



# CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANTS

## A Planting Guide for LA County



### Your Garden Matters

California native plants are a great landscaping choice for your home garden. Not only are they beautiful, they offer important benefits. Native gardens support the food webs, watersheds, and ecosystems upon which we all depend. The simple act of replacing your lawn with California native plants is a powerful way to make a difference.



Save water



Reduce maintenance



Cut pesticide use



Support local ecology



Help the birds and butterflies!



## Tips for Success

Once established, a California native garden is easier and less expensive to maintain than traditional landscapes. Set your garden up for success with a few important tips - some might surprise you.

### Plant with Care



1. **Choose the right time.** Plant fall through early spring to take advantage of cooler temperatures and rainfall.
2. **Plant with care.** Dig a hole 1.5x as deep as the plant and 2x as wide, leaving the crown a half inch higher than the ground. Create a circular berm around the edge of the hole to form a water basin.
3. **Room to breathe.** Make sure mulch doesn't touch the plant's crown or cover irrigation sources.
4. **Room to grow.** Space plants based on mature growth size to avoid an overgrown, wild look.

### Water Like Mother Nature



Native plants require little irrigation beyond natural rainfall after their first year of planting. But that first year is important. Here's what you need to know:

- **Don't overwater.**
- **Water every 1-2 weeks after planting.** Native plants typically enjoy a regular "rainfall" for the first six months or so after planting.
- **Mimic the rain.** Native plants prefer overhead watering from an efficient sprinkler system or hand-watering. (Get an efficient irrigation device rebate at [bewaterwise.com](http://bewaterwise.com))
- **Use your senses.** As you transition from weekly watering to less frequent irrigation, keep an eye on your garden. Watch your plants and check the soil for signs of dryness before you water.



### Did you know?

California has more than 6,000 types of native plants. That's more than any other state in the U.S.

### Think Like a Watershed



Use your landscape to capture water and minimize run-off.

- **Contour your landscape** with berms, swales, and dry creek beds.
- **Use permeable surfaces** wherever possible to allow water to infiltrate into the soil below.
- **Direct water** from downspouts and driveways to your water capture designs and other permeable area to help keep water on site and benefit your plants.

### Set Your Foundation



Evergreen plants and hardscapes provide structure to keep your garden green and attractive year-round.

- **Get shrubby.** Go for the flowers, but be sure to incorporate shrubs and small evergreens.
- **Get solid.** Pavers, decomposed granite, and other hardscapes provide consistency, form and firewise landscaping.
- **Go pro.** A landscape professional can ensure your design is both elegant and functional.

### Right Plant, Right Place



Select the right native plants for your location. Start with the plants in this guide then consider your yard's unique conditions.

- Is it high sun or dense shade?
- Does your yard have poor drainage, or is it sandy?
- Your answers can help inform what plants you choose and where you place them.
- Then, group plants with similar water, sun and soil needs.

### Know Friends from Foes



*Rethink insects.* Do you see a munched leaf? That may be a good thing. Native plants are an irreplaceable food source for local butterflies, bees, caterpillars, and the birds that eat them. Learn about beneficial insects at [ipm.ucanr.edu](http://ipm.ucanr.edu).

## Trees



Desert willow / *Chilopsis linearis*

15+ x 20+

Coast live oak / *Quercus agrifolia*

25-80 x 25-60

Engelmann oak / *Quercus engelmannii*

32-50 x 40-50

## Large Shrubs



Howard McMinn manzanita /  
*Arctostaphylos 'Howard McMinn'*

5-7 x 8-10

Ray Hartman Ceanothus /  
*Ceanothus 'Ray Hartman'*

12-20 x 5-15

Coffee berry / *Frangula californica*

3-15 x 4-15

Toyon / *Heteromeles arbutifolia*

8-15 x 10-15

Sugar bush / *Rhus ovata*

6-10 x 8-10

Hollyleaf cherry / *Prunus ilicifolia*

6-10 x 8-10

## Small Shrubs / Perennials



Narrow leaf milkweed / *Asclepias fascicularis*

1-3 x 1-2

California fuchsia / *Epilobium canum*

0.5-2 x 2-4

California buckwheat / *Eriogonum fasciculatum*

2-5 x 3

Island bush snapdragon / *Gambelia speciosa*

1-3 x 5

Showy penstemon / *Penstemon spectabilis*

2-4 x 3-4

White sage / *Salvia apiana*

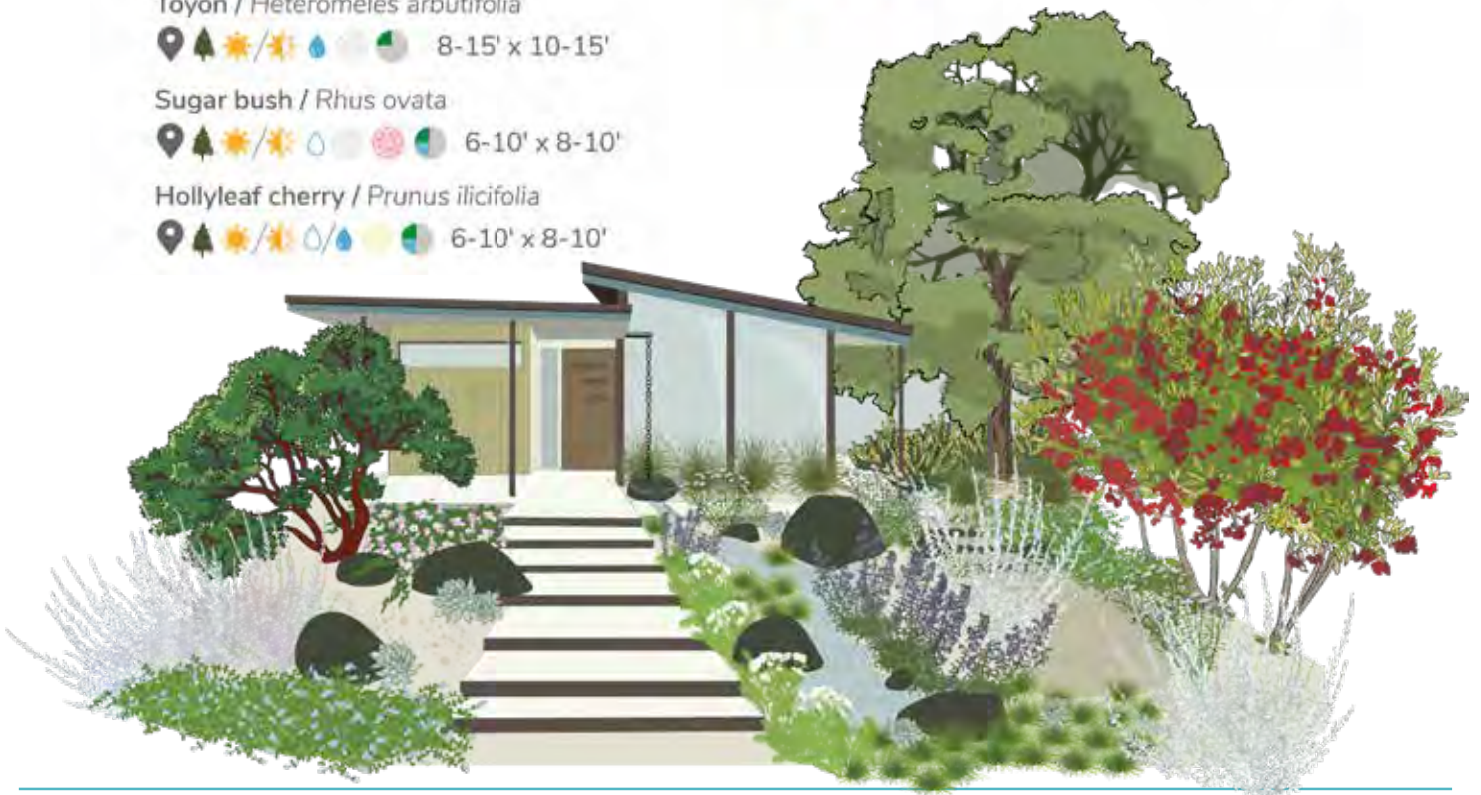
3-5 x 4-8

Black sage / *Salvia mellifera*

5 x 5

De La Mina verbena / *Verbena lilacina 'De la Mina'*

2-3 x 3-4



## Grasses



Clustered field sedge / *Carex praegracilis*

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Deergrass / *Muhlenbergia rigens*

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Alkalai sacaton / *Sporobolus airoides*

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## Medium Shrubs



Indian mallow / *Abutilon palmeri*

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Nevin's barberry / *Berberis nevinii*

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Bush mallow / *Malacothamnus fasciculatus*

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## Groundcover



Common Yarrow / *Achillea millefolium*

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Dwarf coyote bush / *Baccharis pilularis*

🌲 ☀️ / ☀️ / ☀️ / ☀️ / ☀️ 1-3' x 1-6'

Yankee Point Ceanothus /

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

🌲 ☀️ / ☀️ / ☀️ / ☀️ / ☀️ 3-4' x 6-10'

