

Nat Theo Club

FIELD NOTES

ISSUE #98



Tumbleweed

VARIOUS BUSHES, DRIED



Rabbitbrush is green with beautiful yellow flowers in late summer and fall, then dries out and can become tumbleweeds.



On windy days, many tumbleweeds often get caught up against fence lines.



ARE YOU HAVING A WHITE CHRISTMAS?

Here in Colorado, it looks like we'll have a windy Christmas instead of a white one! This time of year, we often have high winds throughout the day. With high winds come many tumbleweeds. I remember one of my first encounters with a tumbleweed. I was enjoying a trail run on a dirt trail when I heard something approaching fast from behind me. We were new to Colorado, and I immediately thought there might be a mountain lion or some other dangerous animal chasing me. I turned around quickly to find not a lion... but a tumbleweed! The wind had pushed it down the trail after me. I was very relieved to see that tumbleweed instead of a lion.

Tumbleweeds are bushes that have dried out, detached from the ground, and roll around in the wind. As they roll, they spread seeds which help more of that kind of plant to grow. Many tumbleweeds where I live are dried-out rabbitbrush. Rabbitbrush is an important plant that belongs here. It grows well in our dry climate, and provides hiding places for rabbits (where it gets its name), food for animals including deer and elk, and its flowers feed many pollinators in the summer. Who knew so much life can come from a tumbleweed!

As dry tumbleweeds tumble across the land, they release seeds. Even though a tumbleweed is dead, its seeds hold the potential for new life. The seeds can germinate and grow more plants, which become important food and habitat for many creatures.

Before Jesus died and rose again, he talked about his death in John 12:23–24: "The time has come for the Son of Man to receive his glory. I tell you the truth, a grain of wheat must fall to the ground and die to make many seeds. But if it never dies, it remains only a single seed." Just as a dead tumbleweed spreads seeds for new life, Jesus's death made it possible for each of us to truly live. Have you accepted Jesus's gift of salvation? How can you truly live in his truth today? Thank Jesus today for dying so you can live with God in eternity.