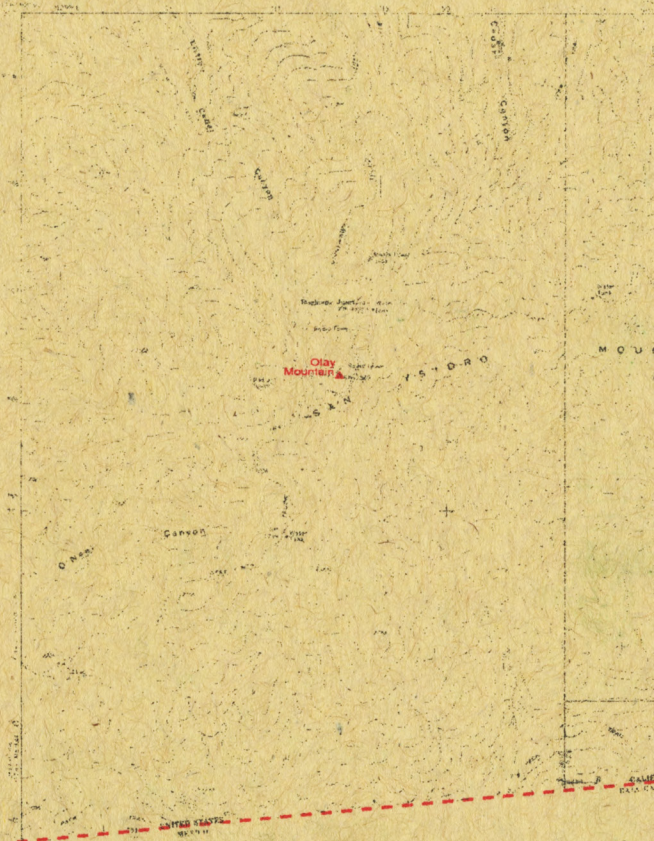


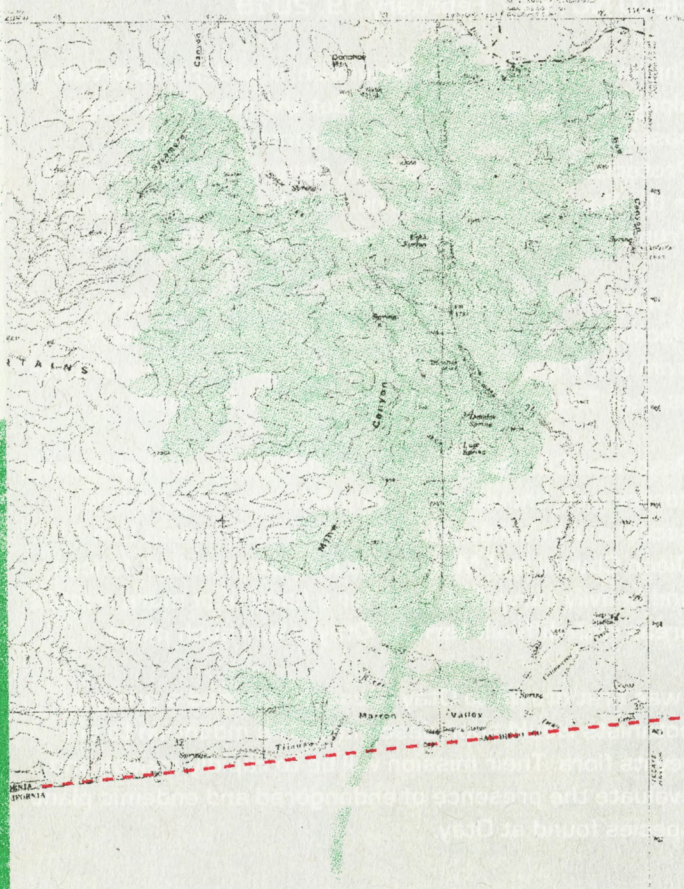
**WELCOME
TO
OTAY
MOUNTAIN**

**AN
ALTERNATIVE
FIELD GUIDE**

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



OTAY MOUNTAIN QUADRANGLE
CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



FIELD NOTES / February 19, 2019

This is the road to Otay Mountain, a wilderness preserve along the US-Mexico border. But the road is no longer passable, barricaded by US Customs and Border Protection (CBP). At 3,566 ft, Otay is the highest peak in the San Ysidro Mountains. I am here only days after Trump declared a national emergency at the border.

A bird served as sentry along the chain-link fence blocking passage to Otay, just a dozen or so meters from the triple-fortified border wall and complex of fences near Tijuana. It is unusually cold for February.

Past here CBP has erected 'model' sections of proposed border wall, should the Trump Administration prove successful in building it. But this area between San Diego County and Mexico has long been walled, fenced, and heavily surveilled, save for a handful of more remote areas with difficult terrain. Otay is one such place.

I was first drawn to Otay because I learned a group of botanists would soon descend on the mountain to survey its flora. Their mission will be to rapidly assess and evaluate the presence of endangered and endemic plant species found at Otay.

