



## THESE ARE A FEW OF OUR FAVORITES...

Growing, gardening with and designing with the native plants we have found indispensable in California Central Coast landscapes.

### PEIGI DUVALL

#### Locations:

#### Calamagrostis foliosa

**Why I like this plant:** attractive, easy care, can stand alone yet plays well with others

**Where I have used this plant:** borders, containers, meadows, mixed beds with sun/part sun, temps from low 40s to high 90s with some building shelter.

**Extra Tidbit:** It's bloom is nicely persistent but does benefit from late season removal

#### Cornus sericea ssp. Occidentalis

**Why I like this plant:** beauty and interest in all seasons,

**Where I have used this plant:** Specimen plant in planting areas where it can receive medium water and tending as needed such as control of new growth at base

**Extra Tidbit:** bare, red/brown branches are fun for making holiday wreaths, also like *C. sericea* ssp *sericea* but it's not in our sale inventory this year.

#### Eriogonum parvifolium

**Why I like this plant:** Oh, the healthy habitat this shrub enables!!! When in bloom and then seed, it is abuzz with life. It's color interest in various seasons adds weight/foundation to any space.

**Where I have used this plant:** mixed planting beds of various sizes, as single specimen in smaller gardens, hedgerows.

**Extra Tidbit:** Have I mentioned the generations of quail that take up residence? I usually cut this plant back fairly hard after most seed heads have lost their bounty. Some landscape crews will cut back with hedge trimmer to @2ft and that works for a few years before the plant gets too lanky.

#### Horkelia californica

**Why I like this plant:** This is such a sweet, lovely, very local ground cover that it's sad to not be used more. It takes its time getting established and isn't a bully. I have several times found it just continuing to grow and spread patiently under and around other grasses and perennials in meadows I've planted out. Has a nice slight fragrance.

**Where I have used this plant:** small planting beds, meadows large and small.

**Extra Tidbit:** can take heat but dries out too easily unless under some protection from direct sun. Often rebounds once right conditions are discovered.

### **Juncus effusus ssp. pacificus**

**Why I like this plant:** great shape and elegant. Usually taller and more 'grass green' hue than J. patens. Has a beautiful, relatively large florescence.

**Where I have used this plant:** Planting beds of various sizes and larger pots.

**Extra Tidbit:** Yes, it like extra moisture but doesn't get grumpy with less. Sometimes a particular plant will want to grow to nearly 3' in height in which case I'll supply some sort of structure – whether another kind of plant or physical garden prop – to give it support.

### **Juncus xiphioides**

**Why I like this plant:** This is an interesting and very handsome rush though not for every garden.

**Where I have used this plant:** seasonally wet areas that beg for vegetation and larger pots.

**Extra Tidbit:** I let one die out in a pot once (suspended watering) since its roots had completely taken up all space. It continued to sit there with light brown leaves and dark brown flowers looking clean and quite elegant.

### **Keckiella breviflora**

**Why I like this plant:** #1 because it was a gift from a friend's property in Monterey County where it grows naturally. #2 it is a very pretty plant with an excellent arching and rambling habit, sweet little blooms, and I had the perfect place to plant it.

**Where I have used this plant:** In a smallish planting bed on my patio up against a grape stake fence panel in full sun. Well drained but not terribly rich soil. I had some water every once in a while.

**Extra Tidbit:** I hope CNPS keeps growing this and having it for sale since it's a great specimen for hotter hill and valley conditions.

### **Lonicera hispidula**

**Why I like this plant:** Very nice woody vine that persists quite easily in Carmel and valley areas. Beautiful blooms and fruit for critters.

**Where I have used this plant:** in good sized pots as well in the ground. Low water use and seems to prefer a tad bit of shade or larger plant cover. Can be used as a grown cover as long as no one tries to walk through it.

**Extra Tidbit:** I like its 'character' in native garden themes plantings.

### **Lonicera involucrata**

**Why I like this plant:** I like its interesting flowers and berries and makes a nice deciduous easy medium sized shrub in any garden that doesn't get too hot.

**Where I have used this plant:** Planting beds and irregularly placed as edges around meadows

**Extra Tidbit:** more of a shrub than a vine, cut back hard or not, it will rejuvenate.

### **Oenothera elata var. hookeri**

**Why I like this plant:** Very handsome and a huge bee attractor, especially for Bumbles. An excellent habitat plant. Good cutting flower though, as an evening primrose, it's blooms close up at night.

