

## Gray rabbitbrush

Common Name

Gray rabbitbrush

[View PDF](#)

Scientific Name

*Ericameria nauseosa*

Scientific Pronunciation

er-ik-kam-MEER-ee-uh naw-zee-OH-suh

Plant Family

[Asparagaceae](#)

Plant Origin

[Native](#)

Plant Type

[Shrub](#)

Typical Bloom (varies by elevation)

[August](#)

Additional Common Names

Rubber rabbitbrush

Gray rabbitbrush is very common in the Sage Hills. It rivals sagebrush in its wide distribution, but has a more limited range, requiring somewhat moister conditions and sandier soils. It is a deciduous shrub, with long narrow leaves and a height of two to four feet. White or gray woolly hairs densely cover the stems and leaves, and its foliage resembles the gray-green color of sagebrush. Rabbitbrush becomes very conspicuous when it blooms in late summer in a showy display of bright-yellow clusters of flowers. The rabbitbrush fruits are capped with many bristles that help the seeds spread in the wind.

It is easy to confuse rabbitbrush and sagebrush. Both are medium-sized shrubs with gray, woolly hairs covering the leaves. Rabbitbrush lacks the strong sage odor and has narrow (linear), non-lobed leaves.

Rabbits do not prefer eating rabbitbrush, so the name may refer to their use of rabbitbrush for cover. Deer, antelope, and other range animals feed sparingly on the leaves, flowers, and young twigs.

Native Americans used rabbitbrush as forage for animals, fuel, candy (chewing gum), dyes, arrows, brooms, and as medicine for toothaches, coughs, colds, sores, and diarrhea.