RARE, ENDEMIC, AND ENDANGERED PLANTS AT OTAY FOUND IMMEDIATELY ALONG US/MEXICO BORDER

Common Name	Scientific Name	Family
Otay manzanita	<i>Arctostaphylos otayensis</i>	Ericaceae
Encinitas baccharis	<i>Baccharis vanessae</i>	Asteraceae
San Diego goldenstar	<i>Bloomeria clevelandii</i>	Themidaceae
Orcutt's brodiaea	<i>Brodiaea orcuttii</i>	Themidaceae
Otay Mountain ceanothus	<i>Ceanothus otayensis</i>	Rhamnaceae
small-flowered morning-glory	<i>Convolvulus simulans</i>	Convolvulaceae
Mexican flannelbush	<i>Fremontodendron mexicanum</i>	Malvaceae
Palmer's grapplinghook	<i>Harpagonella palmeri</i>	Boraginaceae
Otay Mountain lotus	<i>Hosackia crassifolia</i> ssp. <i>otayensis</i>	Fabaceae
Gander's pitcher sage	<i>Lepechinia ganderi</i>	Lamiaceae
Jennifer's monardella	<i>Monardella stoneana</i>	Lamiaceae
Cedros Island oak	<i>Quercus cedrosensis</i>	Fagaceae

endemic [adjective]

en-de-mic | \ en-'de-mik

1a : belonging or native to a particular people or country

1b : characteristic of or prevalent in a particular field, area, or environment

2 : restricted or peculiar to a locality or region

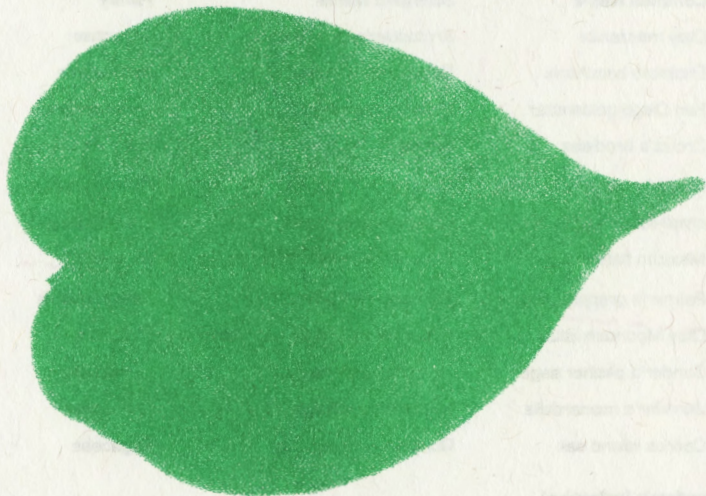
/ endemic diseases

/ an endemic species

[source: Merriam-Webster Dictionary]

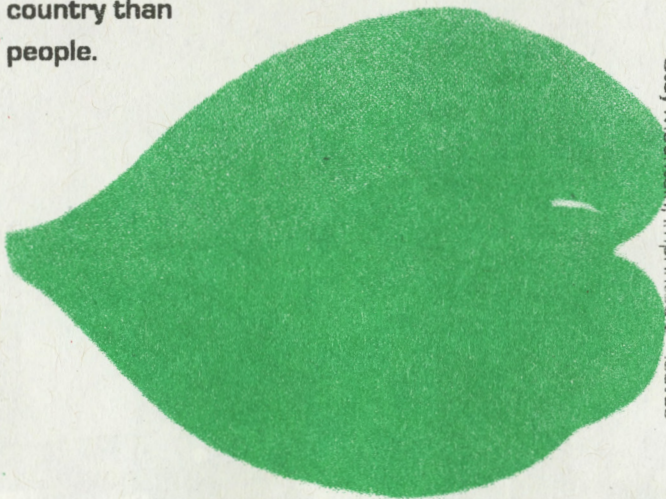
FIELD NOTES / February 19, 2019

These botanical activists aim to use the legal protections afforded to plants under US and California endangered species laws to protect the rights and safety of people crossing the US-Mexico border.



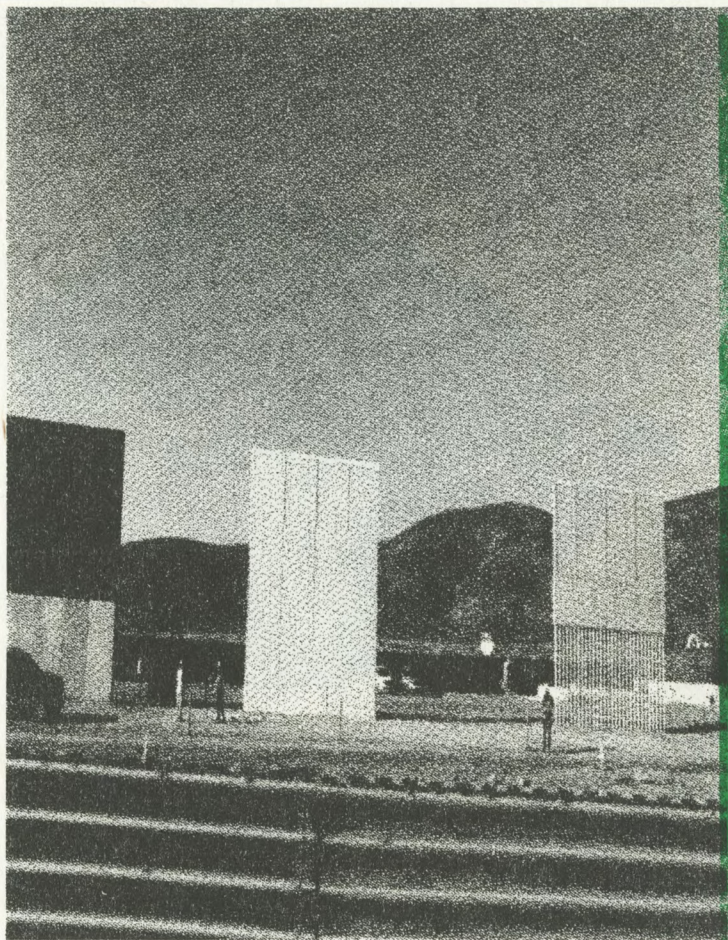
The assessment is organized to provide evidence for lawsuits against the Trump administration for the proposed border wall's impact on endangered species.