**Where I have used this plant:** anywhere that it can grow with abandon or that I have time to chase after and keep in check. I usually cut fully back once it browns out.

**Extra Tidbit:** If you've got space and sun. You will be rewarded by it's beautiful arrays.

### **Plantago subnuda**

**Why I like this plant:** I like how it looks, en mass or as edging.

**Where I have used this plant:** in sunny meadows, as edging, and in larger planting beds

**Extra Tidbit:** gardeners and crew have laughed at me for planting purposely since in some places it's considered a weed.

### **Scrophularia californica**

**Why I like this plant:** Another excellent local habitat plant. Excellent pollinator activity. Beautiful arching branches.

**Where I have used this plant:** planting beds with part shade – even smaller ones with time allotted for a little additional tending at season's end, meadows and more open areas with natural riverbed moisture.

**Extra Tidbit:** not for dry, rocky areas.

## **AMY ESSICK**

Location: ridgetop in mid-Carmel Valley – rocky "soil". Sun - hot/evening fog.

All plants purchased at CNPS-MB sales. All young plants caged for underground critters and deer - Aggressive despite extensive wild oak woodland area.

### **Arctostaphylos edmundsii 'Big Sur':**

**Why I like this plant:** Beautiful healthy green leaves all year round. It can handle full sun, heat domes, heavy smoke, rocky soil, and very little water. Third year leap!

**Where I have used this plant:** Out in a side yard of “rock soil” denuded by original owner.

**Extra tidbit:** Deer not eating branches sticking out of cage – can it stand up to the munchers?

### **Epilobium Bowman's #1:**

**Why I like this plant:** Most successful 1<sup>st</sup> year native to date for late summer color and feeds hummingbirds non-stop late July into September+ – a mesmerizing show!

**Where I have used this plant:** Beds by house. Grows best full sun/little water – 2/month. Grew rapidly to 30” high x 20” wide. Can be planted close to others.

**Extra tidbit:** Seeds appear on lower portion of stalk as top flowers bloom; tiny black seeds in “Einstein hair” mass. Deer protection required.

### **Keckiella cordifolia:**

**Why I like this plant:** Blooms go on for months year-round, even as seed pods form. Hummingbirds love this plant.

**Where I have used this plant:** In beds around the house with wall or lattice support behind, out in open land near bush to cascade on.

**Extra tidbit:** Delicate looking but hardy – little water. Leaves go red in late summer-fall in full sun. Green leaves in sun/shade. Survives deer grazing.

### **Salvia Bee's Bliss:**

**Why I like this plant:** Third year leap with morning shade/afternoon sun. Winter leaves are full, soft, and healthy green with light purple flowers.

**Where I have used this plant:** Beds around the house.

**Extra tidbit:** More of a low ground cover with cascading over bed wall. Full sun starts to look weary with gray leaves by August, sun/shade in summer grey green leaves look better.

### **Savia Bon Bon:**

**Why I like this plant:** Plant it and leave it alone to grow and bloom purple blue flowers for months.

**Where I have used this plant:** Beds around the house. Does best with morning shade/afternoon sun, little water, and leave it alone.

**Extra tidbit:** Size differences with sun/shade ratio. Does not like crowding. No deer interest yet.

### **Salvia Kaleidoscope:**

**Why I like this plant:** First year produced marked growth and bright red-purple/blue flowers. Does not seem to be as sensitive to “space” or “fussy” like some salvia.

**Where I have used this plant:** Beds around house.

**Extra tidbit:** No deer interest yet.

### **Salvia Winnifred Gilman:**

**Why I like this plant:** Best native plant scent ever! First year - compact with small leaves fully covering slightly twisting branches and blue/purple “crown” summer flowers lasting for months.

**Where I have used this plant:** In bed near hot tub and open entry areas/pathways for welcoming calming scent.

**Extra tidbit:** More green leaves with small weekly water first summer. No deer interest yet.

### **Solidago California:**

**Why I like this plant:** Fast growing and blooming happy yellow flowers first year. Small volunteer plants growing well.

**Where I have used this plant:** Full sun to 48” high in first several months. Half that size in sun/shade with no flowers as of September 1st. Water 2x month.

