

## **UC Merced**

### **Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology**

#### **Title**

Zigmond: *Kawaiisu Ethnobotany*

#### **Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1p67r39h>

#### **Journal**

Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology, 3(2)

#### **ISSN**

0191-3557

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#### **Publication Date**

1981-12-01

Peer reviewed

hardt's *Missions and Missionaries in California* is four massive volumes, not two, and a classic work may be cited only to its most recent reprinting rather than to the original paper.

As one who battled his way through a mass of 18th-century documents on Baja California without guidance, I can say with some security that perusal of *Northern New Spain: A Research Guide* would have saved me at least six months of hard work and probably improved my product significantly.

#### REFERENCE

- Engelhardt, Zephyrin  
1908-1915 *The Missions and Missionaries in California*. 4 vols. San Francisco: James H. Barry.



*Kawaiisu Ethnobotany*. Maurice L. Zigmond.  
Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press,  
1981, 102 pp., 1 map, photos, \$25.00  
(paper).

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This volume of 102 pages is attractively printed in large format (8½x11 in.) with paper binding. According to the introduction, the work is a "by-product of generalized field work among the Kawaiisu" undertaken first in 1939-1940, and then resumed in the early 1970s after a 30-year hiatus. The earlier field work, in part, provided the basis for Zigmond's doctoral dissertation (Zigmond 1941).

After a brief introduction, the main body of the text consists of an alphabetical listing of each taxon (given by currently acceptable genus and species) followed by a discussion of Zigmond's observations of Kawaiisu knowledge and uses for each plant. Several tables supplement the written text, including a

summary table of the plant usages, a list of Kawaiisu plant names, a list of common names of plants, and an inventory of the genera and species grouped according to plant families. Also included are a list of plants which the Kawaiisu recognized and applied names to, but did not use, and a list of the plants found in or near the Kawaiisu homeland that were neither named nor used. Several interesting photographs, mostly taken by Zigmond during the late 1930s, are also provided.

Zigmond states that the Kawaiisu had a high regard for their plant world, which provided them with food, medicine, intoxicants, clothing, shelter, and many utilitarian items. Some plants were especially highly regarded and used by the Kawaiisu in their rituals and religious practices. It is noted in the introduction that the Kawaiisu way of naming plants reveals no coherent pattern for recognizing what are obviously related plants. Thus, although there is a common name for acorn, there is no apparent interrelationship between the designations for the seven species of the genus *Quercus* which were known and used. For a full discussion of nomenclatural problems Zigmond directs the reader to his publication "Kawaiisu Plant Name Categories" (1971).

Zigmond's discussion of Kawaiisu plant usages is both well written and informative. He provides a considerable amount of detail about two plant groups in particular, *Nicotiana* and *Datura*. Plants belonging to these two genera were central elements in Kawaiisu ceremony and religion, as well as important plant medicines. The discussion of the ownership, care, pruning, and gathering of *Nicotiana bigelovia* and the specialized preparation of its leaves by fermentation, is one of the more important passages, for it shows that plant "usage" is a complex process requiring very specific knowledge of numerous details. Zigmond amplifies and clarifies many points

on the usage of *Nicotiana*, *Datura*, and many other plant groups, such as the pines (genus *Pinus*) and oaks (genus *Quercus*), and others which play critical roles in the subsistence patterns of the Kawaiisu.

As interest in understanding the interactions taking place between humans and the plants in their environment has grown steadily during recent decades, the completion of this volume is timely. Maurice Zigmond's *Kawai-*

*isu Ethnobotany* is indeed an important contribution to the literature of ethnobotany.

#### REFERENCES

Zigmond, Maurice L.

1941 *Ethnobotanical Studies Among California and Great Basin Shoshoneans*. Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, New Haven.

1971 *Kawaiisu Plant Name Categories*. University of Oregon Anthropological Papers No. 1.