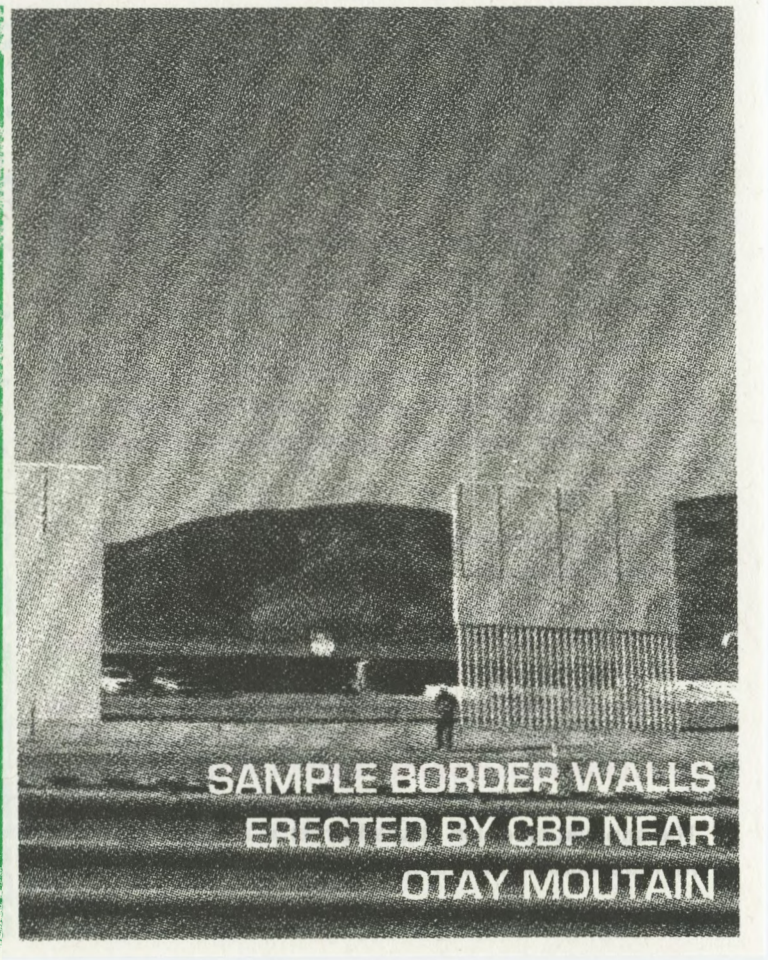
I came to Otay in order to better understand this political moment in which plants may be afforded greater legal protections in our country than people.



Otay Mountain, imprinted on leaves

Reflecting on what at first appears as a collision of the **ecological** with the **political** is to acknowledge their inseparability—how power moves through a variety of kinds of life.





**SAMPLE BORDER WALLS
ERECTED BY CBP NEAR
OTAY MOUNTAIN**

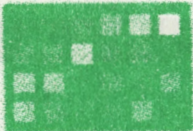
FIELD NOTES / MARCH 20, 2019

Animals, like people, suffer at the border. In March 2018, I joined a group of students checking and setting camera traps for jaguar as part of a study of the sonora jaguar's presence (and absence) from the borderlands. A century ago, jaguars were once abundant across this range, but were exterminated through US government programs to reduce livestock attacks: Thought extinct from the US for many years, at least five jaguars have been spotted in recent years in Arizona and New Mexico. Border walls have made it difficult for breeding pairs of jaguars to re-establish in the US. Perhaps one day they will return to California.

Wildlife biologists are outspoken about the effects of existing border walls and fences for a variety of species, including the Mexican grey wolf, peninsular bighorn sheep, and Sonoran pronghorn. The proposed expansion of the wall would be catastrophic for many dozens of endangered species. Even winged creatures, such as the ferruginous pygmy-owl, are impacted by the border; their flight patterns do not permit them to cross tall barriers.

The separation of kin at the border is a multispecies unnatural history.

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People killed by US Customs

Incident Year	Name
01 May 2018	Claudia Patricia Gómez Gonzáles
01 February 2018	Robert Young III
01 January 2018	Juan Daniel Jacques
01 November 2017	Unnamed
01 September 2017	Rodolfo Ballardo
01 August 2017	Israel Caballero
01 August 2017	Gloria Lopez-Lopez
01 August 2017	Raul Quiroz-Quiroz
01 May 2017	Darius Smith
01 February 2017	Unnamed
01 February 2017	Unnamed
01 July 2016	Unnamed
01 June 2016	Unnamed
01 May 2016	Unnamed
01 March 2016	Unnamed
01 March 2016	Unnamed
01 February 2016	Hector Leroy
01 October 2015	Rayshaun Cole
01 October 2015	Unnamed
01 September 2015	Unnamed

BAJA CALIFORNIA
CALIFORNIA

and Border Protection

Age	State of Death
20	Texas
28	Florida
33	Texas
"Adult"	Arizona
31	Arizona
18	California
15	California
20	California
15	California
Unspecified	New Mexico
Unspecified	New Mexico
Unspecified	Texas
"Adult"	Arizona
Unspecified	Texas
Unspecified	Arizona
Unspecified	Arizona
43	Texas
30	California
Unspecified	California
Unspecified	Michigan

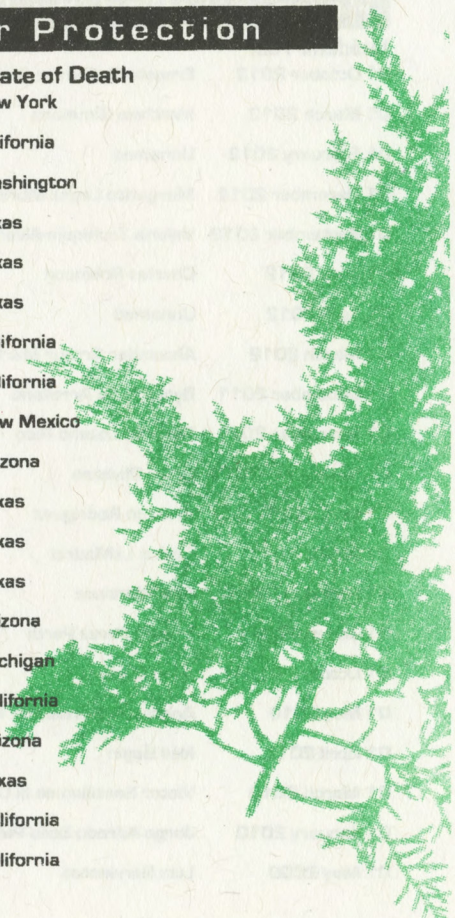
People killed by US Customs

Incident Year	Name
01 June 2015	Richard Matt
01 June 2015	Graciela Lopez Franco
01 March 2015	Jamison Childress
01 February 2015	Unnamed
01 January 2015	Tiano Melton
01 January 2015	Unnamed
01 December 2014	Francisco Manuel Cesena
01 November 2014	Adam Thomas
01 October 2014	Unnamed
01 October 2014	Edgar Amaro López
01 September 2014	Unnamed
01 September 2014	Aide Fink
01 July 2014	Joaquin Tomas Cibrian
01 May 2014	Jose Luis Arambula
01 March 2014	Unnamed
01 February 2014	Julian Ramirez Gaíndo
01 January 2014	Gabriel Sanchez Velazquez
01 January 2014	Keith Martin
01 December 2013	Steven Keith
01 November 2013	Cruz Marcelino Velazquez



and Border Protection

Age	State of Death
Unspecified	New York
32	California
20	Washington
Unspecified	Texas
25	Texas
Unspecified	Texas
40	California
27	California
36	New Mexico
23	Arizona
Unspecified	Texas
50	Texas
Unspecified	Texas
31	Arizona
Unspecified	Michigan
41	California
31	Arizona
35	Texas
58	California
16	California



People killed by US Customs

Incident Year

01 October 2013	Ernesto Guitierrez Cortez
01 March 2013	Matthew Simmons
01 February 2013	Unnamed
01 December 2012	Margarito Lopez Moreles
01 September 2012	Valeria Tachiquin-Alvarado
01 June 2012	Charles Robinson
01 April 2012	Unnamed
01 March 2012	Alexander Arthur Martin
01 December 2011	Byron Sosa Arrellano
01 November 2011	Gerardo Lozano Rico
01 September 2011	Omar Olivares
01 April 2011	Armado Rodriguez
01 March 2011	Carlos LaMadrid
01 February 2011	Alex Martinez
01 January 2011	Robert Perez Perez
01 October 2010	Juan Mendez
01 May 2010	Anastacio Hernandez Rojas
01 April 2010	Neil Begin
01 March 2010	Victor Santillan de la Cruz
01 January 2010	Jorge Alfredo Solis Palma
01 May 2009	Luis Barrientos

and Border Protection

Age	State of Death
38	California
28	Texas
51	California
19	Arizona
32	California
75	Maine
Various	Texas
24	California
28	Arizona
20	Texas
28	Texas
46	Texas
19	Arizona
30	Washington
Unspecified	California
18	Texas
42	California
54	Maine
36	Texas
28	Arizona
56	New Mexico

People killed by US Customs

Incident Year	Name
01 December 2008	Steven Edward Martin
01 December 2008	Miguel Castillo Lopez
01 July 2008	Tomas Orzuna
01 October 2007	Kenneth Petersen
01 August 2007	Jose Alejandro Ortiz-Castillo
01 May 2007	Benito Gonzalez
01 March 2007	Gerardo Valentinez
01 March 2007	Ramiro Gamez Acosta
01 February 2007	Unnamed
01 January 2007	Francisco Javier Dominguez Rivera
01 August 2006	Luis Nunez III
01 August 2006	Lucia Baez
01 March 2006	Lourdes Cruz Morales
01 February 2006	Unnamed
01 December 2005	Carlos Delgado Martinez
01 December 2005	Guillermo Rodriguez
01 October 2005	Agustin Gomez Campos
01 October 2005	Jeffrey Suddeth

and Border Protection

Age	State of Death
21	Arizona
Unspecified	Texas
Unspecified	California
Unspecified	Minnesota
23	Texas
40	California
Unspecified	California
20	California
Unspecified	Arizona
22	Arizona
Unspecified	California
40	Arizona
14	Arizona
Unspecified	Arizona
Unspecified	Texas
Unspecified	California
Unspecified	California
36	Montana

