

*Eriodictyon crassifolium* Benth. var. *nigrescens* Brand, THICK-LEAVED YERBA SANTA, BICOLORED YERBA SANTA. Shrub, evergreen,  $\pm$  sclerophyllous, with spreading and ascending branches, in range 50–250 cm tall; shoots with grayish green leaves, velveteen and densely soft-hairy, resinous on shoot surface and subepidermally, pleasantly aromatic; bark on old stem dull gray and tight. **Stems:** cylindric, pilose, resin-covered on diffusely glandular and  $\pm$  blistery surface, becoming chestnut before forming brownish young bark. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, petiolate, without stipules; petiole  $\pm$  cylindric, short–10 mm long; blade lanceolate-ovate to elliptic or oblong, 25–120(–170)  $\times$  10–40(–50) mm, thickish, long-tapered at base and often indistinct from petiole, dentate-serrate to crenate on margins, acute to obtuse at tip, pinnately veined with principal veins raised on lower surface, with well-developed netlike pattern between evenly spaced parallel secondary veins (each secondary vein ending in a tooth), upper surface uneven ( $\times 30$ ), resinous, dark green and velvety short-pilose and short-tomentose, lower surface mostly velvety tomentose. **Inflorescence:** panicle of cymes, terminal, many-flowered, lateral branches 1-sided, coiled rachis at tip, with 2 rows of flowers on the outer side of coil, where forked sometimes with several flowers below fork, ultimate branchlet 5–13-flowered, at anthesis flowers subsessile, lacking bracts, pilose, glandular; bract subtending branch narrowly spatulate to oblanceolate or linear, 5–12 mm long, very thick, pilose; pedicel formed during fruit development. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 10–13 mm across; the lowest flowers sometimes cleistogamous; **calyx** deeply 5-lobed, 3.1–5.3  $\times$  2.3–4.3 mm,  $\pm$  stiff-pilose on all surfaces; tube 0.5–0.7 mm long; lobes linear, in range 2.6–4.5  $\times$  0.6–1 mm, green to purplish, thick, appressed to corolla tube (suberect); **corolla** 5-lobed, 10–14.5 mm long, pilose; tube cylindric, white at base grading to pale lavender above,  $\pm$  pleated and with a rounded rib from base to each lobe alternating with a furrow extending to each sinus, hairs especially on ribs + with short glandular hairs; throat narrowly funnel-shaped, boundary between tube and throat indistinct, tube + throat 8–11.5 mm long, throat lavender grading to darker color of lobes and with darker veins, externally evenly pilose with inconspicuous glandular hairs, internally lacking appendages; lobes spreading, overlapping in bud, rounded to  $\pm$  angled, 2–3.3  $\times$  2.5–3.7 mm, violet to lavender with darker veins; **stamens** 5, fused from base of corolla tube, 5.8–8.5 mm long within a flower, included; filaments fused to midpoint or 2/3, free portions unequal, straight, whitish, mostly fused portion with radiating white hairs; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, oblong, 1–1.5  $\times$  1–1.2 mm within each flower, purplish red and light creamy yellow (darker on 1 side and next to connective); **nectary disc** covering lower portion of ovary, orange; **pistil** 1, 6–8.5 mm long; ovary superior, ovoid, 1.5–2  $\times$  0.8–1 mm, greenish, with straight, ascending hairs at top, 2-chambered, each chamber with several ovules; styles 2 or fused to ca. 0.5 mm at base, suberect with curving tip, 4.8–7 mm long, light green at base but mostly lavender and darker just beneath stigma, hairy from base to midpoint; stigmas terminal, dome-shaped, light yellowish green and then green, above level of anthers minutely papillate-pebbly (colliculate). **Fruit:** capsule, dehiscent by 4 valves, 8–10-seeded, ovoid, 3–3.5 mm long, 5-sided in  $\times$ -section, sharp-tipped (beaklike), bristly short-pilose. **Seed:** 3-sided ovoid, ca. 1.3  $\times$  0.6 mm, metallic brown, with horizontally elongate cells in neat vertical rows on all faces, short-papillate along cell rows. Mid-January–mid-June.

Native. Evergreen shrub occurring often in relatively dense, local populations scattered throughout the range in chaparral, and able to resprout after fire. *Eriodictyon crassifolium* is easy to recognize either by its velveteen, aromatic leaves (*yerba santa*) or showy lavender flowers, but care should be taken touching the plant because sensitized persons will develop dermatitis from a resin coating on the surfaces. Within a population can occur two shades of flowers. This plant is a hydrophyll borage that lacks internal appendages on the corolla associated with the stamens. In range the fruits are heavily infested with insect larvae, so that at many sites fruits with seeds are rarely produced, and the large structures that appear to be mature fruits are, instead, insect galls. However, the presence of dense stands indicates that some sexual reproduction occurs. One source of viable seeds may come from the cleistogamous flowers that are present at the base of the inflorescence. To date, variety *nigrescens* is the only variety of *E. crassifolium* verified in the flora.  
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