

Photo provided by the Chumash  
and Tongva peoples.



# Learning the Land

An Activity Book featuring Lessons  
and Teachings from Local Tribes

For Grades 2-6!

The State of California Native American Heritage Commission identified 22 Tribes that have ancestral or cultural ties to Los Angeles County. All 22 Tribes were invited to participate in the development of the Countywide Land Acknowledgment and this Activity Book.

The following local Tribes participated in the development of this Activity Book (in alphabetical order):

- Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation
- Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians
- Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians
- Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
- Gabrielino Tongva Tribe
- Gabrielino/Tongva Nation
- San Manuel Band of Mission Indians

This Activity Book was developed in 2024, led by the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture and the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission, in coordination with Cogstone Resource Management, Kearns & West, and Avid Core. Additional content was provided by Tima Lotah Link, Chumash Cultural Educator.

This book belongs to:

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Native peoples and their ancestors—tracing all the way back to the land’s original inhabitants—have always lived on the land we now call the County of Los Angeles.

The Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh, and Chumash Peoples are from the land where you live.

Let's learn about some of the plants and animals that play a pivotal role in the ecological balance of the County and in the cultural heritage of these local Tribes!

One of the best ways to get to know your surroundings and to learn to care for and respect this land is to draw it! Drawing what you see is a great way to study the details of native plants and to keep track of what you find.



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Draw a place that is special to you.  
Write or say a few words about why it is special.



## Tule Reeds

Fun Fact:  
Tule plants can grow  
up to 8 feet tall!

Tule's tough, flexible stems are used by local Tribes for weaving houses, skirts, hats, dolls, boats, baskets, cradles, and mats.

Today, because of construction and climate change, the waterways where tule grows are being destroyed. What's left of the tule marshes that covered hundreds of miles of California are now just a few scattered ponds. These rare habitats are protected by the government. Now, Native people often need special permits to harvest tule. When they harvest, they need to be careful not to disturb the summer nesting grounds of native blackbirds.

Here's a tule doll!

Would you like to  
travel in a tule  
boat or live in a  
tule house?



# Native Plants Word Search

V Q D Z S Z J S V K G W K V W  
S G X W V E L D E E N R Y A C  
O W R K J M K A T R E Z D W Y  
E A X A U A P H O D T R E E S  
K L F Q S U V K W A D M Q W B  
N N K C R S A O Z U K G Y Z U  
G U J P W A O O J E Q N R T C  
E T L C I D S Z X Y U E R S K  
T E Q O L D H Y K W Y L E U W  
O Y F J V Z F U A K Y L B C H  
Y U Y I B P I C I C D A R F E  
O E V I L M I C J A E O E Q A  
N G R M F G J A P L R E D D T  
P C E J E G A S D B C S L X K  
M D E E W E L K C I P C E M Y

## Word Bank

BLACK WALNUT  
BLUE ELDERBERRY  
BUCKWHEAT  
LIVE OAK  
PICKLEWEED

PURPLE NEEDLE GRASS  
REDWOOD TREES  
SAGE  
TOYON  
YUCCA



## Acorns


In the past, people from local Tribes prepared acorn as breads, biscuits, patties, dumplings, coffee, cheese, and nuts. But the most common way to eat acorn was to cook it with water to achieve whatever thickness that

a particular cultural area preferred: thin like soup, thicker like pudding, or firm like Jello. Like rice, noodles, or potatoes, this food was eaten as the central part of a meal, its delicate flavor enhanced by meats, vegetables, nuts, and fruits.

Today, while Native people still eat acorn in its traditional forms, they are trying new and exciting ways to