**Extra tidbit:** No deer interest.

## **LOREN WALDEN**

### **Salvia clevelandii (Allen Chickering):**

**Why I like this plant:** Charming blue/purple flowers, scent of summer, deer abhor it, chickadees and bees love it, hardy, need not water once established.

**Where I have used this plant:** I cluster sage plants on rocky or sloped sites for bird nesting habitat or in single specimens among varieties of sticky monkey flowers for a springtime show.

**Tidbit:** Can tolerate all manner of soil and the full harsh sun of mid-summer inland areas. It is a versatile winner easy to grow.

### **Salvia pachyphylla (celestial blue):**

**Why I like this plant:** All the qualities listed for Allen Chickering with a bit deeper purple flower and softer green color on the leaves in the summer.

**Where I have used this plant:** The two sages mentioned thus far together make a lovely habitat for native birds and insects while providing showy backdrop for some of our more delicate orange, yellow, or red native flowering plants.

**Tidbit:** Don't be too anxious to deadhead or tip prune when the flowers die back, the seeds attract songbirds to snack on in late summer/early fall.

### **Salvia spathacea (Cerro Alto and Avis Keedy):**

**Why I like this (these) plants:** These two yellow flowered humming bird sages charm the summer garden in shady hilly spots. I love the colors and are not always easy to find at nurseries. They are hardy if shaded from the hottest part of the day and are given an occasional

drink mid-summer. Deer ignore them and over the years when planted in clusters on slopes, they create a wonderful foreground for oaks.

**Where I have used this plant:** At the edge of the summer shadow lines of oak woodlands on a slope.

**Tidbit:** At the end of summer cut back the dead flower stalks to the ground. They respond well the next year if you are brutal in your cutting them back before the rains.

### **Baccharis pilularis Pigeon Point (Pigeon Point Coyote Brush):**

**Why I like this plant:** This is a work horse within a native habitat landscape and a bit of an unsung and somewhat maligned hero because it seems “common” which is why it works so well! It is hardy, deer ignore it, easy to maintain, and hosts a variety of native insects. Tolerant of many soil conditions this low growing mounding evergreen shrub provides a wonderful backdrop for smaller showy flowers in springtime.

**Where I have used this plant:** Around walkways in groupings to create a border and to fill in disturbed hillsides for stabilization.

**Tidbit:** Baccharis of any variety keeps a California landscape from looking too contrived.

### **Epilobium canum (California fuchsia):**

**Why I like this plant:** When few other plants are flowering late in the season, this and other varieties of Epilobium pop with firecracker red blooms amid minty green foliage. Showy and fun! Easy to maintain and tolerates different soils.

**Where I have used this plant:** Both in clusters and in pockets where I want a splash of color to draw the visitor’s gaze downward.

**Tidbit:** Combine with your favorite Solidago (goldenrod) for a yellow and red late-summer splash of color. They like the same amount of water and general care. Cut them both back hard in December and they will be in sync for the next summer.

### **Monardella villosa (Coyote mint):**

**Why I like this plant:** Bright pink/purple flowers all summer if deadheaded with evergreen leaves this charming low growing mini shrub is ignored by deer yet loved by insects, easy to grow, and looks fabulous interspersed in the landscape or in small clusters.

**Where I have used this plant:** Wherever I want a splash of summer low growing purple color this is often my first choice. A few years ago, I used it to dot a pathway leading to the front door of a charming house and I believe the scent added to the allure of the occasion of coming home.

**Tidbit:** When in full bloom visit this plant late at night and watch as a variety of moths feast on nectar under the moonlight. Also, when it is looking leggy, cut it to the ground late summer/early fall for a bushy revival when the rains begin

**PAT REGAN:**

**Arctostaphylos insularis 'Canyon sparkle':**

**Why I like this plant:** It is one of the easiest manzanita selections to grow (and propagate) It is clean and formal looking all year. The foliage is so glossy it literally catches light and “sparkles”. It has very large clusters of clean white flowers in mid-winter.

**Where I have used this plant:** it makes a great container specimen. Planted in a narrow bed in only afternoon sun in Carmel Valley it shares a space with my other favorites on this list.

