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*Amaranthus palmeri*

[Synonyms : *Acnida palmeri*, *Amaranthus blitoides*]

**CARELESS WEED** is an annual. Native to south-western North America it has small greenish flowers.

It is also known as Dioecious amaranth, *Kvarnamarant* (Swedish), *Laskavec palmerův* (Czech), Palmer amaranth, Palmer's amaranth, Pigweed, and Quelite.

The flowers are pollinated by the wind.

*Palmeri* commemorates an Englishman, Edward Palmer (1829/31-1911) who was a naturalist and specimen collector (plants and animals) and emigrated to the United States in 1849. He collected marine invertebrates on the California State Geological Survey of 1861 and, in the following years, plant (some authorities say over 100,000) and zoological specimens as well as archaeological artefacts primarily in California (south-western United States), Mexico and South America for various patrons.

For several North American Indian tribes careless weed is a food. The Yuma tribe and the Cocopa and Mohave Indians baked the fresh plant, and they and some of the Tohono O'odham Indians also cooked the leaves as a green vegetable. While the Navajo as well as the some of the Tohono O'odham, and also the Yuma, ground the seeds to obtain a meal – and the Navajo chewed them as a breath sweetener too. Several of the tribes including the Yuma, Cocopa and Mohave Indians prepared the plants and stored them for Winter food.

Locally the leaves are picked when young and eaten raw in salad or cooked like spinach (*Spinacia oleracea*) or added as flavouring in savoury dishes.

The plant yields yellow and green dyes.

Today careless weed is viewed as an invasive plant in some parts of North America.