

CHOOSING PLANTS TO FIT A SITE

California is a large state with a diverse flora and various climates. To further complicate the matter of growing plants, there is a great diversity in the cultural requirements of the plants. To dispel any myths: NOT ALL California native plants are drought-tolerant; NOT ALL prefer the heavy clay soil; and NOT ALL tolerate full sun.

The native plants have evolved over eons of time and are suited to California's climatic conditions: a hot dry summer and fall and a cold, wet winter and cool, damp spring.

Choosing the plant site and deciding what to plant go hand in hand. To grow specific native plants in your garden, observe the same species in the wildlands; and then, at the planting site, replicate the planting situation as to soil type, water needs and sun exposure.

Most, but not all, native plants require good drainage. If the site has heavy clay soil, plant on a slope. If the site is sandy, plant on a more level area, mulching heavily to retain moisture.

Many native plants in full sun survive the spring and summers with little or no added water once deep roots have formed; however, other natives will not prosper in full sun unless they are given additional water. Watering is a tricky situation since molds and soil fungi grow rapidly under warm, wet summer conditions. Therefore water early in the day and thoroughly soak the soil, while keeping the foliage dry.

Save the native plants endemic to your property—at least until you have observed them through all the seasons. When you become acquainted with them, you will be able to assess their horticultural value to the site.

NATIVE PLANTS FOR VARIOUS PLANTING SITUATIONS

FULL SUN --hot and dry:

Aesculus californica	California Buckeye
Arctostaphylos spp.	Manzanitas
Artemisia spp.	Sagebrush
Ceanothus spp.	California Wild Lilac
Cercis occidentalis	Western Redbud
Cercocarpus betuloides	Mountain Mahogany
Dendromecon rigida	Bush Poppy
Eriogonum spp.	Buckwheat
Eschscholzia californica	California Poppy
Fremontodendron californicum	Flannelbush
Heteromeles arbutifolia	Toyon
Holodiscus discolor	Cream bush
Lonicera interrupta	Chaparral Honeysuckle
Lupinus spp.	Lupine
Penstemon spp.	
Rhamnus californica	Coffeeberry
Salvia spp.	Sage
Zauschneria spp. (Epilobium)	California Fuchsia

FULL SUN to part shade --tolerates moisture :

Asclepias (speciosa & fascicularis)	Milkweed (Showy & Narrowleaf)
Berberis aquifolium	Oregon-Grape
Brodiaea spp. and other bulbs	California native bulbs
Calycanthus occidentalis	Spicebush
Carpenteria californica	Tree-Anemone
Ceanothus intergerrimus	Deer Brush
Clematis lasiantha	Pipestems
C. ligusticifolia	Virgin's Bower
Delphinium spp.	Larkspur
Linum lewisii	Blue Flax
Lonicera hispidula	Honeysuckle
Monardella villosa	Coyote-Mint
Penstemon spp.	
Rhamnus ilicifolia	Holly-leafed Redberry
Ribes sanguineum	Pink Flowering Currant
Ribes speciosum	Fuchsia-flowered Gooseberry
Rosa spp.	California Wild Rose
Sambucus mexicana	Blue Elderberry
Sisyrinchium bellum	Blue-eyed Grass
Spiraea douglasii & S. densiflora	Native spiraeas

DRY SHADE-plantings under oaks:

*Aquilegia formosa - A. pubescens	Columbine
Arctostaphylos spp.	Low-growing Manzanitas
Artemisia spp.	Sagebrush
Berberis aquifolium	Oregon - Grape
Brodiaea spp. and other bulbs	California native bulbs
Chlorogalum pomeridianum	Soap Plant
* Ferns: Wood Fern, Sword Fern, Maidenhair Fern	
* Heuchera spp.	Alumroot
* Iris spp.	Douglas Iris hybrids
Mimulus aurantiacus	Bush Monkeyflower
Nassella pulchra	Purple Needlegrass; also other native grasses
Ribes viburnifolium	Evergreen Currant
* Symphoricarpos albus laevigatus	Snowberry

RIPARIAN AREAS-part shade:

*Aquilegia formosa & A. pubescens	Columbine
Mimulus aurantiacus	Bush Monkeyflower
*Lilium pardalinum	Leopard Lily
Philadelphus lewisii	Wild Mock Orange
* Spiraea douglasii & S. densiflora	Native Spiraeas

RIPARIAN AREAS-deep shade, more moisture:

Acer circinatum	Vine Maple
Acer macrophyllum	Big-leaf Maple
*Asarum hartwegii	Wild-ginger
Dicentra formosa	Bleeding Heart
Mimulus cardinalis	Cardinal Monkeyflower
*Tellima grandiflora	Fringe cups
Thalictrum fendleri	Meadow-Rue
*Vitis californica	California Wild Grape

*denotes plants that may need a little summer water if not in a wet area.

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Distributed by Sierra Foothills Chapter
California Native Plant Society