

Native Plants Suggested for School Gardens in Orange County

Planning a native garden is an exciting time for students (and birds and butterflies) waiting for California native plants! Please view this list as a starting point in your garden's design.

The California native plants listed below are categorized by size and sun/shade requirements. As your garden matures and your understanding of native plants increases, you might expand the list of plant species you choose. This list of garden-proven natives will maximize chances for success while minimizing the effort required.

The list excludes some difficult-to-grow plants and native plants that are not available in our native nurseries.

Some plants which may not be a good fit for school gardens include the rhizomatous Matilija Poppy (*Romneya coulteri*), and plants that will not stand up to rough physical treatment like succulent Live-forevers (*Dudleya* sp.). We have left out the thorny California Wild Rose (*Rosa californica*), which is difficult to weed around, and physically dangerous plants, such as Foothill Yucca (*Hesperoyucca whipplei*) with its sharp leaf tips.

Additionally, we have omitted plants that can be toxic. For example, Blue Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*), is a lovely small tree with excellent habitat value, but its leaves and unripe berries can be poisonous when eaten, especially if uncooked.

Plants with an Asterisk (*) are highly recommended. Other plants that have particular traits are mentioned afterward with comments such as "Dormant season" for plants that die back to the still living roots for a season. When considering plants for your garden, be sure to look up the plants in trusted and local resources to understand their eventual size, shape and tolerances. See www.calscape.org for more information.

PLANT LIST

Ground Covers (Sun—under 2 foot tall)

Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*). Extra water helps.

*California Sage hybrids (*Artemesia* 'Montara' or *Artemesia* 'Canyon Gray').

*Dwarf Coyote Brush (*Baccharis pilularis* 'Pigeon Pt.' or B. 'Twin Peaks').

*Anchor Bay Dwarf Lilac (*Ceanothus gloriosus* 'Anchor Bay').

*Carmel Creeper California Lilac (*Ceanothus griseus horizontalis* 'Carmel Creeper,' and C. 'Yankee Point').

*California Fuchsia (*Epilobium canum*). Loves sun.

*Seaside Daisy (*Erigeron glauca*) Selections include (*Erigeron* 'Bountiful,' E. 'Sea Breeze').

*California Buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) Low-growing selections such as (*Eriogonum* 'Warriner Lytle,' E. 'Bruce Dickenson').

*Woodland Strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*). Likes sun near coast.

*Hybrid Sage (*Salvia* species) Low-growing selections include (*Salvia* 'Dara's Choice,' S. 'Bee's Bliss,' and S. 'Mrs. Beard').

*Purple Sage (*Salvia leucophylla*). Low-growing selections include (S. 'Pt. Sal').

*Black Sage (*Salvia mellifera*). Low-growing selections include (*Salvia mellifera* 'Skylark,' and S. *mellifera* 'Terra Seca').

Small Shrubs and Perennials (Sun)

- *Pacific Mist Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* 'Pacific Mist').
- *John Dourley Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* 'John Dourley').
- *Narrow-leaf Milkweed (*Asclepius fascicularis*). Dormant in fall and early winter.
- Red Bush and Sticky Monkeyflower (*Diplacus puniceus* and *D. aurantiacus*). Short-lived.
- *Scarlet Buckwheat (*Eriogonum grande* var. *rubescens*, and *E.* 'Dana Point').
- Foothill Penstemon (*Penstemon heterophyllus*). Can be short-lived in clay soils.
- *Purple Sage (*Salvia leucophylla*) Low-growing selection includes (*S.* 'Amethyst Bluff').
- *Goldenrod (*Solidago velutina*). Can also be used in shade in inland gardens.
- *Lilac Verbena (*Verbena lilacina*).

Small Shrubs and Perennials (Shade)

- Island Alum Root (*Heuchera maxima*). Can be short-lived.
- *Douglas Iris (*Iris douglasiana*). Likes sun near coast.
- *Hooker's Evening Primrose (*Oenothera elata*). Dormant in fall (seeds easily).
- *Hummingbird Sage (*Salvia spathacea*). Extra water can help to start.
- Meadow Rue (*Thalictrum fendleri* var. *polycarpum*). Likes extra water to start.
- *Catalina Perfume, Evergreen Currant (*Ribes viburnifolium*). Likes sun near coast.

Medium Shrubs (Sun)

- *Indian Mallow (*Abutilon palmeri*).
- Howard McMinn Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos densiflora* 'Howard McMinn'). Limit summer water.
- Sunset Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* 'Sunset') Limit summer water.
- *California Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*).
- *Coyote Brush (*Baccharis pilularis*).
- Woollyleaf Ceanothus (*Ceanothus tomentosus*).
- California Lilac cultivars (*Ceanothus rigida* 'Snowball,' *C.* 'Concha,' *C.* 'Joyce Coulter,' and *C.* 'Dark Star').
- *Bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*). Very good once started. Some have trouble getting it started.
- *California Bush Sunflower (*Encelia californica*).
- *California Buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*). Good anywhere it fits but great on slopes.
- *Ashy-leaf Buckwheat (*Eriogonum cinereum*) Low rounded habit and long bloom season.
- *Island Snapdragon (*Gambelia speciosa*) Also cultivars including (*Gambelia* 'Firecracker' and *G.* 'Bocarosa').
- *Menzies' Goldenbush (*Isocoma menziesii*). Loves summer heat.
- *White Sage (*Salvia apiana*). Flower stalks can get tall.
- *Cleveland Sage (*Salvia clevelandii*) and selections such as ('Allen Chickering,' 'Winifred Gilman,' and 'Poza Blue'). Showy flowers and fragrant foliage.
- *Black Sage (*Salvia mellifera*).

Medium Shrubs (Shade)

Howard McMinn Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* 'Howard McMinn'). Light shade. Limit summer water.

*California Coffeeberry (*Frangula californica*). Many selections such as ('Little Sur,' 'Eve Case,' and 'Mound San Bruno'). Likes sun near coast.

*California Mock Orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*).
Golden Currant (*Ribes aureum* var. *gracillimum*).

Large Shrubs/Small Trees (Sun)

*California Lilac (*Ceanothus* 'Ray Hartman,' C. 'Frosty Blue,' and C. 'Snow Flurry').

Island Bush Poppy (*Dendromecon harfordii*). Long flower season, but can be finicky.

*Saint Catherine's Lace (*Eriogonum giganteum*).

*Laurel Sumac (*Malosma laurina*). Can get very tall and wide. Can be pruned.

*Hollyleaf Cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*). Can be trimmed to stay in the medium height range.

*Lemonadeberry (*Rhus integrifolia*). Very dependable, can be sheared or grown as large shrub.

*Sugar Bush (*Rhus ovata*). Shiny dark green leaves. Slower growth than Lemonadeberry.

Medium Trees (Sun)

*Western Redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*). Deciduous, often multi-trunk form.

*Mountain Mahogany (*Cercocarpus betuloides*). Evergreen, somewhat columnar.

*Desert Willow (*Chilopsis linearis*). Loves extra water but does not require it.

*Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*). Will need special pruning to become a tree over time.

*California Walnut (*Juglans californica*). Deciduous. Bears small walnuts.

Santa Cruz Island Ironwood (*Lyonothamnus floribundus* ssp. *asplenifolius*). Evergreen.

*Scrub Oak (*Quercus berberidifolia*). Can be pruned to show off branching form.

Large Trees (Sun)

*Tecate Cypress (*Hesperocyparis forbesii*). Evergreen.

*Torrey Pine (*Pinus torreyana*). Can get very large.

*California Sycamore (*Platanus californica*). Deciduous. Can get very large.

*Coast Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia*). Evergreen. Tends to have a spreading canopy over time.

*Engelmann Oak (*Quercus englemannii*). Semi-deciduous.

*Valley Oak (*Quercus lobata*). Deciduous.

Grasses and Grass-like Plants

*Purple three-awn (*Aristida purpurea*). Seeds prolifically.

*Sedge species (*Carex pansa*, *C. praegracillis*). Spreads by rhizomatous roots.

*California Fescue (*Festuca californica*). Grey green leaves. Neat appearance.

*Spreading Rush, Wire Grass (*Juncus patens*). Spreads slowly.

*Canyon Prince Wild Rye (*Leymus condensatus* 'Canyon Prince').

*Coast Melic Grass (*Melica imperfecta*). Found locally. Can spread by seed.

*Deergrass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*). Most widely-used grass.

- *Blue-eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*). Dormant season summer/fall. Seeds easily.
- *Alkali Dropseed (*Sporobolus airoides*).
- *Purple Needle-grass (*Stipa pulchra*). California state grass. Seeds prolifically.

Annuals

Recommended for easy germination and growth—normally planted as seed.

- *Elegant Clarkia (*Clarkia unguiculata*).
- *Farewell to Spring (*Clarkia amoena*).
- *Chinese Houses (*Collinsia heterophylla*). Can take a bit of shade.
- *California Poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*). A perennial plant used as an annual.
- *Blue Globe Gilia (*Gilia capitata*).
- *Tidy Tips (*Layia platyglossa*).
- *Lupines (*Lupinus succulentus*, *Lupinus densiflorus*, and other *L. species*).
- *Baby Blue-eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*).
- *California Bluebells (*Phacelia campanularia*).
- *Tansy Leaved Phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*).
- *California Bee Plant (*Scrophularia californica*). A perennial plant used as an annual.