



Gerald and Buff Corsi ©
California Academy of Sciences

Beach Strawberry (*Fragaria chiloensis*)

Family: Rosaceae

Description: This native strawberry is one of two species that were hybridized to create the modern garden strawberry. Beach strawberry is found along much of the Pacific coast, growing on dunes and coastal bluffs. Growing from 6–12 inches tall (15-30cm), it spreads via runners and has three dark green, shiny, serrated leaves that help it retain moisture. The white 5–7 petaled flowers mature into large red berries with white flesh.

Pollinator and Wildlife Use: The strawberry fruit provides food for birds and the flowers are a nectar source for butterflies such as the Sara Orangetip.

Ethnobotany: Wild strawberries produce a small number of flavorful, nutritious fruit. California Indians ate strawberries fresh and dried, and used the roots to clean teeth and ease gum inflammation. The leaves are high in Vitamin C and can be used to make a tea.

Erosion Prevention: Beach strawberry reproduces by sending out runners that can quickly spread and cover an area, making it useful for erosion control.

Other Facts: This drought-tolerant plant commonly grows on coastal bluffs and has a high tolerance for salinity. Migratory birds are thought to have dispersed beach strawberry from the Pacific coast of North America to the mountains of Hawaii, Chile, and Argentina.



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References and Useful Websites:

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