

# Southern California Native Plants

→ a starter guide  
from **TreePeople**



# Introduction

Native plants are critical to our local watershed—especially during times of drought. When native plants are used, it helps save precious water, supports biodiversity, and provides beautiful color and texture to a garden.

This guide draws from Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and is designed to help you create a sustainable landscape by getting to know your site, learning specific plant characteristics, and understanding what to factors to consider when planning your garden.

The plants showcased in this guide are simply a starting point for native plants in LA County. We invite you to explore more about the native plants of your region, visit local native plant gardens and nurseries, and join in on TreePeople's workshops and mountain restoration events to learn more.

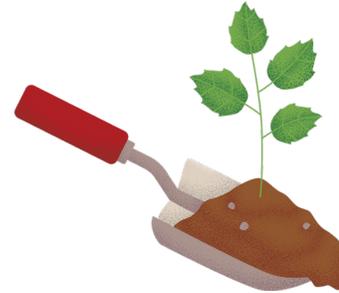
# Native Plants of Southern California

Southern California is a Mediterranean-type climate region. Only 2% of the world is classified as Mediterranean but accounts for 16% of the world's plant species. Our Mediterranean-type climate region is unique by location, climate, plants, and soil.

- *This region is on the west coasts of continents and is found within 30-45° north and south latitude of the equator.*
- *It can be found on the west coast of North America and central Chile into Argentina, the Southwest coast of Australia and South Africa, and the Mediterranean basin surrounding the Mediterranean Sea.*
- *It is characterized by cool, wet winters and warm to hot, dry summers. Marine air from the ocean moderates temperatures along the coast which includes fog in early summer.*
- *Plants in this region have evolved with specific characteristics to survive the long, dry, hot summers including hairy, fuzzy, or cupped leaves and deep, spreading roots.*
- *These plants have adapted to survive in typically thin, rocky, degraded soils.*

## Get to Know Your Site

To get started, you'll need to learn the key characteristics of your site. Knowing the soil type, climate zone, and sun exposure are crucial for choosing the right plants to help ensure they thrive.



### Soil Type

*What do you know about your soil?*

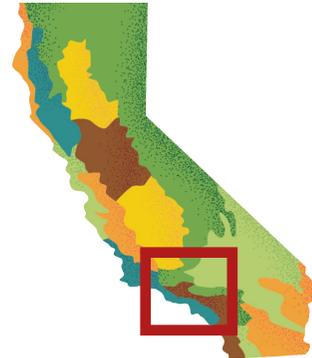
A simple soil texture test can help determine the soil type of your site: clay, sand, or loam.

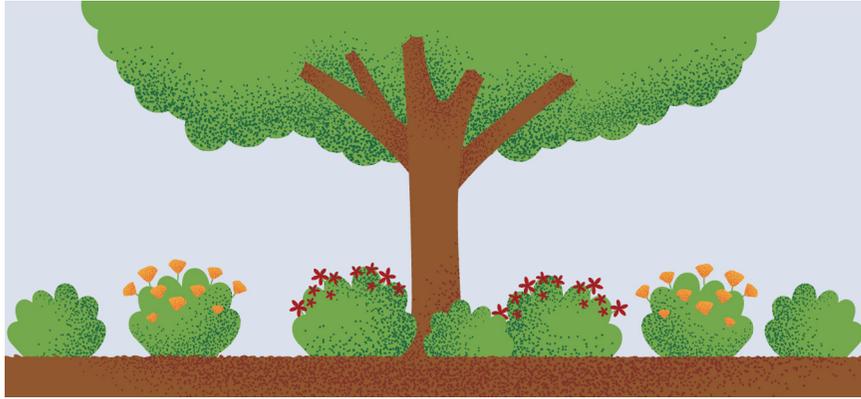
For a how-to guide, [click here](#).

### Climate Zone

*What climate zone do you live in?*

Climate zones are areas defined by seasonal temperature, rainfall, humidity, altitude, and coastal influence. The best guide for California is the Sunset Climate Zone maps. Los Angeles County Sunset Climate Zones range from 18-24. **This guide presents a collection of Los Angeles County plants.** To find your climate zone, [consult a Sunset Western Garden book](#).





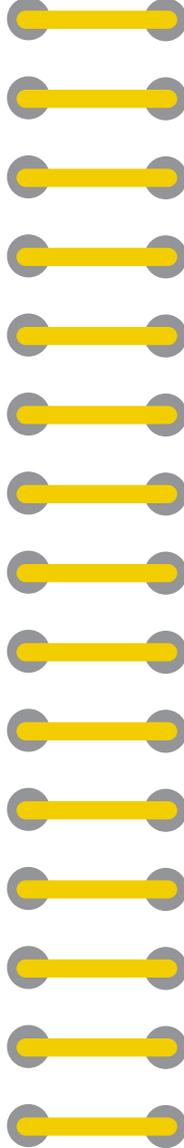
## Sun Exposure

*Is the planting site in full sun, partial shade, or full shade?*

Some plants prefer a lot of sun, some prefer shade, and others do fine in both.

Determine the sun exposure of your planting site:

- **In full sun:** It receives at least 6 full hours of direct sunlight.
- **Partially shaded:** It receives 3-6 hours of sun each day, preferably in the morning and early afternoon.
- **Shaded:** It receives less than 3 hours of direct sunlight each day, with filtered sunlight during the rest of the day.



## Get to Know Your Plants

Learning about the specific characteristics of your plants will help in determining where to place them at your site and how to care for and maintain them.

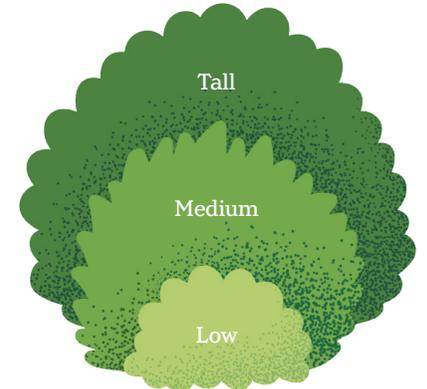
### Height and Spread

*How tall and wide will your plants grow?*

This information will help in ensuring your plants have enough space to grow. Height and spread information serves as a general guideline, as actual size at maturity will vary depending on soil, microclimate, and maintenance.

Plants in this guide are separated by three general sizes:

- **Low:** Grow up to 3 feet high.
- **Medium:** Grow 3-6 feet high.
- **Tall:** Grow 6 feet or more.



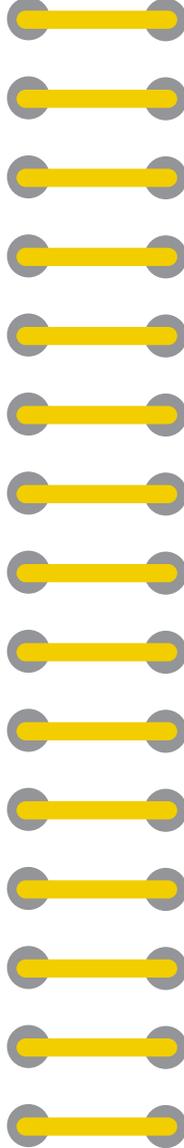
## Water Needs

*How much water will your plants need?*

Most native plants do not need a lot of water to do well. The ratings given throughout this guide are based on average rainfall. Southern California native plants need most of their water in winter months when it rains, and almost no water in the summer. (If it is a drought year, you may need to increase water during winter and spring months to simulate typical winter rains.)

Ratings are from the [Water Use Classification of Landscape Species \(WUCOLS IV\)](#).

- **Very low:** No water to once a month, if needed.
- **Low:** Water once to twice a month, if needed.
- **Moderate:** Water 3-4 times a month. Allow to dry out between waterings.



## Plant Type

*What kind of plants are you selecting?*

Native plant gardens can have a mix of different types of plants. Knowing the different types will help in understanding **how** they grow, **when** they grow, and **what** they bring to the garden.

- **Shrub:** woody branches and no trunk.
- **Grass:** low, tender (herbaceous) green stems rather than woody.
- **Groundcover:** low-lying with a creeping, spreading habit.
- **Tree:** single (or multi) trunk, larger than a shrub.