People killed by US Customs

Incident Year	Name
01 May 2005	Juan De Jesus Rivera-Cota
01 February 2005	Bassim Chnait
01 February 2005	Julio Cesar Yanez Ramirez
01 October 2004	Edgar Ramos-Villareal
	Maria Guadalupe Gomez Patino,
01 September 2004	Adriana Martinez
01 September 2003	James Roberts
01 June 2003	Ricardo Olivares Martinez
01 February 2003	Juan Patricio Peraza Guijada
01 February 2003	William Otto Petersen

FIELD NOTES / FEBRUARY 19, 2019

Because the most direct route to the border at Otay was blocked for miles around by CBP, I had to track back and go over the mountain to reach the other side. There is a truck trail that can take you the 9.5 miles or so up and over Otay to the border from the North. I did not have a truck, so I set out on foot.

After 5 hours I reached the summit, but there was not enough daylight to make it to the border with time to return up and over the mountain again.

and Border Protection

Age	State of Death
16	Arizona
20	California
31	Arizona
25	Arizona
37, 16	Texas
Unspecified	California
22	Arizona
19	Texas
30	Arizona

The day I went to Otay, I did not see another person on the mountain except for CBP patrols and volunteer border 'guards' in unmarked white pickup trucks. I was warned going up by the first CBP Patrol that it was inadvisable to hike there, that they were patrolling the area for people attempting to cross the border.

At one point while recording video, I heard a CBP patrol come careening down the trail. My first instinct was to hide.

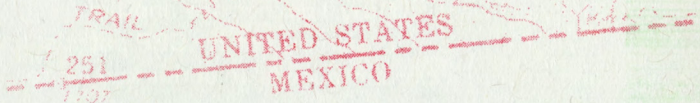
REST IN

Name: Jesús Flores-Cruz

Age: 41

Nationality: Mexican

Cause of Death: Fatal shooting



Incident Date: February 18, 2014

Incident Location: Otay Mountains

POWER

Associated Press

Thu Feb 20, 2014 12:19 PM

SAN DIEGO — The Mexican government on Thursday condemned a U.S. Border Patrol agent's fatal shooting of a Mexican man who allegedly struck the agent in the head with a rock near the U.S.-Mexico border in California.

Mexico's Foreign Relations Department said it was "deeply concerned" about the killing of 41-year-old Jesus Flores Cruz near San Diego. The department said lethal force should be avoided in immigration enforcement.

The unidentified agent fired his gun Tuesday after Flores Cruz hurled several large rocks, including one about the size of a basketball, the San Diego County Sheriff's Department said.

One of the larger pieces hit the agent in the head and that the agent feared for his life, investigators said.

Flores Cruz suffered two gunshot wounds, the sheriff's department said in a press release. Authorities said they confirmed his identity with a fingerprint match from a 1996 arrest by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. No further details on that arrest were released.

Under current policy, agents can use deadly force if they have a reasonable belief that their lives or the lives of others are in danger. The Border Patrol has long maintained rocks can be lethal weapons.

PLANTS OF INTEREST

Tecate cypress

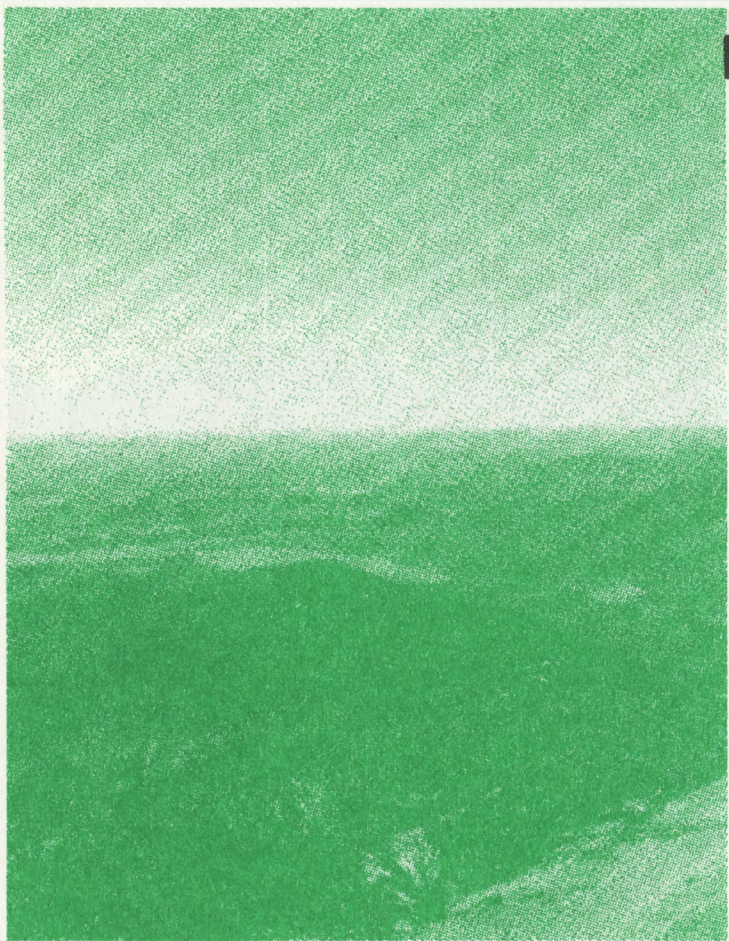
Cupressus forbesii (also: *Hesperocyparis forbesii*), is endemic to a small geographic range spanning southern California and Northern Baja, including Otay Mountain. It is considered both rare and endangered in California, according to the California Native Plant Societies' Rare Plant Rank classification system.

