

pronunciation of the word and allow it to echo in your inner ear: you might hear Freddie Mercury's soaring voice singing the worldwide anthem "We Are the *Champions*." Companion words include *champ*, to chew or bite, which is what a *champion* does when the game is on the line. A *champion* champs at the bit of victory.

CHAPARRAL

A close, dense thicket of small evergreen oaks and other shrubby plants characteristic of Southern California and Baja California. Where the land is dry and studded with shrub it makes for fertile grazing. The Basques shepherded the word into English. The old-as-stone Basque word for dwarf evergreen trees, *txaparro*, grew into the Spanish *chaparro*, and immigrated to America with the Basque shepherds, many of whom now work in the remote *chaparral* countryside of the American West. The popular TV show *High Chaparral* featured this exchange between two cowboys in its first season: Killian: "I've got a sister that can out rope and out ride the best man High *Chaparral* ever saw." Joe: "Oh, I'll admit your sister's a better man than you, Killian." In *The Pacific Coast Trail*, William R. Gray writes, "Fragrant with sage, a rippling breeze played among low hills blanketed by *chaparral*."





Chaparral: *Le Piedras del Cielo*

CHARTREUSE

*A pale apple-green color; an aromatic liqueur produced by French Carthusian monks. In 1866 the monastery of the Grande-Chartreuse, so called because of its proximity to the nearby Chartreuse Mountains, concocted an herbal liqueur called *Les Pères Chartreux* from their apple orchards. The proceeds from its sales went to the maintenance of the monastery and the rest to charity. Eighteen years later, 1884, the liqueur went into commercial production producing a color as **intoxicating** as the drink, distilling a new word in honor of the monks' delectable work. *Blue Cats and Chartreuse Kittens* is a book by Patricia Lynn Duffey that explores the **strange** and wonderful ways that synesthetes*