Type/Habit

- **Annual:** Completes entire cycle each year; grows from seed, flowers, makes more seeds, dies.
- **Perennial:** Lives more than 2 years with little to no woody growth.
- **Evergreen:** Leaves are present all year.
- **Deciduous:** Loses all its leaves in a season.
- **Semi-deciduous:** Loses its leaves for a very short period; as old leaves fall off, new growth begins.
- **Deciduous perennial:** A non-woody deciduous plant, typically dying back all the way to the ground every year.

Seasonality



# What to Consider When Planning Your Garden

There are a variety of things to consider when designing the type of native landscape you wish to create. Selecting the right type of plants for the site and the right number of plants is key. When designing your site consider the following:

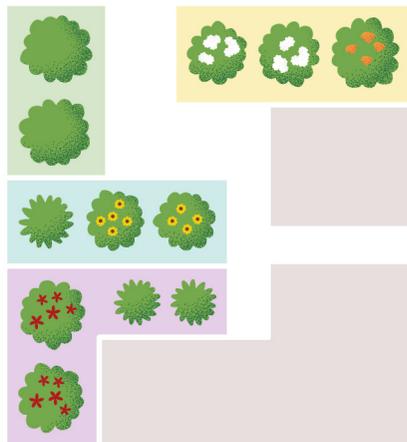
## Location

*Are there areas that can be revitalized by native plants? Look for:*

- Lawn areas that can be reduced and/or replaced with native plants.
- Existing gardens or planters with water-needy plants that can be replaced with natives.

## Water Needs

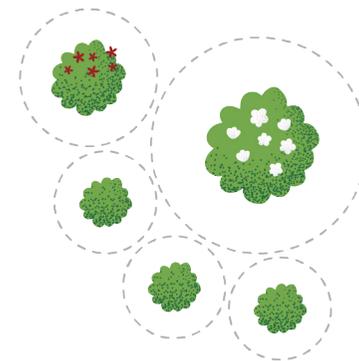
Choose and group together plants with similar water needs. Either low to very low water needs or moderate to low water needs.



## Plant Spacing

*Choose plants of varying heights.*

- Consider their size at maturity and what they might block or shade in the future.
- Taller plants should go behind shorter plants.
- Spread plants out by their width at maturity so they don't crowd each other and cause maintenance issues.



## Themes & Special Elements

*Do you want to:*

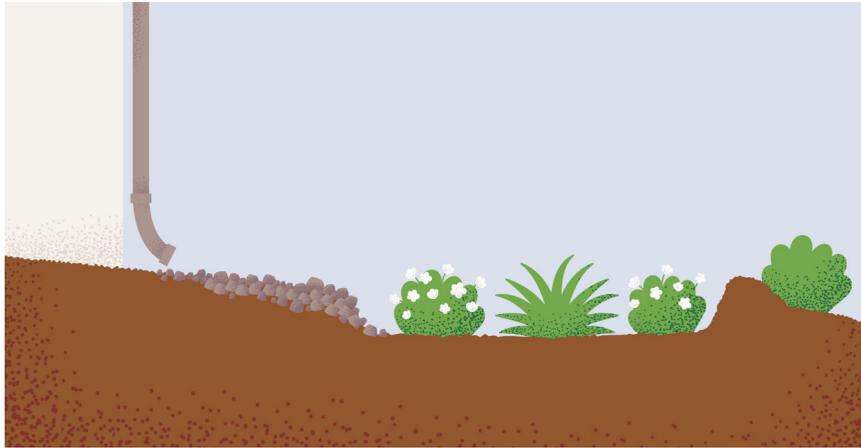
- Attract wildlife such as butterflies and hummingbirds?
- Add fun elements like a bench, water fountain, bird feeder, or permeable pathway?
- Include a native tree for added interest or shade?
- Add specific colors? Or, choose plants that flower at different times of the year for year-round flowers?
- Create a plant community theme such as an oak woodland, coastal sage scrub, wildflower meadow, or chaparral garden?

## Contour the Land

Creating berms and swales not only adds interest, but allows water flow to slow down, spread out, and sink into the soil.

Consider adding:

- A dry streambed swale.
- Islands of raised areas.
- A rain garden.



## Key

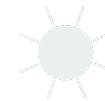
### Sun Exposure



**Full sun:** Requires at least 6 full hours of direct sunlight.



**Partially shaded:** Requires 3-6 hours of sun each day, preferably in the morning and early afternoon.



**Shaded:** Requires less than 3 hours of direct sunlight each day, with filtered sunlight during the rest of the day.

### Water Needs



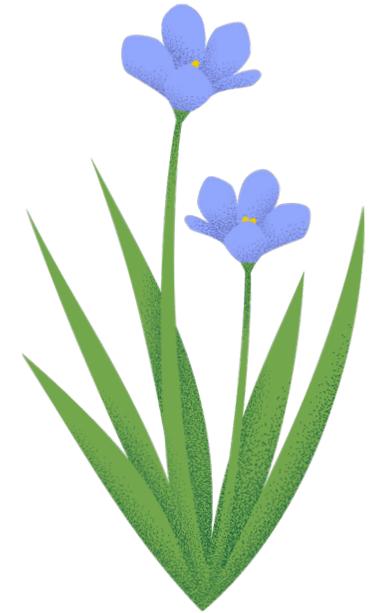
**Very low** water use

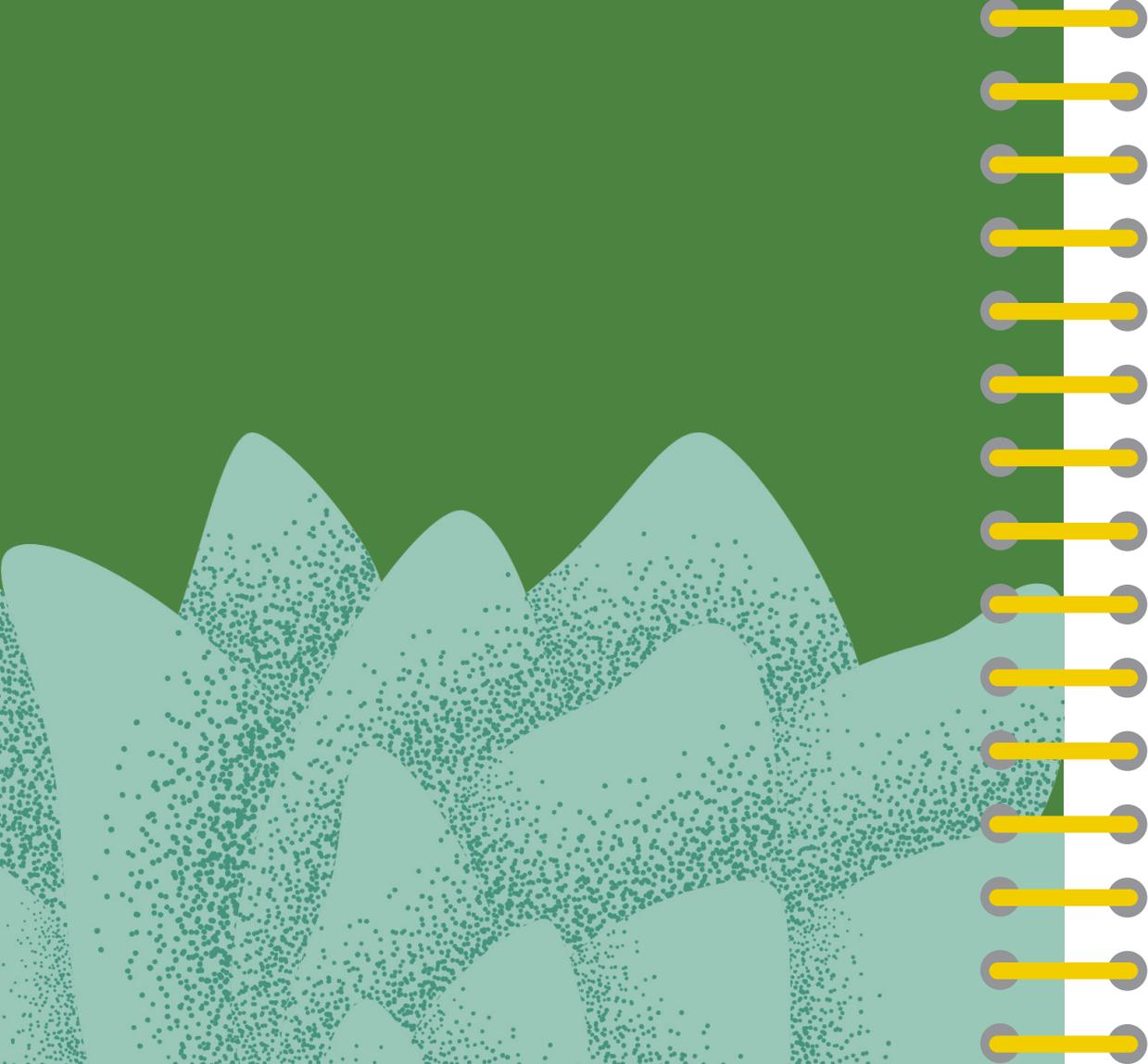


**Low** water use



**Medium** water use





# Low Plants

## Up to 3 Feet High

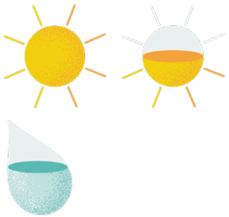
Low growing plants include groundcovers, annuals, and smaller plants that grow up to 3 feet tall. Low growing plants make beautiful alternatives to grass and/or can be placed near the front of and in-between taller plants. Annuals provide seasonal pops of color that typically disperse seeds for continued yearly plants.

# Common yarrow

(*Achillea millefolium*)

This perennial plant has flat-topped clusters of flowers that bloom from May through June. Cultivated varieties include white, yellow, gold, pink, or red flowers and are a great component to butterfly or pollinator gardens. Used as a lawn alternative, it can be mowed to create a fern-like carpet.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand

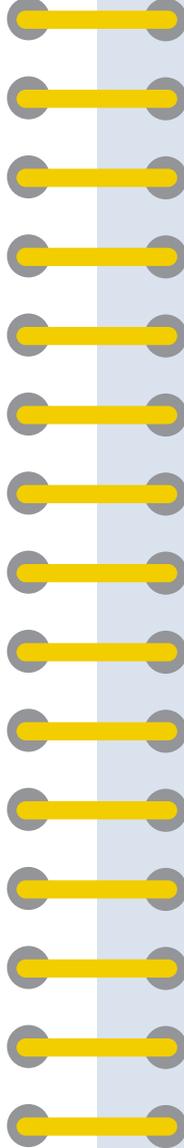
**Height x Width:** 2-3 ft x 2-3 ft

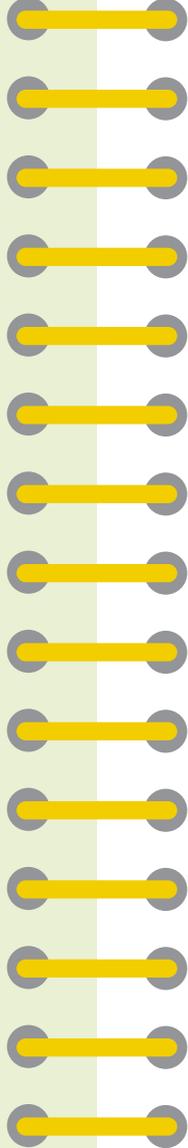
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 1 to 24  
and best on zones 4, 5, 6, 17



## Maintenance Hints

Prune out dead flower stalks. In late fall, cut back to healthy leaves near the ground. Mow for a lawn alternative.





# Bush sunflower

(*Encelia californica*)

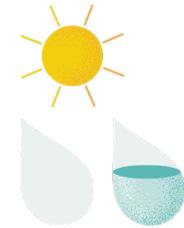
Beautiful in winter and spring with its abundant yellow, daisy-like flowers, this perennial is fast growing and makes a nice cut flower. Note: during summer heat, it can go dormant and lose its leaves.



## Maintenance Hints

Deadhead old blossoms to extend the bloom. Give occasional summer water to keep the plant green. Cut back to 4" stubs in the fall.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand

**Height x Width:** 3 ft x 5 ft

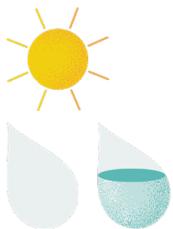
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 7 -24, performs best in zones 19-24

# California fuchsia

(*Epilobium canum*)

When the flowers of summer have faded, the red trumpet-shaped blooms make this perennial a welcome sight to hummingbirds migrating south for the winter. It has small linear leaves from green-grey to silver.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand

**Height x Width:** 2 ft x 4 ft, and spreads

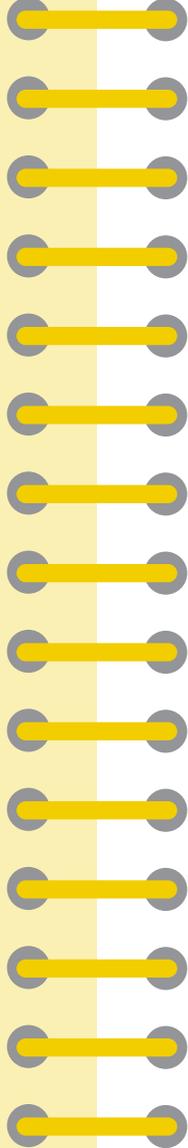
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 2 to 24 and best on zones 4, 5, 6, 17



## Maintenance Hints

Plant stalks can be cut down to 1" to 2" stubs after blooming in late December. Pull stalks, as needed, to curb spreading.





# Red buckwheat

(*Eriogonum grande rubescens*)

Blooming clusters of dark pink flowers grow at the top of stems throughout the summer making this small shrub a great pollinator for butterflies. Perfect for rock gardens or in the understory of larger plants. Although this rare herb is endemic to the Channel Islands, it does well inland with afternoon shade and a little extra water. Tolerant of clay and alkaline soils.



## Maintenance Hints

Deadhead to stimulate more flower growth. Prune back as needed to green leaves or buds.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, sand, well-drained

**Height x Width:** 1-2 ft x 2-3 ft

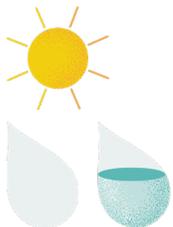
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 14-24

# Bladderpod

(*Peritoma arborea*)

Abundant, bright yellow flowers that remain for most of the year attract bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds to this perennial shrub. The seed pods look like small inflated balloons, which give it the name Bladderpod.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand, well-drained

**Height x Width:** 1-6 ft x 6 ft

**Sunset Climate Zone:** 8-24



## Maintenance Hints

Prune lightly after the main flush of flowers to promote a more dense shrub.





# Hummingbird sage

(*Salvia spathacea*)

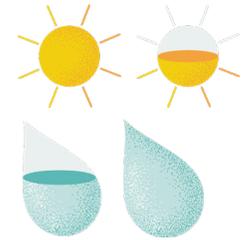
An evergreen-spreading perennial that shoots up tall flowering stems of dark pink-colored flowers. The leaves are soft to the touch and fruity-scented. It grows low and spreads. As per its name, it attracts hummingbirds and makes a good groundcover under low-water-use trees.



## Maintenance Hints

Deadhead old flower stalks, as needed.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand

**Height x Width:** 1-3 ft x 4 ft

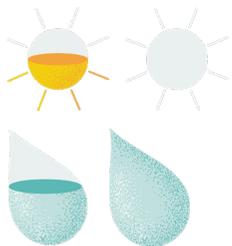
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 10-24

# Catalina currant

(*Ribes viburnifolium*)

This low, spreading evergreen shrub prefers dry shade, which makes it perfect for planting under oaks. It has nice arching branches and can be used for erosion control on dry slopes with filtered shade. Its lovely maroon flowers are produced mid-winter into spring and the leaves and stems have a spicy fragrance.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand

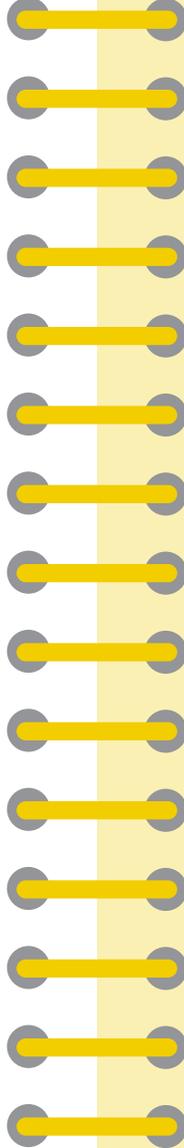
**Height x Width:** 3 ft x 8 ft

**Sunset Climate Zone:** 14-24



## Maintenance Hints

It can take a deep watering once a month in summer but not if planted under oaks. Pinch the tips for a dense shrub. Prune in winter, as needed.





# Purple needlegrass

(*Stipa pulchra*)

A perennial bunchgrass that produces tufts of seedheads that start out purple-tipped, then become golden in color. These stems and seeds look like a needle and thread, giving it its name. Purple needlegrass became the California State Grass in 2004.



## Maintenance Hints

Trim or mow once or twice a season to stimulate thicker growth.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand

**Height x Width:** 2-3 ft x 1-3 ft

**Sunset Climate Zone:** 6-9, 11, 14, 15, 17-24

# California poppy

*(Eschscholzia californica)*

This summer annual produces bright orange flowers on solitary stems and waxy blue-green leaves. Long slender capsules give way to small black seeds that disperse and reseed each spring. It was selected as the state flower in 1890 as a fitting symbol of the golden state.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Loam, sand

**Height x Width:** 0.5-1.5 ft x 1-2 ft

**Sunset Climate Zone:** 1-24



## Maintenance Hints

Wait to remove dried seed pods until after seeds disperse to ensure more flowers in the following year. Cut back in late summer down to healthy green leaves.





# Pigeon Point coyote bush

(*Baccharis pilularis* 'Pigeon Point')

A low-growing evergreen shrub with light green rounded leaves and small white flowers that bloom in the fall. Can be used as a groundcover, and a good choice for fire-prone areas.



## Maintenance Hints

Cut back every few years.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand

**Height x Width:** 1.5-2 ft x 6-9 ft

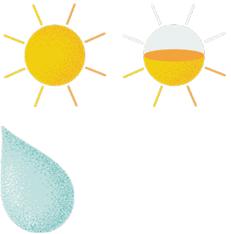
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 5-11, 14-24

# California meadow sedge

(*Carex pansa*)

A clumping, spreading grass-like plant. Its dark green leaves flop over to create a meadow effect. When mowed, it can be used a lawn alternative. A good choice for bioswales and rain gardens too.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand, well-drained

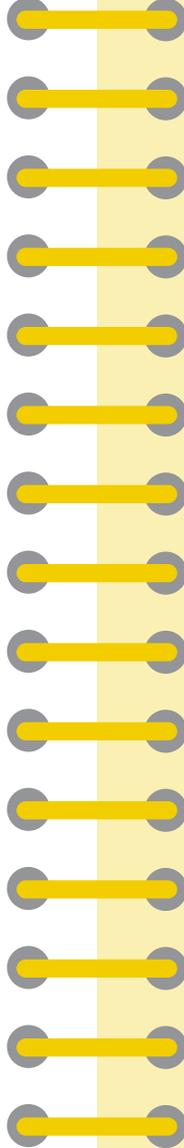
**Height x Width:** 6-9 in x 1-3 ft

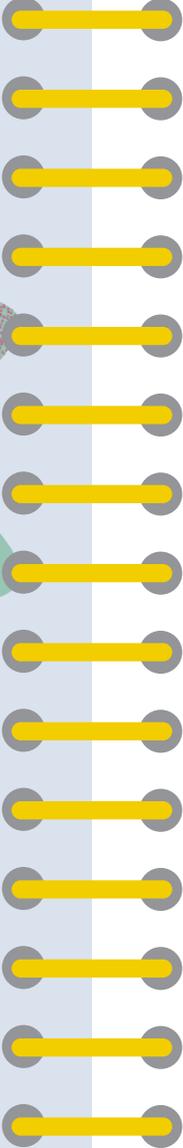
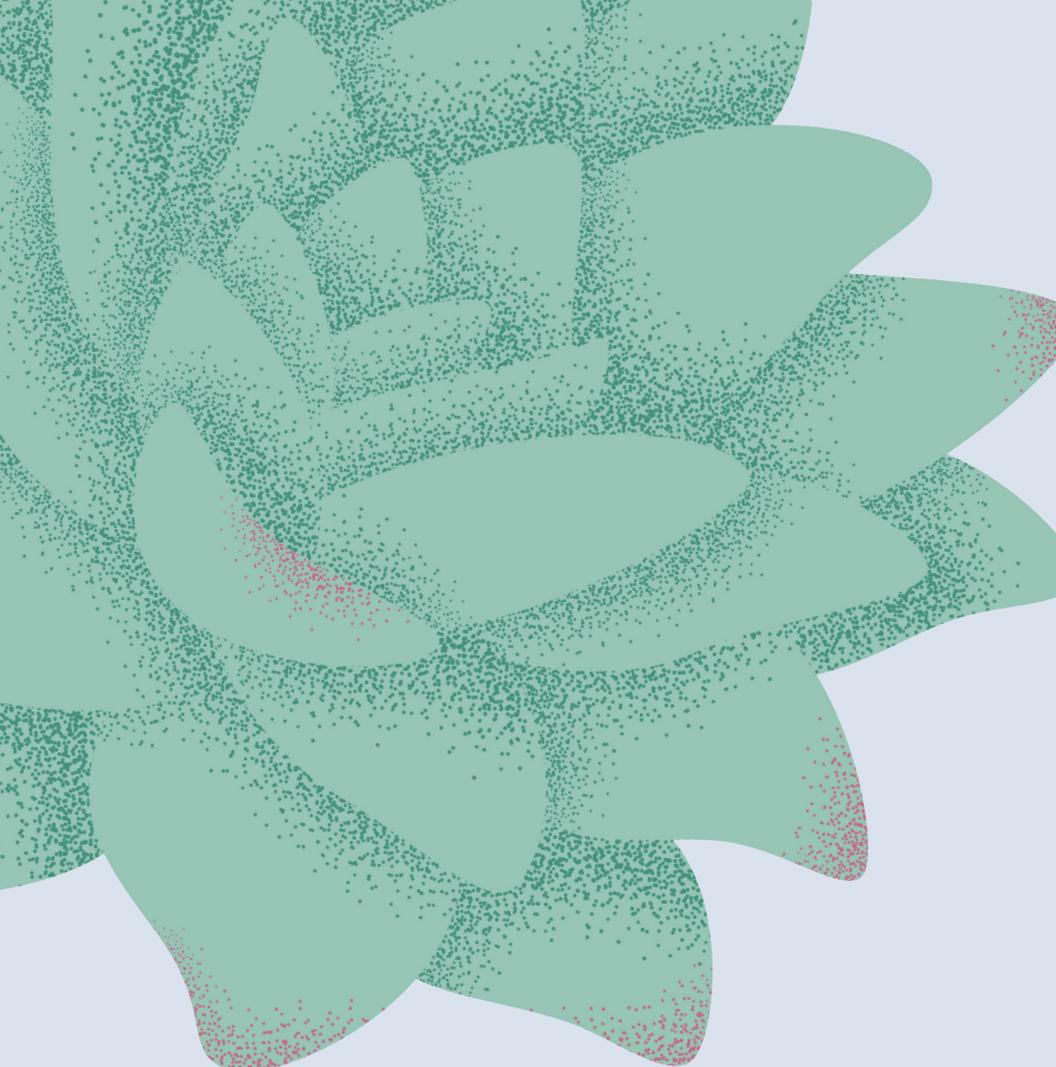
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 7-9, 14-17, 19-24



## Maintenance Hints

It needs regular water. If planted inland, it will need more shade.





# Chalk dudleya

(*Dudleya pulverulenta*)

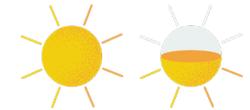
Chalk dudley is one type of native Dudleya succulents. It has a rosette of wide, pale green, fleshy leaves that get a coating of chalky, powder-like wax. In the winter and spring, tall, pink stems emerge covered in pointy, rose-colored flowers which are a favorite of hummingbirds. A great choice for rock gardens and pots.



## Maintenance Hints

No overhead water. If planted inland, it will need partial shade.

