

# 'Dorado' Bladderpod spiderflower

*Peritoma arborea* var. *arborea*  
(Nutt.) Iltis

## Description

'Dorado' bladderpod is an erect, perennial evergreen shrub, native to Southern California and endemic to the State. It stands 4-5 feet tall, and is widely branched, extending 5-7 feet wide. The trifoliate leaflets are a greenish-yellow color, oblong-elliptic shaped and about ½ to 1 ½ inches long. This shrub is in bloom most of the year and has yellow flowers that are very attractive to insects. The fruits are very distinctive, oblong, inflated sacs 1 ½ to 2 inches long. Each fruit contains a few dark brown seeds which are smooth with a prominent end-curved embryo and matures throughout the year.

## Source

The original collection of 'Dorado' bladderpod was made from a population along Highway 138 near Gorman, Los Angeles County, CA at an elevation of 3800 feet in August 1965. The seeds were brought to the California Plant Materials Center in Pleasanton for seed increase. After being tested at 20 different field sites, this accession showed equal to superior performance to all other native accessions in establishment, survival and use for upland game, erosion control and environmental enhancement. The accession was brought to the California Plant Materials Center in Lockeford in 1973. 'Dorado' was released by the Lockeford PMC in 1979 with the scientific name of *Isomeris arborea* Nutt. var. *globosa* Cov. On 13 December 1989 the name was changed to *Cleome isomeris* Greene and on 16 July 2010 to *Peritoma arborea* var. *arborea* (Nutt.) Iltis.

## Conservation Uses

'Dorado' bladderpod is an attractive, native shrub for many conservation purposes including critical area stabilization. It is drought-tolerant, requires little maintenance and is therefore a great ornamental plant in hot and dry conditions. 'Dorado' is also a great addition to pollinator hedgerows since it is in bloom most of the year and its flowers are attractive to bees. This cultivar has shown excellent performance as a conservation plant on critical areas, and for environmental enhancement on moderately deep, medium to finely textured soils that are well-drained. It is not tolerant of water-logged conditions. It is a great plant for upland game cover and food, particularly quail. There is a great potential for success with 'Dorado' shrub plantings along freeways and highways.

## Area of Adaptation and Use

Bladderpod is best adapted to the climate and desert soils of Southern California, where it originates. The species is often found in disturbed areas, and along coastal bluffs, hills and desert washes. It prefers a pH of 6.5 or higher, is extremely drought-tolerant and is able to survive extreme temperatures ranging from below freezing to over 100 F. Bladderpod grows successfully at elevations up to 4,000 feet. Although it is best adapted to Southern California, there have been many successful plantings of 'Dorado' in the central and northern Sacramento Valley.

## Establishment and Management for Conservation Plantings

'Dorado' seeds mature throughout the growing season and can be collected throughout the year; however, summer-fall harvests are the heaviest. Seeds are easily collected by stripping pods from plants and extracting the seed. Plants are usually propagated by direct seeding into containers in a greenhouse. The seedlings develop at a rapid rate and should be moved into



'Dorado' bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea* var. *arborea*) is a cultivar released by the California Plant Materials Center in Lockeford, CA in 1979.

larger containers as they develop. Seedlings can be transplanted in the spring or fall. 'Dorado' can also be planted by direct seeding at the rate of 5 pounds per acre drilled. Weed control especially of annual grasses is essential during establishment of 'Dorado' plantings.

### **Ecological Considerations**

There are no known disease problems with 'Dorado' bladderpod. Grasshopper predation was a problem in some sites.

### **Seed and Plant Production**

Seed and Plant Production Recommendations for seed production of 'Dorado' include spring or fall planting of plug plants with a row spacing of 5 – 8 ft. and a spacing of 4 – 6 ft. within the row. Fertilization is not recommended during establishment as it encourages weed growth. Control weeds with cultivation and pre-emergent herbicides. Irrigation may be required until plants are established. Mature seed should be hand-harvested for optimum production in late summer or fall. Plantings are long lived with seed production continuing on 25-year-old plantings at the Lockeford PMC.

Seed should be cleaned using an air-screen separator using a No. 14 screen on top and No.8 bottom screen. There are approximately 4,500 seeds per pound. Seed production of 135 pounds per acre may be anticipated.



*'Dorado' bladderpod (Peritoma arborea var arborea) hedgerow at the California Plant Materials Center in Lockeford, CA.*

### **Availability**

*For conservation use:* 'Dorado' seed is available through the California Crop Improvement Association and the Lockeford Plant Materials Center. Seed is maintained by the National Plant Germplasm System (NPGS).

### ***For more information, contact:***

**USDA-NRCS**

**Lockeford Plant Materials Center**

**21001 N. Elliott Road, P.O Box 68**

**Lockeford, CA 95237**

**Tel: 209 727 5319 Fax: 844 206 6967**

**<http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/capmc> (Include PMC name, address, phone, fax, website).**

### **Citation**

'Dorado' Bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea* var. *arborea*). USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, California Plant Materials Center. Lockeford, CA 95237. Published [March 2012], Revised [December 2017].

For additional information about this and other plants, please contact your local USDA Service Center, NRCS field office, or Conservation District <<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>>, and visit the PLANTS Web site <<http://plants.usda.gov>> or the Plant Materials Program Web site <<http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov>>

*Helping People Help the Land*

**USDA IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER**