

*Dendromecon* Benth. TREE POPPY

*Dendromecon rigida* Benth., BUSH POPPY. Shrub, evergreen, sclerophyllous, branched throughout, 100–350 cm tall; shoots glabrous and slightly glaucous; latex colorless.

**Stems:** young stems cylindrical,  $\pm 2$  mm diameter, green and turning reddish on exposed surfaces. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, short-petiolate, without stipules; petiole 1–5(–10) mm long, expanded at base and ridgelike on margins; blade elliptic to broadly lanceolate, 20–100  $\times$  6–35 mm, firm but flexible, tapered at base, minutely and irregularly toothed (minutely crisped), wavy, and  $\pm$  cartilaginous on margins, acute or occasionally obtuse at tip with short point, the margins initially whitish or very pale green becoming reddish, pinnately veined with principal veins raised but more so on lower surface, grayish green. **Inflorescence:** flowers solitary or in few-flowered clusters appearing as cymes, terminal on axillary shoots, lacking bracts, glabrous; pedicel 10–70 mm long. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, in range 35–70 mm across, dish-shaped; **sepals** 2, vertically hemispheric,  $\pm 10$  mm long, light green becoming reddish brown above midpoint, glabrous, shed before anthesis (caducous); **petals** 4, elliptic to obovate or  $\pm$  rhombic, 20–30  $\times$  16–20 mm, bright yellow, irregular toothed or slightly wavy on margin near tip, satiny; **stamens** 50–70(< 100), free, helically alternate; filaments ascending to erect, 25–65 mm long, progressively longer toward center, yellowish green, slightly to sharply bent below anther; anthers basifixed, dithecal, linear and curved inward, 4–5.5(–7) mm long, strong yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light yellow; **pistil** 1, 7–13 mm long, with part of style and stigma exerted above anthers; ovary superior, cylindrical to cucumber-shaped, 1.4–2.2 mm wide, glaucous, with 10 low ridges, 1-chambered with 8–12 ovules attached to outer wall; style 1–2 mm long, green, glaucous; stigma 2-lobed, lobes spreading, thick, fleshy, papillate on upper and lateral surfaces, narrowly margined, 1–3-pointed or horned at tip, margins lateral and pointing downward or curving under, entire or 2–4-horned or 2–4-toothed, sometimes horned between lobes. **Fruit:** capsule, dehiscent from base upward by 2 valves, several–12-seeded,  $\pm$  straight to arching and narrowly fusiform, 25–90 mm long, shallowly 10-ribbed, retaining the lobed stigma; during dehiscence valves becoming recurved, initially attached to 2 fibrous strands of placenta (replum). **Seed:** capped with caruncle covering hilum, subspheroid, 2–3(–4) mm long, brownish olive, minutely netlike; caruncle weakly contorted (convolute),  $\pm 0.5 \times 2$  mm, pale pinkish tan, oily. Mid-December–early June.

Native. Sclerophyllous evergreen shrub of chaparral occurring throughout the range but locally abundant only in certain areas, e. g., Cold Creek Watershed, where it vigorously resprouts and profusely flowers following fire. *Dendromecon rigida* has alternate, somewhat glaucous leaves and bright yellow flowers. Its long, beanlike fruits resemble those of California poppy, and the capsules of bush poppy mature after several months to release up to a dozen seeds. Each seed has an oily structure (caruncle), which is an adaptation for ant dispersal.

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