According to the plant blog 'In Defense of Plants', the Tecate cypress is "a holdover from a time when this region was much cooler and wetter than it is today. It owes its survival and persistence to a combination of toxic soils, a proper microclimate, and fires that burn through every 30 to 40 years."

The Tecate cypress cones only open and release seeds in response to wildfires. "After a low intensity fire, literally thousands of Tecate cypress seedlings can germinate. Even if the parent trees burn to a crisp, the next generation is there, ready to take their place (In Defense of Plants)." But after decades of fires suppression, forest fires in Southern California now burn hotter, more intensely, and more frequently than in the past. These fires can kill, rather than replenish, stands of Tecate cypress.



Tecate cypress, Olay Mountain



A green-tinted photograph of a landscape. In the foreground, a road or path curves from the bottom right towards the center. A utility pole stands in the middle ground. The background shows a flat horizon under a clear sky. The entire image has a fine, woven texture.

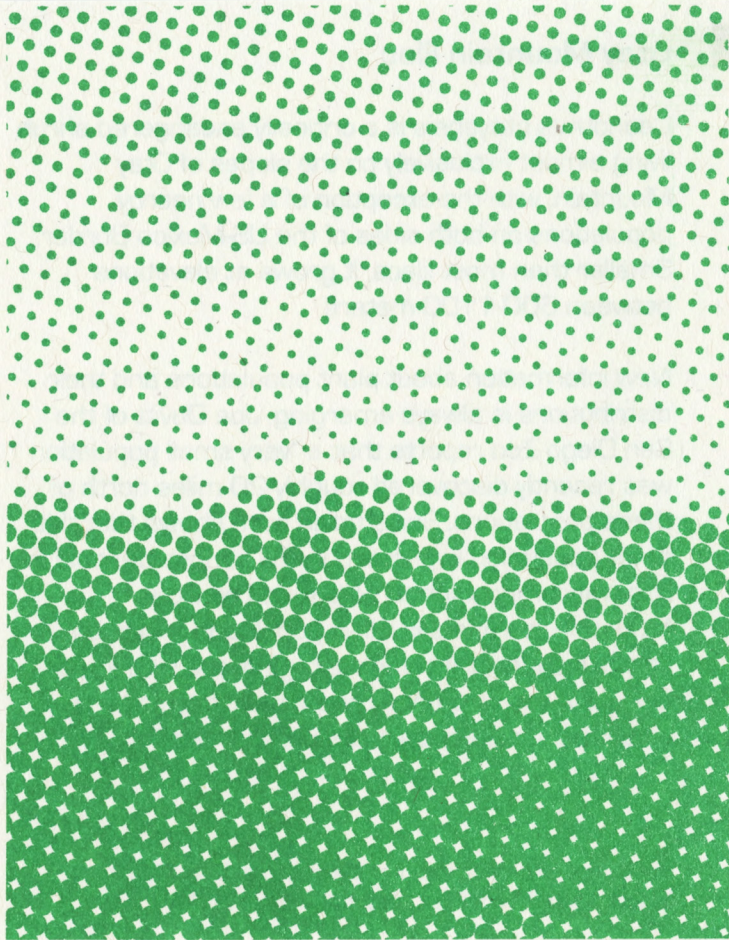
OTAY MOUNTAIN TRUCK TRAIL

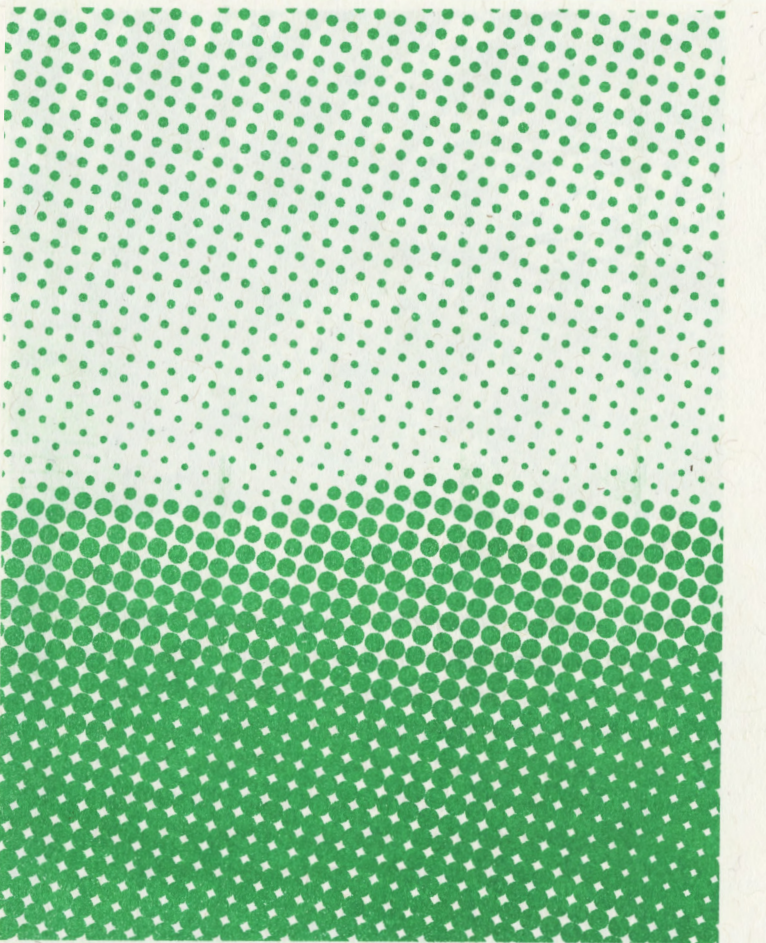
Otay Mountain lilac


Ceanothus otayensis is a critically endangered shrub living almost exclusively on the slopes of Otay Mountain, with the exception of a few nearby populations on both sides of the US-Mexico Border. Smaller than most lilacs, it grows at elevations between 600-1100 meters.

