



# Ventura County Watershed Protection District

## Environmental Services Section

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June 1, 2015

**TO:** County Integrated Pest Management Group  
**FROM:** Pam Lindsey, Watershed Ecologist  
**SUBJECT:** Iceplants Demystified

During our last meeting on May 15, 2015, we discussed many invasive plant species. I volunteered to provide a summary of information on iceplants. I have showcased the more commonly seen non-native species here, and the one native specie that may occur in Ventura County.

### **Ice Plant Family: Aizoaceae**

Only 2 of the 13 species in California is native, most native to South America or southern Africa.

### **Red apple (*Aptenia cordifolia*)**

This common landscape plant escapes into the wild on California beaches, as well as in Oregon and Florida.



### **Hottentot-fig, Freeway iceplant (*Carpobrotus edulis*)**

This commons species is planted all over freeways, and has escaped onto beaches and along riparian (stream-side) habitats. Has yellow or pink flowers and long triangular stems.



**Sea-fig (*Carpobrotus chilensis*)**

This looks like and hybridizes with Freeway ice plant. It has mostly magenta, smaller flowers and the leaves are shorter and less sharply angled.

**Narrowleaf iceplant (*Conicosia pugioniformis*)**

This was all over the dunes at Vandenberg AFB when I worked there. We tried hard to control it, but I'm sure we did not slow it down much. I have not seen it here much, but it is likely on the beaches.

**Seaside delosperma (*Delosperma litorale*)**

This occurs on the beach dune habitats in southern California and out on the Channel Islands.

**Showy dewflower (*Drosanthemum floribundum*)**

This common landscape plants form those carpets of hot pink flowers that you can probably see from space. People use them in fuel modification zones and on slopes for erosion control, and the plants have escaped to coastal bluffs.



**Coppery mesembryanthemum** (*Malephora crocea*)

This looks similar to the showy dewflower, but with orange flowers. This is also a common landscaping plant that has escaped along the coast.



**Crystalline iceplant** (*Mesembryanthemum crystallinum*)

I've seen this at Ormond Beach at the end of Perkins Road. Based on the photo note, it occurs in Isreal, too. This is a low growing iceplant with the curious round crystals all over it, like someone dipped it in sugar.



**Slender-leaved iceplant (*Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum*)**

The leaves are more cylindric and have less pronounced crystals than *M. crystallinum*.



**Western sea-purslane (*Sesuvium verrucosum*)**

This native occurs along the margins of saline wetlands in California and the western US, as well as in South America. I have not encountered this one yet.



Send me a plant photo if you have questions. I do not always know, but can usually figure it out.  
Pam

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