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Juglans californica

[Synonyms : *Juglans californica* var. *hindsii*, *Juglans californica* var. *quercina*]

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WALNUT is a deciduous shrub or tree. Native to south-western North America it has small rounded fruit.

It is also known as California black walnut, California walnut, Claro walnut, and Southern californica black walnut.

The flowers are pollinated by the wind.

The tree is now viewed as endangered in its native woodland habitat from over-grazing and the encroachment of urban development.

Californica means ‘of or from California (United States)’.

The nuts were eaten by the North American Costanoan and Chumash Indians.

Chumash Indians used the nutshells as dice and the bark provided them with basketry material.

A leaf infusion was used by the Costanoan tribe to treat some blood problems.

It has small edible sweet-tasting nuts that can be eaten raw or cooked and made into pies and confectionery. The nuts also yield an edible oil but it does have the disadvantage of going rancid quickly.

The nutshells and the young twigs yield various brown dyes.

Although its wood is attractive and said to be comparable to that of the black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) in quality that of southern californica walnut is far harder to come by (the trees are smaller and there are fewer of them) and this makes it impracticable for making commercial products in any quantity.

Although normally ignored by deer the nuts are enjoyed by squirrels.

The trees have not only been cultivated as ornamental plants but also as a stabilisation tool in areas subject to soil erosion.