New information about plant populations and their distributions is always emerging. Joe Davitt of the San Diego Zoo reports that a "very small population was recently discovered roughly 20 miles north of these populations. Soil studies have shown that this small population is growing in soil almost identical in mineral composition to soils found on Otay Mountain. It's unclear if this population migrated to this location, taking advantage of the similar soil type, or if it is a remnant population, from a time when the species was more widespread."

Opposite: Herbarium voucher specimen of Otay Mountain Lilac collected from Otay Mountain in May 2000.



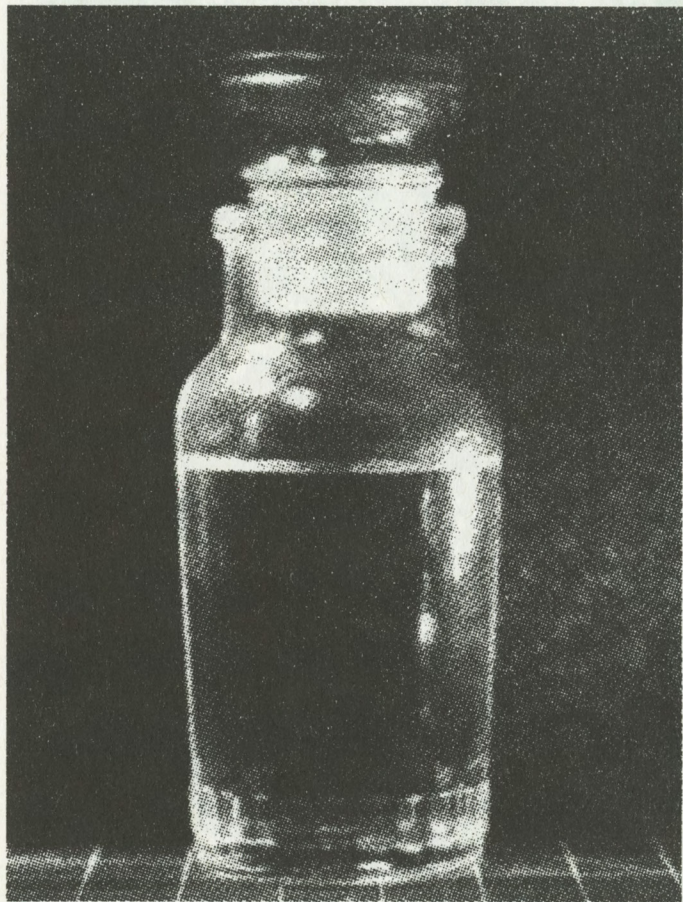




Otay manzanita

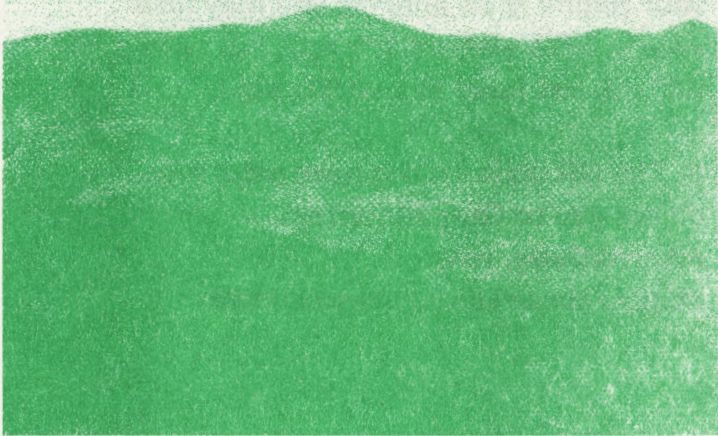
Arctostaphylos otayensis is listed as critically imperiled by the California Native Plant Society, and its entire population is restricted to Otay mountain, San Miguel mountain, and a limited number of individuals just south of the US-Mexico border in Baja. It has striking red bark that peels away as it ages, and fruits resembling small apples. It is threatened by habitat impacts such as road building, as well as by wildfires.





FIELD NOTES / February 19, 2019

The mountain smells like chaparral. The air carries memories of dry scrub and sun, thorny plants and vast expanses. I close my eyes on the trail up to the mountain and breathe. The scent takes me to a stand of laurel sumac growing in dense clumps two meters high. The sumac have long, thick green leaves and red stems. I want to remember the smell of the mountain, so I take a few leaves back home with me in the hopes of bottling it.



