, Cultural Resources Management
Department, San Manuel Band of Mission Indians

Overview

Discover the abundant uses of native desert plants during this one-day field class. Daniel McCarthy, edible plants expert, will teach participants about the plants historically harvested by the native people of Southern California for food, medicine, and utilitarian purposes. The program will start in the classroom with an overview of local Native American tribes and how culture defines plant use or the other way around. Attendees will also learn about plant communities, habitat, and distribution, focusing on the ethno-botany of key species found in the Mojave and Colorado Deserts. In the afternoon, the class will follow the trails for a hike to identify edible plants found in the Preserve area. No plants will be harvested in the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve. Respectful gathering practices will be discussed as well as restrictions collecting on federal lands and in the National Park.

Itinerary

Sunday, March 15, 9 am – 4 pm

Big Morongo Canyon Preserve

- Classroom lecture
- Lunch break, **bring your own food**
- Field class (hike along the trail)

What to Bring to the Course

The 10 Essentials: Every day in the Desert

- Day pack
- 4 quarts of water
- Closed toe hiking shoes
- Lunch and snacks
- Clothing layers
- Hat
- Sun glasses

- Sunscreen
- Notebook and pencil/pen
- Whistle

Fitness Requirements

Participants must be in good physical condition for courses/activities in a desert that may be hot, dry, windy, and sometimes surprisingly cold.

Hike Level

Easy

Guidelines

- You are responsible for your safety.
- Park your car in designated areas only. Parking along the side of the road is dangerous to you and the environment.
- Rattlesnakes are present in the desert. Avoid contact with wildlife. Put your hands and feet only where you can see them.
- Stay with the group. If you get lost, stay put.
- Before leaving the class, check out with the Desert Institute Representative.
- Drink plenty of water. If you run out, notify the instructor or the Desert Institute Representative.

Instructor Biography

Daniel McCarthy, M. S., Anthropology, has worked at Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, Joshua Tree National Park, and throughout Southern California compiling photographic inventories of the rock art of this region. He has served as District Archaeologist for the San Jacinto Ranger District and acting Forest Archaeologist for the San Bernardino National Forest where he was the Tribal Relations Program Manager for 17 years. His research interests include desert archaeology, aboriginal trail systems, and rock art. McCarthy also conducts southern California Native American cultural awareness classes providing information about native plant uses, rock art, and material culture.

* The Desert Institute staff/instructors will attempt to accommodate participants needs, however we reserve the right to deny a student participation in the course due to concerns regarding health and safety issues.