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INFORMATION  
Inquiries

Glendora, California  
April 16, 1943

Mr. J. Rubinstein  
Columbia Laboratories, Inc.  
5111 South Main Street  
Los Angeles, California

Dear Sir:

Several weeks ago you discussed the subject of bitterbrush (Purshia tridentata) with Mr. Sinclair. We made inquiry of our Berkeley Office, and the following answer was received.

"Bitterbrush is one of the most important range browse plants in the Western states. In California it grows mainly east of the Sierra Cascade Divide. It occurs as scattered plants in some localities and forms dense stands in others. It has been weakened or killed by grazing, fire, girdling by rodents, or defoliation by caterpillars throughout a large part of its range and special studies are now in progress to determine methods whereby this valuable browse can be rehabilitated and made to produce more forage on these areas.

"The common names quininebrush and bitterbrush have been used because of the presence of a very bitter substance which occurs throughout the plant. The chemical composition of this bitter element has not been determined although it has been isolated by chemists who made some pharmacological studies of the plant and seed. The nutritive value of the plant was also determined through chemical analyses by range technicians. References to these works follows:

Kennedy, P. Beveridge, and Sanford G. Dinmore. 1909. Digestion experiments on the range. Nevada Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul. 71. 39 pp.

Nets, G. V., C. H. Rogers, and G. L. Jenkins. 1940. A Phytochemical and histological study of Purshia tridentata (Pursh) D. C. Amer. Pharm. Assoc. Jour. 29: 480-485.

Stoddart, L. A., and J. E. Greaves. 1942. The composition of summer range plants in Utah. Utah Agr. Expt. Sta. Bul. 305. 22 pp.

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Trimble, Henry. 1892. Purshia tridentata, D. C. Amer. Jour.  
Pharm. 64: 69-71

"We are not aware of any other chemical analyses that have been made of  
bitterbrush."

Very truly yours,

J. D. SINCLAIR, Senior Silviculturist

JEROME S. HORTON, Assistant Forester

Looks like your favorite plant is  
in the spotlight - Jess

JES