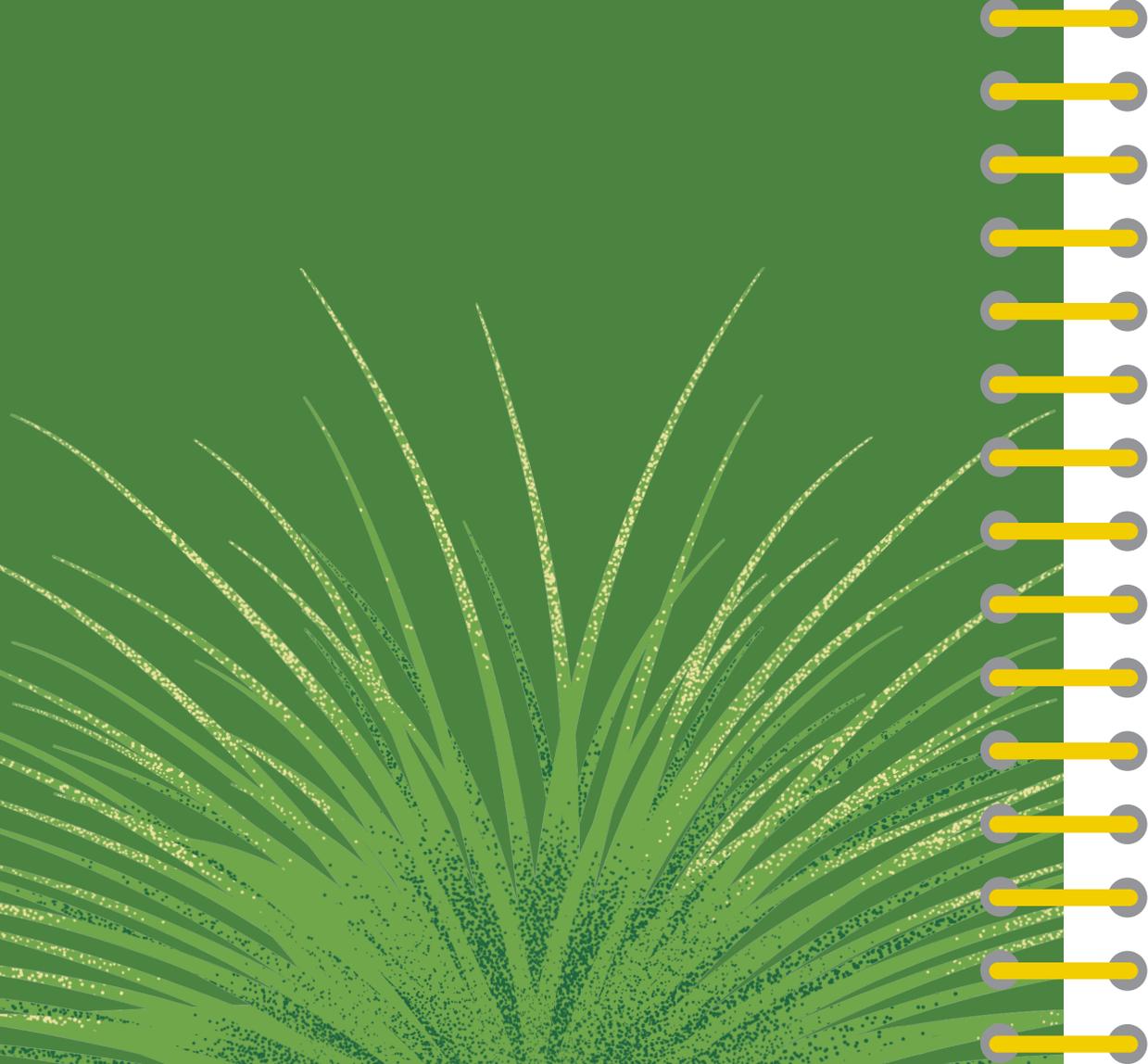
## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Loam, sand, well-drained

**Height x Width:** 1 ft x 1 ft

**Sunset Climate Zone:** 19-24



# Medium Plants

**3 to 6 feet high**

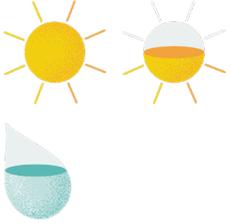
Medium-high growing plants include plants and shrubs that grow 3 to 6 feet tall. These plants are great to fill in the landscape, adding the next level of height and interest to the garden.

# Yankee Point ceanothus

(*Ceanothus thyrsiflorus* var. *griseus* 'Yankee Point')

One of the most popular low-growing ceanothus varieties. This evergreen shrub has clusters of blue flowers that appear March to May which attract butterflies and beneficial insects. It's small, shiny green leaves add another attractive element to a garden.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand

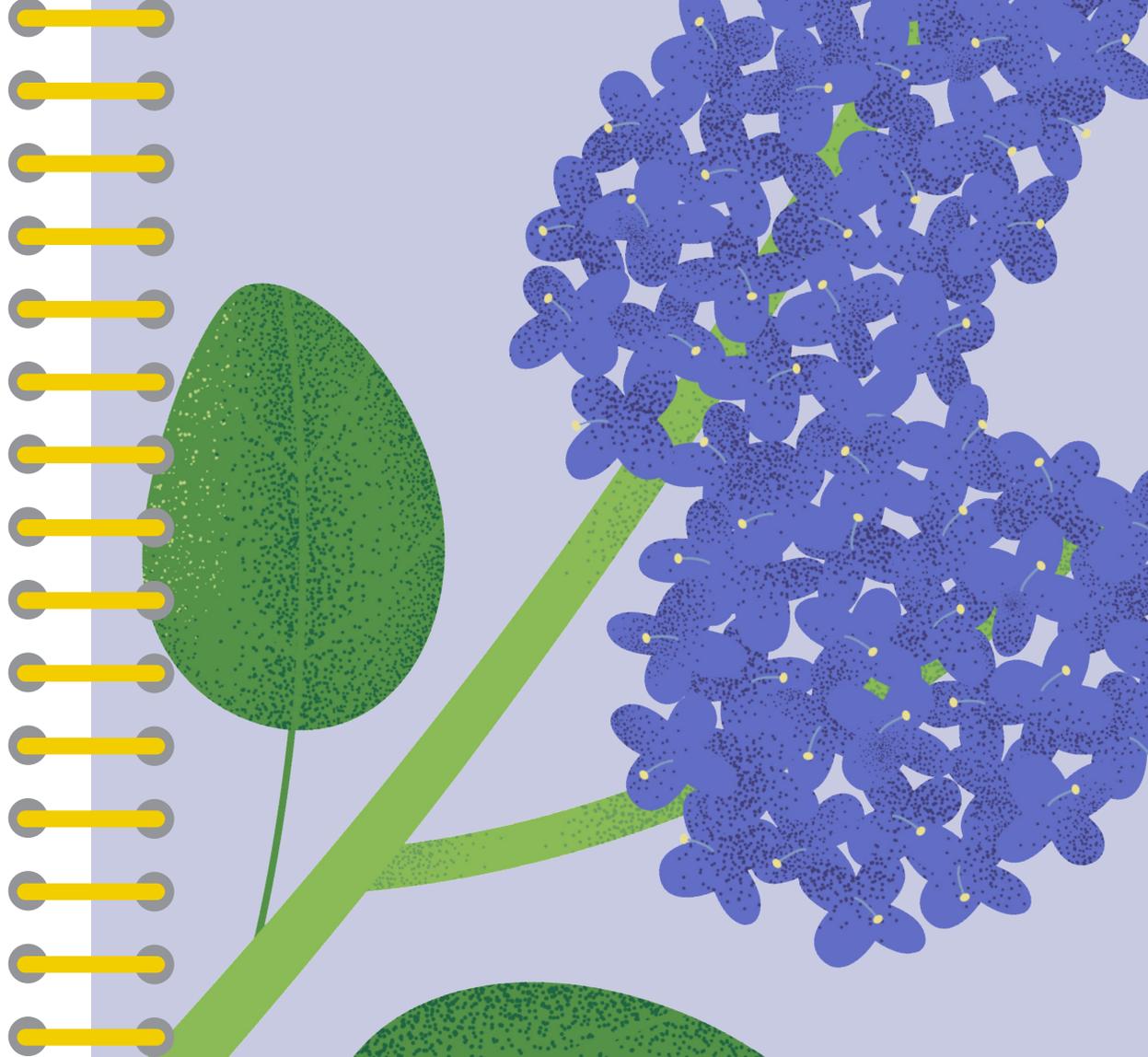
**Height x Width:** 3-4 ft x 6-10 ft

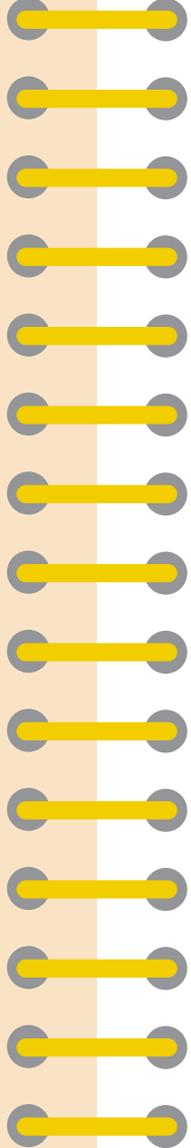
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24



## Maintenance Hints

Prune back branches after it blooms and as needed.





# Ken Taylor flannel bush

*(Fremontodendron 'Ken Taylor')*

A smaller version of California flannel bush, Ken Taylor flannel bush produces the same stunning golden-orange flowers from spring into summer. This low-mounding evergreen shrub is a favorite of pollinators.



## Maintenance Hints

Do not prune during rainy season.  
Wear long sleeves when pruning to avoid the itchy hairs on the leaves.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Loam, sand, well-drained

**Height x Width:** 3-4 ft x 4-8 ft

**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24

# Sticky monkeyflower

(*Mimulus aurantiacus* + cultivars)

A small shrub with deep green, sticky leaves and tubular flowers that range in color from pale yellow, orange, to rusty red. Blooms from spring through summer attract hummingbirds and are a food source for caterpillars of the common buckeye butterfly.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Loam, sand, well-drained

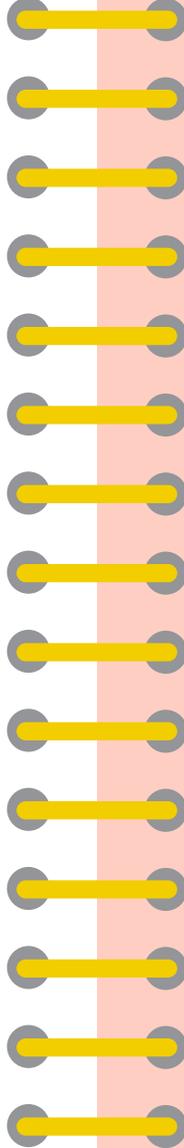
**Height x Width:** 3-4 ft x 4-8 ft

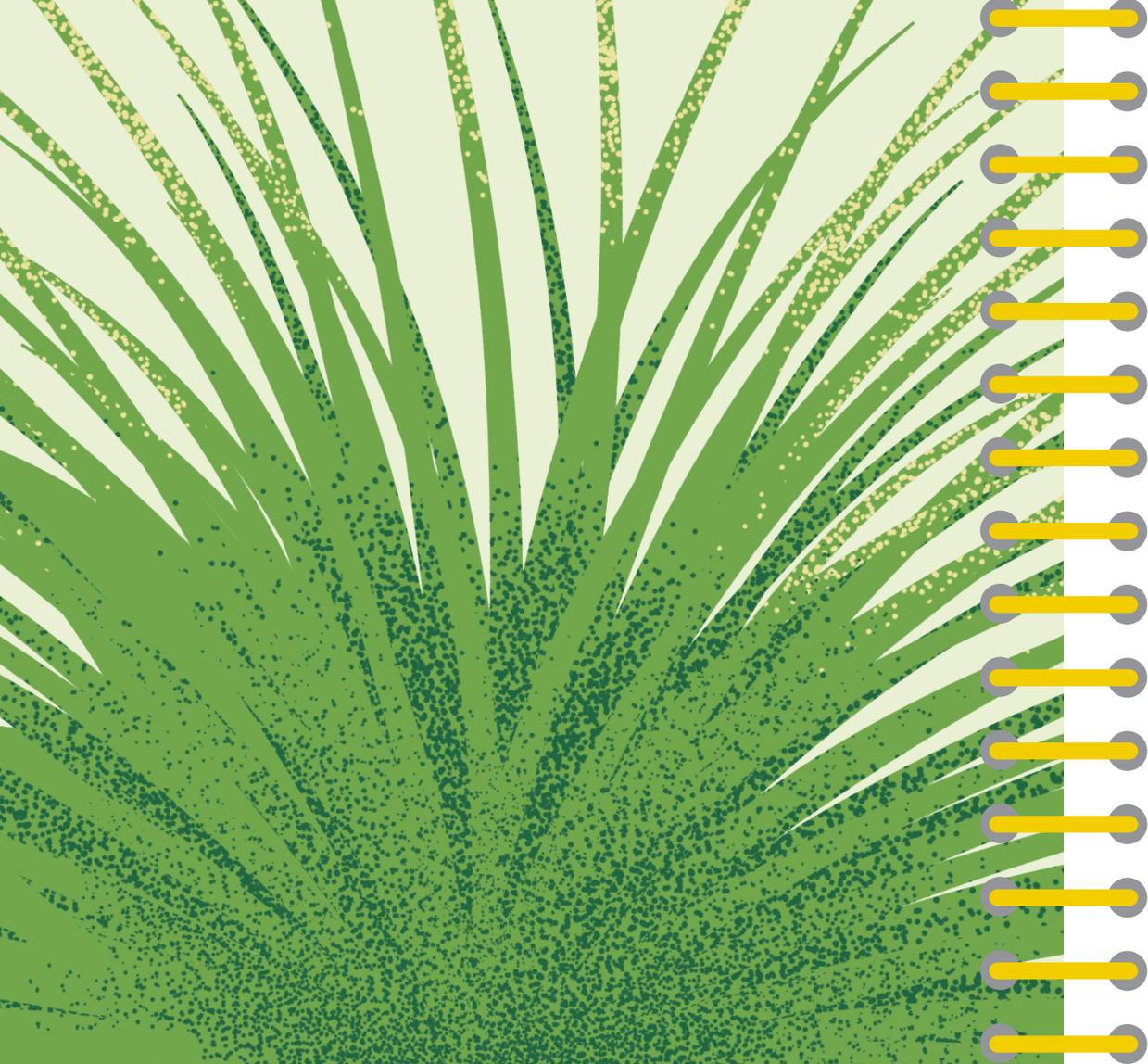
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24



## Maintenance Hints

Pinch back tips for sturdier, dense growth.





# Deergrass

*(Muhlenbergia rigens)*

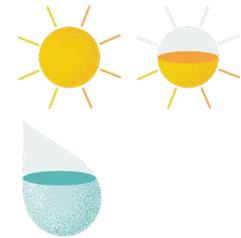
A striking and easy to maintain native grass. Its long, slender grey-green leaves turn a tawny brown in fall. Its growth resembles a spraying fountain.



## Maintenance Hints

For a more tidy look, lightly run a rake through it to remove dead leaves. Cut it back in May for a flush of fresh growth.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand,

**Height x Width:** 3-6 ft x 4-6 ft

**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24

# Purple sage

(*Salvia leucophylla*)

A stunning aromatic shrub with grayish leaves and whorled spikes of lavender-pink flowers that attract a variety of birds. It makes a beautiful addition to the garden with its spreading branches.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Loam, sand

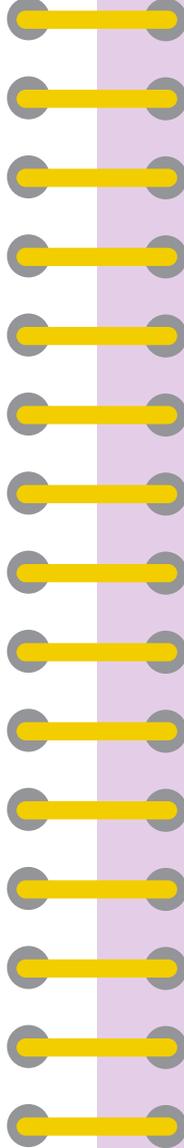
**Height x Width:** 3-6 ft x 3-10 ft

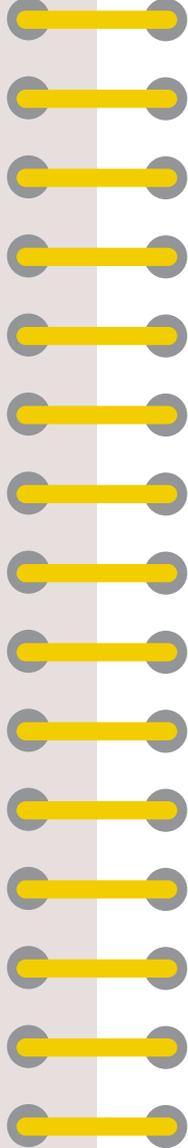
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24



## Maintenance Hints

Pinch back when young for a more dense growth. Cut back to green leaves and buds by a third in winter.





