18 things to do with Oxalis

Why do you think they are so plentiful here?

What makes a weed a weed?

Dig up the plant and use it to identify the different parts. Can you find the tuber, stem, leaves, and flowers?

Count how many plants are in one area. Mark out 1 square foot. Oxalis are excellent at taking over areas.

Use the leaves to create a heart collage by gluing them to paper.

Weave or tie the flowers on their stems to make a crown or jewelry.

If you are brave and have permission, nibble on the stem or leaves to see why it is called "sourgrass" (don't eat too much!*)

Make your own yellow dye! Briefly simmer, (or just soak in water with a little salt in the window or fridge) flower petals in water. Dip paper or pieces of cotton cloth/string and let dry.

What is the biggest leaf you can find?

Find the tallest stem.

Can you dig up the tubers? How deep are they? What do they look like? Have your parents help you cut one open.

How are the flowers different early in the morning and midday?

Oxalis pes-caprae, also known as sour grass or Bermuda buttercup, is an invasive species in the US. Originally from South Africa, this weed is plentiful in San Diego right now. You can identify it by its tall yellow flowers and heart-shaped leaves with purple spots. Unfortunately, it takes up the space that our native wildflowers would grow in. Do you see any growing in your yard or neighborhood? Pull some weeds and try one of the 18 things to do with Oxalis! (*The leaves and stem of Oxalis are edible, but please get permission first and do not eat too much).

Put the leaves and flowers between two pieces of paper and lightly tap with a hammer or rock. What happens?

Look for seeds or seed pods.

Can you find any other plants that have similar looking leaves?

Press the plant and flowers in a magazine or large book. Use paper to protect book pages.

How many petals does the flower have? What other parts of the flower can you find?

Create a flower bouquet for your home.

If you have permission, wash and add some to a salad for dinner*!

SAN DIEGO
BOTANIC
GARDEN