

Cistus L. ROCK-ROSE

Cistus ladanifer L., GUM CISTUS. Shrub, evergreen, ± sclerophyllous, much-branched, 100–250 cm tall; shoots with tough, leathery leaves, shiny, glutinous and covered with thick resin (except stomatal zones on lower leaf) secreted from sessile glands, the glands domelike, very aromatic. **Stems:** cylindrical, glabrous; young bark orange-brown with lenticels, the lenticels vertically elongate and slightly raised or pimplelike. **Leaves:** opposite decussate, simple, sessile with pair connected by 2 low ledges across node, without stipules; blade linear-lanceolate to elliptic or narrowly oblong, 30–85 × 6–16 mm, tapered to roundish at base, entire and narrowly inrolled under (revolute) on margins, acute at tip, pinnately veined but with 3–7 parallel veins at base having midrib sunken on upper surface and principal veins raised on lower surface, upper surface glutinous, dark green, finely net-veined, lower surface not glutinous, grayish green, densely covered with umbellalike (peltate) stellate hairs, deeply cobblestonelike; basal portion of blade gradually more expanded and cupped toward the flowering tip of branchlets. **Inflorescence:** flowers solitary, terminating branchlet, bracteate; bracts and bractlets subtending pedicel typically 4, differing from leaves in a graded series, the lower 2 with reduced blades, expanded and resinous cupped bases, and ciliate margins, the hairs to 1 mm long; upper 2 bracts lacking blades and with raised glands on bases. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 65–85 mm across, wish-shaped; **sepals** 3, overlapping, cupped-ovate, 20–25 mm long, thick and stiff, in bud the exposed surface covered with spinose-domed cells, brownish becoming light green and crimson, inner surface glabrous; **petals** 5, wedge-shaped, 30–45 × ca. 30 mm, white with thick yellowish base, with or without an ovate maroon blotch near base; **stamens** many, free; filaments unequal, ascending around ovary, 3–8 mm long, straight to somewhat curvy, bright yellow; anthers basifixed, dithecal, 2 mm long, yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellow; **pistil** 1, 6–6.5 mm long; ovary superior, 8–10-lobed and broad conic, 6 mm wide, yellowish white covered with peltate hairs, chambers = lobes, each chamber with many ovules attached to center; style short; stigma hemispheric-capitate, 5 mm wide and exceeding tip of ovary. **Fruit:** capsule, loculicidal, dehiscent by 4–10 valves, many-seeded, shallowly lobed subspheric, 8–11 mm long, brown, covered with raised stellate hairs; placenta ca. 2 mm long, orange. **Seed:** ellipsoid, ca. 1 mm long, dull brown; cells on seed coat in longitudinal rows. Early April–early May.

Naturalized. A resinous evergreen shrub sometimes cultivated in SMM but which has escaped into chaparral near Castro Peak. The large white flower of *Cistus ladanifer* superficially resembles matilleja poppy (*Romneya*), but commonly has a maroon spot near the base of each petal, as well as the resinous, opposite leaves.

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