



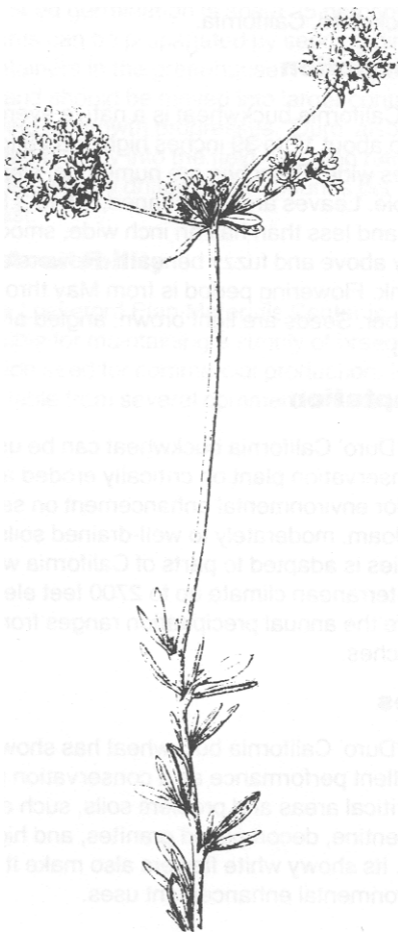
United States Department of Agriculture

**Soil Conservation Service**

Davis, California



# 'Duro' California Buckwheat



## **'Duro' California Buckwheat** (*Eriogonum fasciculatum* Benth.)

The USDA Soil Conservation Service (SCS) and the California Agricultural Experiment Station cooperated in the release of 'Duro' California buckwheat. The species grows naturally on dry slopes and canyons near the coast from San Diego County north to Marin County. 'Duro' is a blend of six collections of California buckwheat from various locations in California. 'Duro' was developed at the SCS Plant Materials Center in Lockeford, California.

### **Description**

California buckwheat is a native evergreen shrub about 12 to 39 inches high and 28 to 51 inches wide. Branches are numerous, slender and flexible. Leaves are egg-shaped, 1.5 to 3.8 inches long and less than half an inch wide, smooth or fuzzy above and fuzzy beneath. Flowers are white or pink. Flowering period is from May through October. Seeds are light brown, angled and very small.

### **Adaptation**

'Duro' California buckwheat can be used as a conservation plant on critically eroded areas and for environmental enhancement on sandy to clay loam, moderately to well-drained soils. This species is adapted to parts of California within the Mediterranean climate up to 2700 feet elevation where the annual precipitation ranges from 7 to 20 inches.

### **Uses**

'Duro' California buckwheat has shown excellent performance as a conservation plant on critical areas and problem soils, such as Serpentine, decomposed granites, and high pH soils. Its showy white flowers also make it ideal for environmental enhancement uses.

### **Establishment**

'Duro' is good seed producer. Seed matures in the early fall. Annual production is about 300 pounds per acre. The seed dries on the plant, which allows some leeway in harvesting. Fruits can be hand stripped from dried clusters and then cleaned by machine. Without the calyx removed from the seed, there are about 334,000 seeds per pound. Seed germination is about 25 percent.

Plants can be propagated by seeding directly into containers in the greenhouse. Plants grow rapidly and should be moved into larger containers or the field as growth progresses. 'Duro' also can be seeded directly into the field. Seeding rates are 9 pounds per acre drilled and 14 pounds per acre broadcast.

### **Seed Availability**

The Lockeford Plant Materials Center is responsible for maintaining a supply of breeder and foundation seed for commercial production. Plants are available from several commercial nurseries.

The Soil Conservation Service operates one of its 23 plant materials centers at Lockeford, California, in San Joaquin County. Special emphasis is placed on finding suitable plants for erosion control on soils and sites where it is hard to establish protective vegetative cover.

Plants are significant components of about two-thirds of the conservation practices that farmers, ranchers, and others find essential in solving erosion and sedimentation problems. It is SCS policy to assemble, evaluate, release, and distribute for commercial increase new or improved plant materials needed for resource conservation and development.

SCS assistance is available without regard to race, creed, color, sex, or national origin.

Cover illustration reprinted from Abrams & Ferris, *Illustrated Flora of the Pacific States*, Four Volumes, with permission of the publishers, Stanford University Press.