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Ambrosia psilostachya

[Synonyms : *Ambrosia californica*, *Ambrosia coronopifolia*, *Ambrosia coronopifolia* var. *asperula*, *Ambrosia coronopifolia* var. *gracilis*, *Ambrosia cumanensis*, *Ambrosia lindheimeriana*, *Ambrosia psilostachya* var. *californica*, *Ambrosia psilostachya* var. *coronopifolia*, *Ambrosia psilostachya* var. *lindheimeriana*, *Ambrosia rugelii*]

PERENNIAL RAGWEED.is an annual or perennial. Native to south-western North America it has tiny, fragrant yellow flowers.

It is also known as *Ambrosia* (Swedish), *Ambrosie lysoklasá* (Czech), *Ausdauerndes Traubenkraut* (German), Cuman ragweed, *Sträv ambrosia* (Swedish), Western ragweed, and Western ragwort.

Warning – the pollen can present a hazard for hay fever sufferers.

Psilostachya is derived from Greek *psilo-* (bare) and *stachyo-* (spike, ear of corn) components meaning ‘with hairless spike’.

The plant was rolled into bundles with various sages and used by the Kiowa North American Indians in their sweat houses.

The Kiowa also applied a plant decoction of perennial ragweed as a wash for healing sores on their horses.

The Californian Diegueño tribe washed their hair with a stem and leaf decoction to counter dandruff.

It seems however that the plant’s prime value for several North American Indian tribes was medicinal. Perhaps not unexpectedly the Kiowa washed skin sores on themselves (as well as their horses) with a plant decoction. Some of the Keresan Indians prescribed a plant infusion during a difficult childbirth. The Costanoan applied a leaf poultice to aching joints and the leaves were also used by the Cheyenne and Diegueño Indians for treating various bowel disorders.