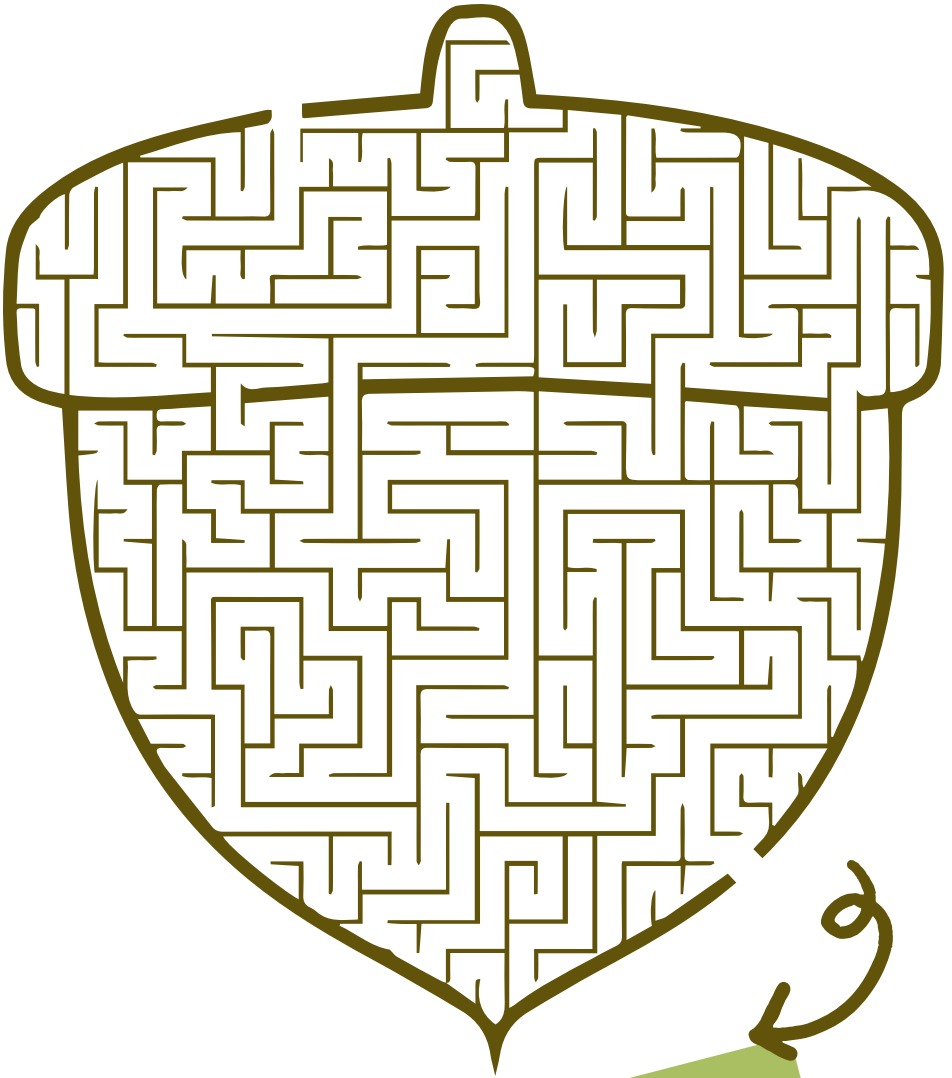
prepare it. People everywhere are embracing the flavor, culture, and nutritional value of this remarkable food.

Fun Fact:  
There are more than 187 different ways to say "acorn soup" in the many California Native languages!



How long do you think it takes to grind acorns with a mortar and pestle like these?

# Acorn Maze



What kind of food would  
you make with acorns?



Fun Fact:  
Abalone eat kelp which  
increases kelp diversity!

Deer, mountain lions, bears, foxes, snakes, bats, birds, and many more depend on the waterways and green spaces throughout Southern California. Today, Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh, and Chumash Peoples work with wildlife and environmental organizations to make sure these animals—whom they've shared the landscape with for thousands of years—are protected and continue to have clean water, accessible land, and food supplies.

## Abalone

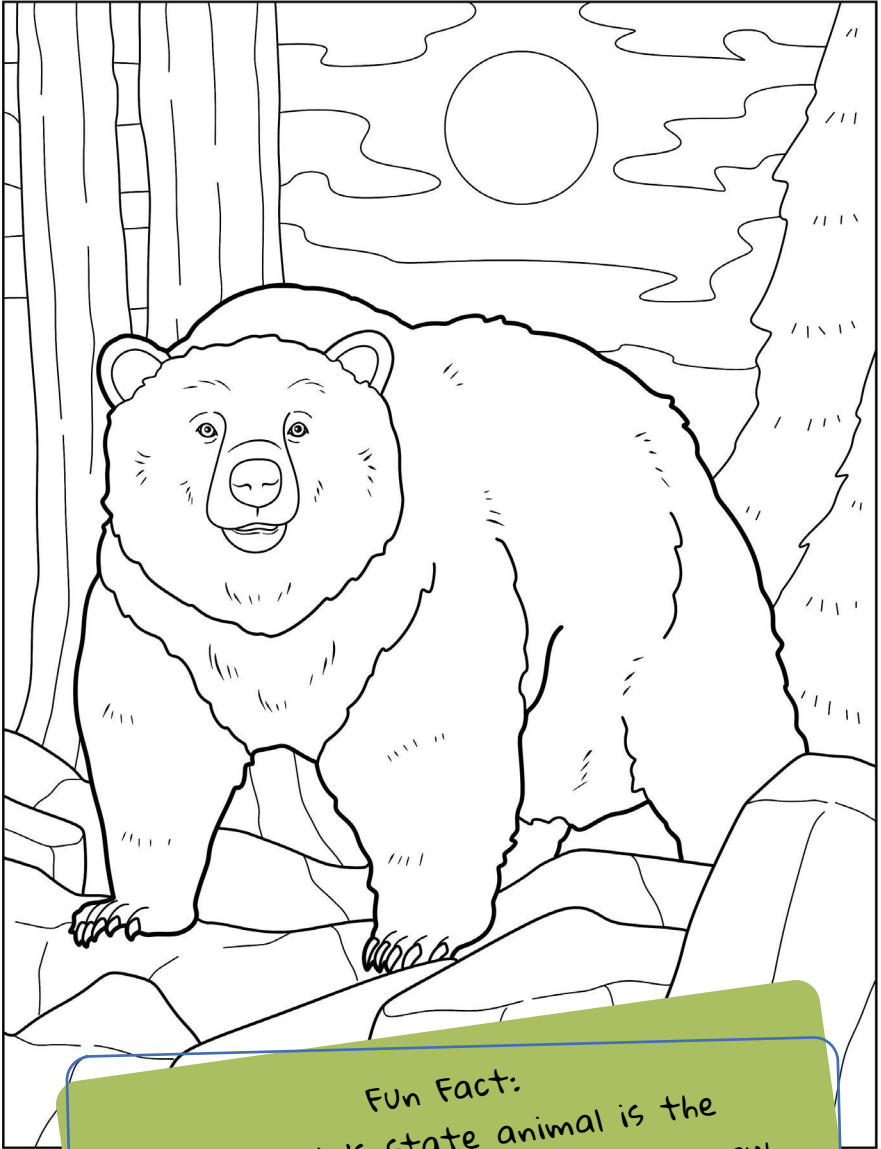
Abalone are marine snails that live in coastal saltwater. Seven species of abalone exist in California, and all are threatened by overharvesting, disease, and climate change. Because of this, abalone is no longer one of the main food sources for local Tribes, but the shells remain one of the most