# Black sage

(*Salvia mellifera*)

Aromatic, dark green leaves and whorled spikes of flowers that vary in color from white, pale blue, to lavender, provide an important food source for butterflies and hummingbirds. This shrub is considered the keystone species of the Southern California coastal sage scrub plant community.



## Maintenance Hints

Pinch back regularly when young for a more dense growth. Cut back stems to green leaves and buds by a third in winter.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Loam, sand

**Height x Width:** 3-5 ft x 3-10 ft

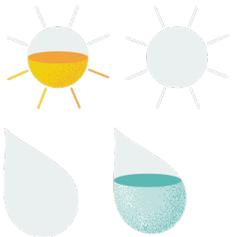
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24

# Woolly bluecurls

*(Trichostema lanatum)*

A small evergreen shrub with pointy, fragrant, green leaves and clusters of deep purple-blue, woolly flowers that give it its name. This fast growing plant is a favorite of hummingbirds.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Loam, sand, well-drained

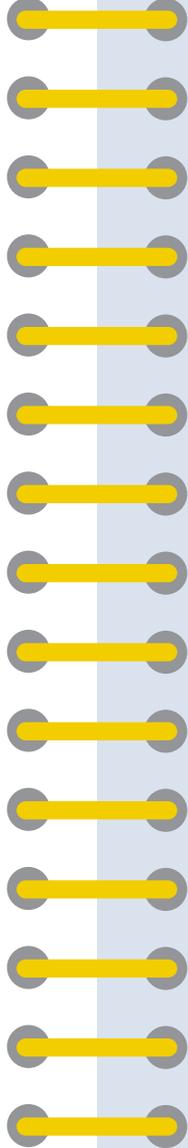
**Height x Width:** 4 ft x 4 ft

**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24



## Maintenance Hints

Deadhead old flowers. Pinch back regularly when actively growing to prevent branch breakage.





# California buckwheat

*(Eriogonum fasciculatum)*

This shrub has small, dark green leaves that grow along the stem and round clusters of pink and white flowers that bloom during the summer and turn to a rusty red color by fall. A favorite of pollinators, it is a keystone species for the sagebrush scrub plant community.



## Maintenance Hints

Prune back when actively growing to direct growth, as needed.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand

**Height x Width:** 3-4 ft x 4 ft

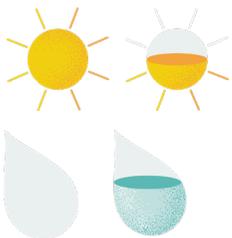
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24

# Narrowleaf milkweed

(*Asclepias fascicularis*)

This flowering perennial has pointed, narrow leaves that whorl around long stems. Clusters of lavender and white flowers eventually turn into pods that split open and drop seeds. This species of milkweed is an important host plant for monarch butterflies in California.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand

**Height x Width:** 3-4 ft x 1 ft,  
and spreads

**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24



## Maintenance Hints

Dies back to the ground in winter  
or cut back once dormant.

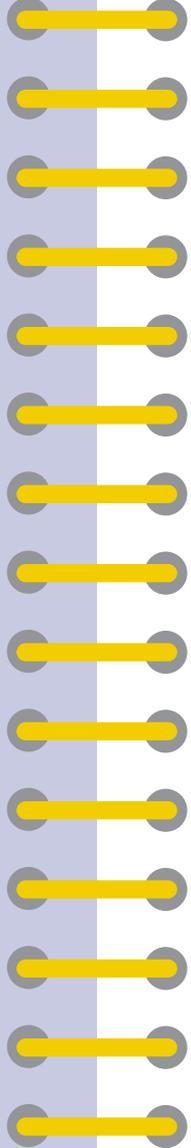




# Tall Plants

## 6 feet or more

Tall growing plants are large shrubs that grow 6 feet tall or more. These plants can be used to create hedges or placed along the back of the landscape, adding the topmost level of height and interest to the garden.



# Bush anemone

(*Carpenteria californica*)

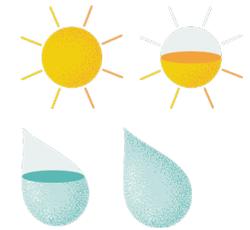
Narrow, dark green leaves provide a great backdrop to the showy white, anemone-shaped flowers with bright yellow centers that bloom in June and July. This shrub has a spreading habit.



## Maintenance Hints

Prune after bloom, as needed.  
Pull out any suckers to contain spreading.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Loam, sand, well-drained

**Height x Width:** 3-8 ft x 6-8 ft

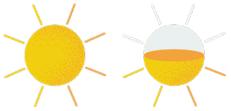
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24

# Toyon

*(Heteromeles arbutifolia)*

White flowers in summer yield to red berries in fall and winter. Dark green toothed leaves and berries provide the inspiration for its nickname: Hollywood. They are also a great choice for native hedges.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand

**Height x Width:** 12-25 ft x 10-15 ft

**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24



## Maintenance Hints

Prune in late winter. Limb up for tree form. Can pinch other times of the year for a denser shrub.





# Lemonade berry

*(Rhus integrifolia)*

Small, white-pink flowers in spring precede sticky reddish fruits which have a tart, lemony taste (hence its name). These berries are food for birds and local wildlife. Its leaves are thick and waxy. Consider use for erosion control, hedges, and for fire prone areas.



## Maintenance Hints

Prune in late winter/early spring, as needed. Limb up for tree form.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand

**Height x Width:** 6-25 ft x 10-20 ft

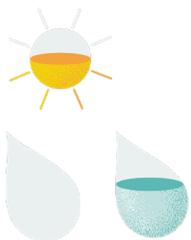
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24

# Golden currant

(*Ribes aureum*)

The fragrant yellow flowers of this deciduous shrub are a favorite of hummingbirds and monarch butterflies in spring. The edible, yellow-orange fruits attract a wide range of birds. Green leaves turn red in autumn before falling off in late December. A great plant for under oak trees. It has a spreading habit.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand

**Height x Width:** 6-10 ft x 5-7 ft

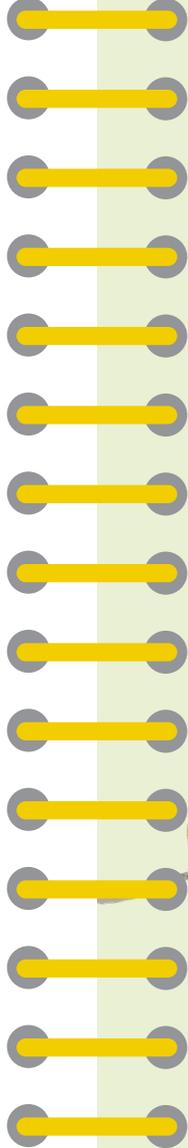
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24

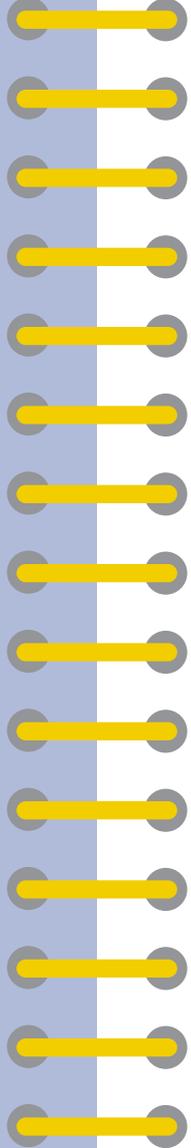


Credit: pp 89

## Maintenance Hints

Prune after bloom for better air circulation and to control rust disease. Remove unwanted suckers to contain spread.