## Succulents



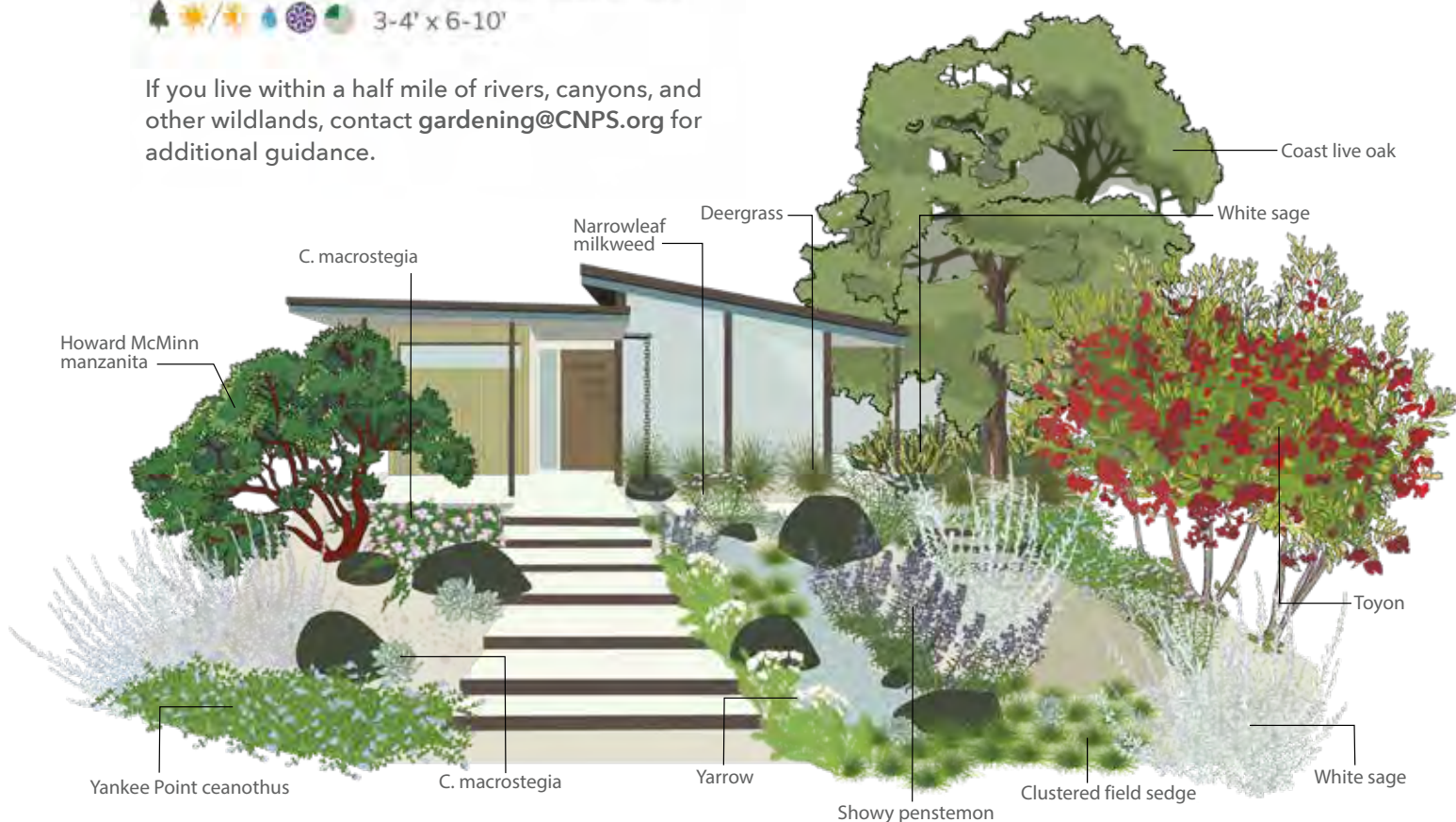
Chalk dudleya / *Dudleya pulverulenta*

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Catalina Island dudleya / *Dudleya virens*

🌲 ☀️ / ☀️ / ☀️ / ☀️ / ☀️ .5-1' x .5-1'

If you live within a half mile of rivers, canyons, and other wildlands, contact [gardening@CNPS.org](mailto:gardening@CNPS.org) for additional guidance.



local



evergreen



deciduous



shade



parts sun



sun



medium



low



very low



bloom time



flower color



## Planning Your Native Plant Landscape

The California native palette offers a beautiful selection of plants for your landscaping needs, including trees of all sizes, evergreen shrubs, groundcovers, vines, perennial herbs, bulbs and colorful annuals.

In this planting guide, the California Native Plant Society provides a recommended starter list of native plants for your Orange County landscape. Use the sample design and plant list (on the inside of this guide) as inspiration. To expand your list, go to **Calscape.org** and enter your zip code to find more ideas for your location.



### What is a California native plant?

From the mighty coastal redwoods to desert wildflowers and coastal succulents, California's native plants are cherished worldwide. These are the plants that grow here naturally and have evolved over thousands of years, long before European settlers. They are uniquely adapted to California's Mediterranean climate and form the foundation of our ecosystems.



### Visit Us

More great information for your California native garden.

#### **bewaterwise.com**

Learn about Metropolitan Water District's rebate programs and see dozens of native plant profiles.

#### **CNPS.org/gardening**

Your one-stop resource from California's native plant experts.

#### **Calscape.org**

Discover which native plants grow best in your location and find nurseries near you.

Photos by Saxton Holt



CALIFORNIA  
NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

**bewaterwise.com**