important parts of their culture—used for jewelry, regalia, canoe decorations, and ceremonies.





Color this California Grizzly Bear



**Fun Fact:**  
California's state animal is the California grizzly bear. They are now extinct, but lived 20-30 years and were 8 feet tall when standing.



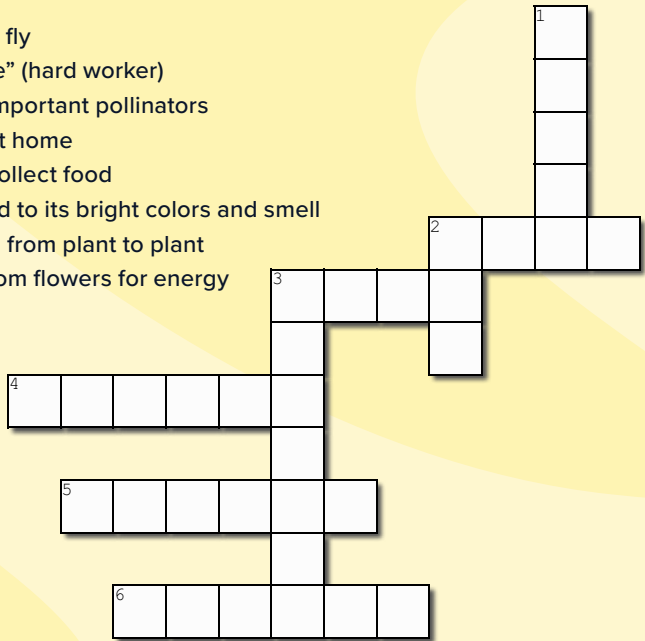
Fun Fact: California is home to 1,600 native bee species!

## Bees

These important pollinators harvest pollen and nectar in clever ways, and without them, the native plants local Tribes rely on wouldn't get pollinated. Food plants, medicine plants, basket plants—everything depends on these busy little guys.

### Crossword Puzzle

1. Bees use these to fly
2. *across* "\_\_\_\_\_ bee" (hard worker)
2. *down* Small but important pollinators
3. *across* Bees call it home
3. *down* Gather or collect food
4. Bees are attracted to its bright colors and smell
5. Bees transfer this from plant to plant
6. Bees drink this from flowers for energy



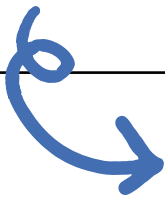
1. wings
2. *across* busy
2. *down* bee
3. *across* hive
3. *down* harvest
4. flower
5. pollen
6. nectar

# Deer

Local Tribes make and wear traditional regalia—ornaments that are special symbols about a ceremony or person—from plants and animals. In Southern California, men, women, and youth wear deer hide skirts, which are decorated with shells, feathers, and rope. The lightweight, cream-colored bones of deer are easy to shape into beads, hairpins, tools, and whistles. Thank you, deer!



What kind of clothing would you make?  
Draw it here.





Think about it:  
How can you protect  
plants and animals?

Photo provided by the Chumash  
and Tongva peoples.

## Caring for the Land

To local Tribes, the land is a family member.  
Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh, and Chumash Peoples  
care for the land like they would  
their own parent, sibling, or grandparent.

If you were to treat the land like a  
family member, what would you do differently?  
Write or draw your thoughts here.

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