**Extra tidbit:** One of the Channel Island (this one from Santa Cruz island) endemics that thrives in similar conditions on the mainland. This selection selected and introduced by Dara Emery at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden. A nice specimen of this selection can be viewed in the Island section of the Lester Rowntree Native Garden in Carmel

### **Arctostaphylos 'John Dourley':**

**Why I like this plant:** This is the perfect manzanita for smaller gardens or borders. This selection, attractive in form, color and flower and fills the bill for a spreading low mounding groundcover. I have had it stay at about 18” tall or mound up to 3-4 feet. Light exposure and neighboring plants and structures influence its ultimate form.

**Where I have used this plant:** I have planted this as a ground cover under the dripline of oak trees in east Carmel Valley, as a large-scale full sun groundcover and border plant. It has thrived everywhere I have tried it. Gophers ignore it. There are nice large examples of this planted along the south side of Valley Greens Drive along the golf course west of the clubhouse and restaurant.

**Extra tidbit:** This selection clearly has some *Arctostaphylos pajaroensis* in its parentage which lends all of its good qualities of leaf form and color. The low spreading form has been speculated to be from another coastal species like *A. cruzensis* or curiously, *A. bakeri* from Sonoma County

### **Arctostaphylos pajaroensis 'Paradise':**

**Why I like this plant:** One of the most beautiful of our local endemic species, native generally from the sandstone hills of Prunedale. This selection has true multi-season interest with abundant winter flowers in varying shades of pink, bronzy new growth in spring maturing to glaucous blue-green foliage in summer and fall with clusters of tiny “apples” attractive to wildlife

**Where I have used this plant:** Mixed plantings at back of beds. Focal points surrounded by typical companions and Large containers (to show off form and bark)

**Extra tidbit:** For a medium to large (6-8’ tall after 10 years) specimen that fully illustrates the essence of the California flora and the Central Coast, there are few rivals. There are places in the Prunedale hills where this species forms dense closed canopies with *Arctostaphylos hookeri*

and *Arctostaphylos crustacea*. A great place to see examples is at Manzanita County Park off Castroville Blvd in Prunedale.

### ***Arctostaphylos viridissima* 'White Cloud':**

**Why I like this plant:** Similar to the island manzanita but with pronounced long white bristles on the twigs and stems that catch sunlight. Large clasping overlapping leaves and dense branching create a truly uniquely beautiful small to medium (3-6' tall after 5 years) shrub. White cloud is a perfect name for this selection as the clusters of pure white flowers combined with the white bristles create a hazy white glow around the dark green foliage

**Where I have used this plant:** planted in both containers and borders along my carport and around the house.

**Extra tidbit:** An island endemic found only on Santa Cruz island, (but less rare and imperiled than many of our local Central coast endemics) this selection made by Bert Johnson of the UC Botanic garden in Berkeley for "its profuse snowy-white flowers and its dense, glossy, dark green leaves".

### ***Ceanothus* 'Centennial'**

**Why I like this plant:** Low dense, glossy leaved foliage and deep blue button-like flower clusters. It has withstood terrible drainage and ridiculously rapid drainage and gophers. It politely fills in among higher upright growing shrubs or blends beautifully with other sprawling groundcovers. I am a sucker for deep blue flowers of any species but particularly fond of the darker flowered ceanothus.

**Where I have used this plant:** Like the next plant on the list, I purchased and sold many of this selection before I ever tried it in my own gardens. I confess I just thought it was "just another groundcover". Then I tried it in an open space between pathways where a lawn had been removed. The goal was to create a dense green low cover that would be visually like the previous water guzzling lawn from a distance, but to do it with less water and no fertilizer. Combined with *Baccharis pilularis* "Pigeon Point" it filled admirably. And then it flowered, and I was hooked.

**Extra tidbit:** Centennial is a naturally occurring hybrid between *C. thyrsoiflorus* variety *griseus* and *C. foliosus* var. *vineatus*. Originally grown under the name 'Darkest Blue', 'Centennial' was officially named and introduced in 1992 and was selected from seed collected along the Sonoma County coast by Roger Raiche, horticulturist at UC Botanical Garden in Berkeley at the time.

### **Ceanothus thyrsiflorus x 'Skylark'**

**Why I like this plant:** It really is a compact, late blooming, deeeep blue flowering shrub with dark glossy leaves, perfect for smaller gardens. When all the other ceanothus are fading or going to seed, it kicks into full flowering glory to transition to the summer. It is exceptionally tolerant of a variety of soil types and gardener types (not a typo)

**Where I have used this plant:** I have planted this in heavy clay soil in high shade from an old oak tree at 1800 feet in the northern Santa Lucia's and against a South facing fence in river alluvium. It has thrived in both locations. It would make a great low hedge or entry plant.

**Extra tidbit:** While regularly sold as a straight thyrsiflorus selection, 'Skylark' is believed to be a cross between Ceanothus thyrsiflorus and C. velutinus. I have selected this shrub for plant sales many times over the past 30 years but had never actually grown it myself until about 6 years ago. It never looks as good in the can as it does after a year or two in the ground. This selection is a real winner.

### **Diplacus 'jellybean orange'**

**Why I like this plant:** Much like certain tones of purple and blue stand out at twilight, the large deeply saturated orange flowers on this hybrid monkeyflower stand out in daylight with a glow much more pronounced than the typical light orange Diplacus aurantiacus. Bred to be garden tolerant and gardener tolerant this versatile subshrub can be featured in a well-watered mixed garden or a dry native mix. It has a long bloom season and can be encouraged into a second spring with light shearing in late summer.

**Where I have used this plant:** Where haven't I used it? This selection makes a great container plant for splashes of color on a patio or doorway. I have massed it with others in the Jellybean series, mixed it with drought tolerant Salvia and Penstemon and Trichostema; planted it along pathways and around benches.

**Extra tidbit:** The Jellybean monkeyflowers were the labor of love of central coast Plant breeder Richard Persoff whose decades long love affair with bush monkeyflowers was sparked by one he tried to grow and promptly killed with kindness. His learning curve produced some of the most beautiful garden tolerant crossover cultivars available today.

### **Symphoricarpos albus var. laevigatus – Common snowberry**

**Why I like this plant:** This is one of my favorite seasonal plants. It is a harbinger of Spring when the first emerald-green leaf rounds appear on naked, nearly invisible stems and a sign that autumn is coming when the snow-white berries appear at the dangling ends of stems beginning to drop their leaves. It is one of the very best plants for shade under an oak tree and can form a 4-5' tall thicket if allowed or be managed with coppicing to be low and lush.

**Where I have used this plant:** I have used this plant to restore the understory of the riparian woodland along the river and planted it in shady places on the north and east side of my house

**Extra tidbit:** common snowberry is found in woodlands from Baja to Alaska and as such has many variable ecotypes based on local conditions. Local is best when selecting for your garden. Once it establishes you will never be without propagation material to spread or share. Rhizomes spread quickly in loose rich soil and are easy to cut and pot up or replant somewhere nearby in late fall and early winter.

### **Trichostema lanatum – Woolly blue curls**

**Why I like this plant:** With the Manzanita and Ceanothus this is one of the iconic California species. For sunny, well drained (or on a good slope it is in clay) soils it is a source of nectar for many insects and hummingbirds and a source of pride for the gardener who finds its happy place to plant it. I love the fragrance of the foliage and the color of the intricate flowers and the "fuzz" on the flowers and stems.

**Where I have used this plant:** This is a picky plant. I have had no long-term success with it as a container plant but have had great luck in heavy soils on slopes and in my rapid draining river sand and cobble. Oddly I must water it occasionally to keep it happy in the sand and rock. I add arborists mulch every year to build up some useful organic layer.

**Extra tidbit:**

### **Thalictrum polycarpum -Meadow rue**

**Why I like this plant:** it is another prime shade plant that adds a graceful maidenhair fern like texture to a shady slope or under the high shade of oaks and bays. It mixes well with bunch grasses like California fescue or Melica's or Calamagrostis. The flowers add extra interest as this dioecious species has more ornate male flowers, but the combination of male and female plants is necessary for seed development. When conditions are right the volunteer seedlings are abundant and easy to transplant.

**Where I have used this plant:** In rain garden patches underneath gutter downspouts, in shady mixed beds on the north side of my house and underneath a large oak.

**Extra tidbit:** my only complaint with this plant is how it responds to wind. It gets quite vertical and can be 3-4 feet tall in my narrow north facing side yard. But the valley winds blow through

like a wind tunnel and knocks the top growth over. Fortunately, it takes judicious (balancing) pruning well and starts new growth again with a deep soaking even in the depths of summer.