# Chaparral mallow

(*Malacothamnus fasciculatus*)

An evergreen shrub with tall, multibranched stems with light grayish-green leaves covered in soft hairs. In the summer, elongated clusters of pink flowers hang at the end of the stems. It has a spreading habit.



## Maintenance Hints

Prune back as needed for a denser shrub. Pull out any suckers to contain spreading.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand, well drained

**Height x Width:** 3-16 ft x 10 ft

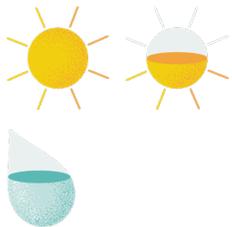
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24

# Howard McMinn manzanita

(*Arctosaphylos* 'Howard McMinn')

A medium-sized shrub with green upright leaves that make a great contrast to its twisting, red peeling branches and bark. The bell-like, pinkish white flowers are a favorite of hummingbirds, butterflies, and other wildlife in late spring.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Loam, sand, well-drained

**Height x Width:** 6-8 ft x 6-8 ft

**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24



## Maintenance Hints

Can handle pruning in the dry season. It prefers no overhead watering.





# Trees

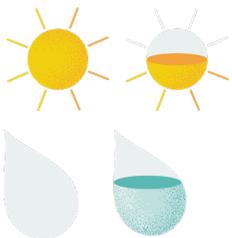
Choose from a variety of native trees ranging from those on the smaller side, which can add a touch of interest to the garden like a western redbud. Or, if there is space, large trees such as the coast live oak not only provide an enormous amount of shade, but serve as a home for hundreds of species of wildlife.

# California buckeye

(*Aesculus californica*)

This small deciduous tree has beautiful light pinkish-white flowers that make a striking display in spring and have a sweet scent. Large seed pods follow containing a single, shiny brown seed. A great accent tree with a multi-trunk habit.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Sandy, clay, loam

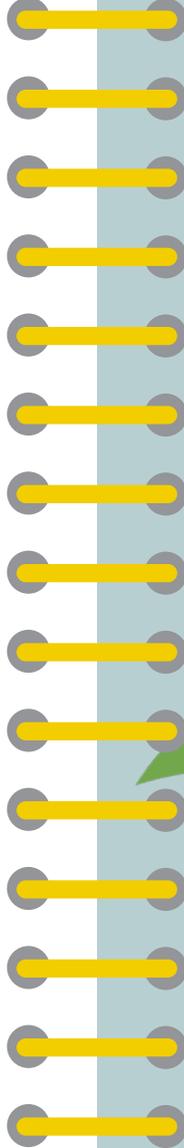
**Height x Width:** 35 ft x 20-30 ft

**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24



## Maintenance Hints

It will shed its leaves in summer if the soil is too dry. With a little supplemental water it will keep its leaves until the fall. Prune in winter, as needed.





# Western redbud

(*Cercis occidentalis*)

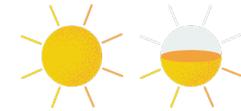
This small, multi- or single-trunk tree has branches that are covered with magenta-pink flowers by late winter to early spring. Magenta seed pods resembling snow peas replace the flowers. The rounded, heart-shaped greenish gray leaves turn yellow to red in October and November. Once the leaves drop, a beautiful silhouette of dark, silvery branches emerges.



## Maintenance Hints

Prune in winter, as needed.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Loam, sand, well-drained

**Height x Width:** 6-20 ft x 6-20 ft

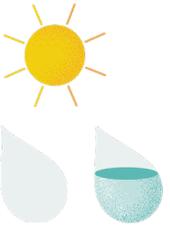
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24

# Desert willow

(*Chilopsis linearis*)

This small deciduous tree has beautiful showy orchid-like flowers that range in color from lavender, pink, rose, or white. The flowers and its long, narrow bluish-green leaves make it a great accent tree with a multi-trunk habit.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Loam, sand, well-drained

**Height x Width:** 12-20 ft x 12-20 ft

**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-21



## Maintenance Hints

Prune in winter, as needed.





# Catalina cherry

(*Prunus ilicifolia* ssp. *lyonii*)

This evergreen tree or large shrub is native to the Channel Islands, so it does best near the coast but can grow in The Valley with a little more water. Its shiny dark green leaves and creamy white flower spikes appear in spring followed by edible cherries—a once significant staple to the diet of indigenous peoples of this region.



## Maintenance Hints

It drops fruit, so don't plant near hardscape (concrete, bricks, stone, impermeable surfaces). Prune, as needed.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand

**Height x Width:** 35 ft x 20-30 ft

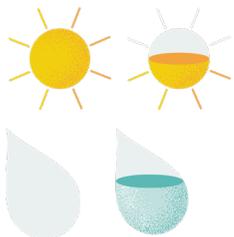
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24

# Coast live oak

*(Quercus agrifolia)*

This large, evergreen tree has a spreading canopy of branches and dark green, convex oval leaves. In early spring, small catkins of flowers appear and are followed by the fruit—a slender brown acorn. Acorns serve as an important food source for local birds and wildlife, and historically are a dietary staples of natives peoples of the region. A TreePeople favorite and true keystone species of Southern California.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand

**Height x Width:** 20-70 ft x  
30-40 ft

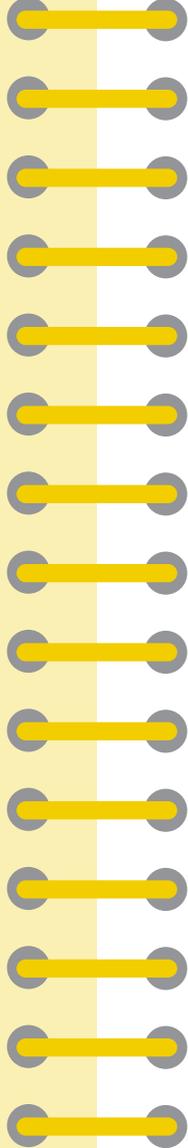
**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24



## Maintenance Hints

Prune in winter, as needed.





# Desert Museum palo verde

(*Parkinsonia* × ‘Desert Museum’)

A hybrid tree that, unlike other Palo Verdes, is thornless. Its smooth green trunk and branches are highlighted by bright green leaves and big, showy, yellow flowers. A great accent tree that attracts birds.



## Maintenance Hints

Do not overwater. Prune when dormant, if needed.

## Planting Requirements



**Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sand, well-draining

**Height x Width:** 20-30 ft x 20-25 ft

**Sunset Climate Zone:** 18-24



# Other Favorites

(aka honorable mentions)

## Low Plants:

- Lilac verbena (*Verbena lilacina*)
- Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*)
- Arroyo lupine\* (*Lupinus succulentus*)



## Medium Plants:

- White sage (*Salvia apiana*)
- Cleveland sage (*Salvia clevelandii*)
- California aster\* (*Corethrogyne filaginifolia*)
- California wild rose (*Rosa californica*)



## Tall Plants:

- Laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*)
- Sugar bush (*Rhus ovata*)
- Hollyleaf cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*)

## Trees:

- Valley oak\* (*Quercus lobata*)
- Chitalpa (*Chitalpa tashkentensis*)
- California bay laurel (*Umbellularia californica*)



\*Pictured right, in descending order.  
Lilac verbena illustrated left.

# Resources

## Native Plant/Tree Websites

- [Calscape](#)
- [Calflora](#)
- [California Native Plant Society](#)
- [SelecTree](#)

## Additional Guides

- [Be Water Wise](#)
- [Waterwise Garden Planner](#)
- [How to Install Your Plants](#)

## TreePeople Videos

- [How To Build Healthy Soil](#)
- [How to Prune Plants](#)
- [How to Manage the Water Schedule](#)
- [How to Install a Climate Appropriate Garden](#)
- [How to Remove Your Lawn](#)
- [How to Install a Rain Garden](#)
- [How to Contour Your Landscape](#)
- [How to Plant a Tree](#)
- [How to Prune a Tree](#)

## Native Plant Nurseries

- [Grow Native Nursery](#)
- [Theodore Payne Foundation](#)
- [Plant Material](#)
- [Artemisia Nursery](#)
- [Hardy Californians](#)
- [Las Pilitas Nursery](#)
- [Matilija Nursery](#)
- [Tree of Life Nursery](#)
- [El Nativo Growers](#)
- [San Marcos Growers](#)

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