

Eriogonum Michx. WILD BUCKWHEAT

Eriogonum crocatum Davidson, CONEJO BUCKWHEAT. Subshrub, evergreen, several-stemmed at base, main stems decumbent with ascending flowering shoots, (10–)30–50 cm tall, on large individuals height < width; shoots with closely arranged cauline leaves, feltlike, appearing silvery gray or light gray, densely white-woolly. **Stems:** cylindric, straight to arched and ascending (not zigzagged), internodes mostly 1–3 mm long, white-woolly; woody stems tardily glabrate, covered with reddish brown bark, at nodes with ledges of old petiole bases and dead persistent leaves. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, petiolate, without stipules; petiole hemi-cylindric, 3–17 mm long, winged and flaring at base (appearing like 2 stipules) and partially clasping stem but obscured by wool; blade rhombic or ovate to wide-ovate or wide-obovate, 8–38 × 8–21 mm, flexible, broadly tapered to tapered at base, entire and wavy on margins, obtuse to rounded at tip, pinnately veined with principal veins raised on lower surface and ± visible through dense hair. **Inflorescence:** involucre-enclosed units (cymes) in terminal, umbel-like compound arrays, of 2–4 orders of branching, 10–50 × 22–90 mm, many-flowered, with an involucre containing a headlike cyme terminating each order of branching, headlike clusters of flowers hemispheroid to flattened spheroid (oblate), to 15 mm across, 20–40-flowered decreasing to 7 mm across for ultimate cymes, bracteate, densely white-woolly; peduncle ascending, 15–90 mm long; bracts subtending set of branches or involucre 3, basally fused, ovate to deltate, 3.5–7.5 × 2.5–6 mm, acute to acuminate at tip; branches arising below each involucre 2–3, widely spreading to produce next order of branching, secondary order branches ca. 1/4 as long as peduncle, higher order branches ca. 1/2 as long as preceding branch; bracts of ultimate branches ca. 1.5 × 1 mm. **Involucre:** sessile, bell-shaped to broadly conic, 3–4 × 2.4–4 mm, fringed with 5–8 erect lobes, the lobes ovate to lanceolate, 1–1.5 × 0.5–1.2 mm; bractlets subtending pedicel 2, exerted from involucre, threadlike, to 3 mm long, yellowish or red, hairy-tomentose; pedicel at anthesis 2.5–4 mm long, ± elastic, with abscission zone at swelling at top of pedicel at level just below edge of involucre. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 3.5 mm across; stipelike base at anthesis cylindric and 1–1.5 mm long becoming longitudinally ridged to narrowly winged and increasing 2× in fruit; **perianth** 6-lobed (tepals) in 2 whorls, slightly dimorphic; tube funnel-shaped from stipelike base, 0.5–1.2 mm long, bright greenish yellow, 6-ribbed; outer lobes (tepals) narrowly oblong, 2–2.3 × 0.7–0.8 mm, inner lobes oblong to spatulate, 2.1–2.5 × 0.9–1.1 mm, inner lobes wider than outer lobes, bright yellow to bright greenish yellow with greenish midrib raised on lower surface; **stamens** 9, fused to top of perianth tube, exerted; filaments ascending, 2.5–3 mm long, light yellow, short-pilose at base; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, oblong, 0.5–0.7 × 0.3–0.4 mm, light yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pale yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, 3-angled fusiform, ca. 1.5 × 0.4 mm, greenish, glabrous, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; styles 3, exerted before stamens expand, 2.2–2.7 mm long, initially coiled then ascending and diverging at anthesis; stigma spheric-capitate, 0.1 mm diameter, pale green. **Fruit:** achene (diclesium), 3-angled lanceoloid, 2.5–3 × 1–1.1 mm, brown. **Seed:** similarly shaped as fruit but slight smaller and acuminoid above midpoint, longitudinally wrinkled. Late February–early July.

Native. An evergreen subshrub endemic to our range, growing on volcanic outcrops, especially in Ventura County, e.g., in the vicinity of Conejo Mountain and at Wildwood Region Park in Thousand Oaks, often occurring with other interesting natives, but especially *Dudleya pulverulenta*. *Eriogonum crocatum* is our yellow-flowered species, and its headlike clusters are easy to spot against the silvery gray foliage, which is also why this species is grown as a cultivated native plant.

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