VISIT OTAY IN 360

If you or a friend have a smartphone you may visit Otay Mountain in 360 degrees.

1. It is recommended to first download the YouTube app for your phone (if your phone is an android you may also view in 360 without the app, but with IOS you will need to use the app).

2. The QR code on the next page will direct you to Otay Mountain.

Alternatively, visit:

<http://tinyurl.com/otaymountain>

3. Once the video has loaded, you may look in all directions, up and down, left and right. Look at what is close and what is far. Don't forget to look behind you. If you wish to hear the sound of the mountain, you will need headphones.

4. Leave no trace.



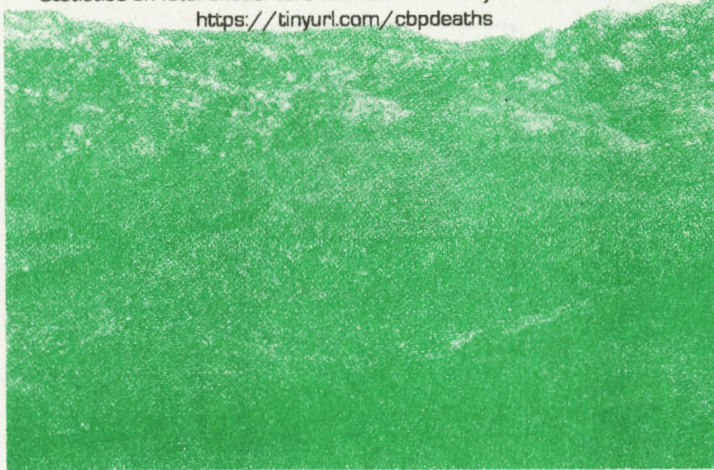
All art and photographs by the author except:

Herbarium specimen images sourced from
The Herbarium of the San Diego Natural History Museum
Synoptic Collections Vouchers

Tecate cypress photograph used with creative commons permission
from Wikipedia user Anthonysthwd. Otay manzanita photograph cour-
tesy of Herbert A. Jensen and the Marian Koshland Bioscience and
Natural Resources Library, University of California, Berkeley.

List of endangered and rare plants taken from expert witness testimony
of Dr. Sula Vanderplank regarding impact of proposed border wall in San
Diego County. Sample border wall photo courtesy Sula Vanderplank.


Statistics on fatal encounters with CBP courtesy of The Guardian:
<https://tinyurl.com/cbpdeaths>



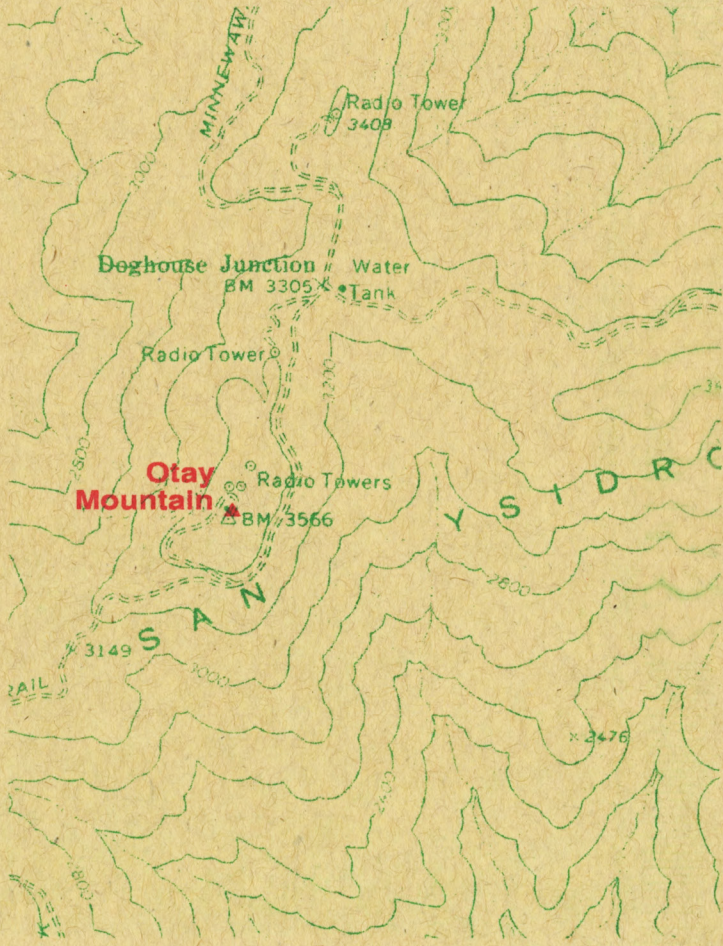
WELCOME TO OTAY MOUNTAIN: AN ALTERNATIVE FIELD GUIDE

Created by Jared Margulies, 2019
Printed at Baltimore Print Studios in 2019

Any profits from the sale of this zine will be
donated to No More Deaths.



Visit www.jaredmargulies.com for more
information about Alternative Field Guides.



Otay Mountain

Radio Tower 3408

Dechouse Junction
BM 3305

Water Tank

Radio Tower

Radio Towers
BM 3566

Y S I D R C

S A N

RAIL

x 3476

3149