

# GARDENING GUIDE for Sacramento

based on [CNPS](#), and [Homegrown Habitat](#)  
More and more Californians are choosing native plants for their gardens. [SacValleyCNPS.org/HH](#)

**Native plants have a beauty unique to California, are climate-conscious, and provide invaluable habitat.**

Join the chorus of Californians bringing our state's natural splendor to their backyards, balconies, containers, and beyond. Why?

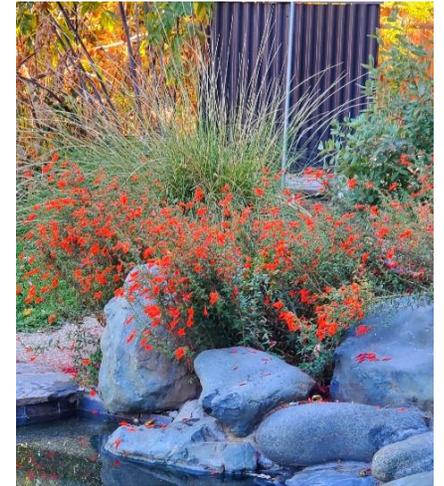
- Easy care: basic maintenance will keep gardens hassle-free
- Drought tolerance: many of California's native plants need little water to thrive.
- Habitat power: attract & feeds butterflies, birds, bees, and other wildlife.
- Climate adapted, Climate resilient, and contributes to Biodiversity.

## Why plant in the fall?

While planting native plants at other times of the year can be successful, it requires extra attention to keep plants hydrated during hot periods by more frequent watering (until plant establishment) and by adding mulch outside the root ball of the plant. Planting in the fall is beneficial for your native plants, especially the trees and shrubs. Here's the top 2 reasons:

**Stronger Root Systems** Perhaps the most important benefit to planting in the fall is that it gives your plants more time to develop strong root systems before the intense heat of the summer. While above ground your native trees, shrubs, and perennials may be going dormant, below ground they will continue to put out roots until the ground freezes. Applying a layer of mulch in the fall can also help keep the ground warm longer, giving roots a little extra time to get established.

**Less Stress on Your Plants** The cooler nights and (hopefully) rainfall of autumn are less stressful for your plants and more beneficial for new root growth. Once you plant remember to water until Mother Nature takes over for the winter. If it is a dry winter, it is advisable to irrigate your native plants.



*California Fuchsia w/ Deer Grass*

## Know Before You Grow

- **Light conditions:** Observe sun and shade on your site throughout the day. Keep in mind, the sun is at its highest angle during summer and lowest during winter, so exposure will vary across seasons. And as plants grow, they'll cast their own shade, changing the sun-shade exposure. Tip: Spend a full day taking photos of your garden every hour, so you can track how the sun moves and how much direct sunlight your space has.
- **Wet spots:** Identify low points (if any) where water might accumulate, perfect for plants that benefit from extra water (Elderberry, Button Willow).
- **Grey water: A great way to add water to your garden** is to reuse your home's grey water. These include, Rain Gardens which capture roof water and distribute from there; Solar Shower, which uses no energy; an Outdoor Shower, which is attached to your home's water and power but distributes water to your garden.
- **Irrigation:** Watering is one of the most important factors in the health and longevity of a California native plant landscape. Inappropriate watering is the primary reason California native plant gardens fail, and can cause quite a bit of frustration for those who are unaware. Read this page on the state CNPS webpage: <https://www.cnps.org/gardening/prepping-and-planting/watering>
- **Zones:** Based on your observations, divide your site into smaller zones of like conditions.
- **Involvement:** How much time and energy are you willing to spend taking care of your plants? Some plants don't need as much attention as others, but all plants require some basic maintenance! Remember that you can start by transitioning your yard one area at a time. And to enrich your soil, you can top dress with organic mulch. And you can pile wood chips on next year's project areas.
- **Cost:** What is your budget for the project? Adjustments to plant sizes/plant quantities or a phased approach to the design can help keep costs manageable. Ask your Water District if they have any incentives for you to take out a lawn!

## Design Tips

- Plant fewer species in higher quantities for a more modern and calming effect. This is also beneficial for wildlife.
- Plant in drifts and swaths of like plants, rather than a sprinkling of different plant species, for a simple but powerful visual effect.
- Try to plant in groups of odd numbers.
- Give plants room to grow into their mature dimensions! Always note the mature sizes on the container labels and space plants accordingly. When native annuals are seeded around shrubs and trees that will take time to fill out, they will add color, interest and be habitat for wildlife.
- Give structure to your yard with evergreen shrubs that will remain green year-round and that will act as a backdrop to more colorful perennials and annuals.
- Select a larger species, such as a Manzanita or Oak, as a single specimen for the landscape. Give it space so that it can grow to its full, mature form.
- When planting trees or large shrubs, there will be a lot of space between plantings. So, bonus! these open areas are a great place to plant annual seeds or plants.

## Plant Speak

**Height and Width:** How big will your plant grow? Be mindful to leave space for growth at maturity to avoid overcrowding. It often takes about 3 years or more for plants to reach their maximum size.

### Establishment Period

Native plants are not fully established until the second or third summer. Remember, it takes a few years for roots to fully develop. If plants are properly sited, you may not need to water much after they are established.

Native plants that are critical to the food web and necessary for many wildlife species to complete their life cycle.			Water Needs <u>ONCE ESTABLISHED</u> VL= Very low- 1 time month Some=2-3 times month High = 1-2 times weekly							Sun Needs Full = 6+ hours day Part = 3-4 hours day Shade = less than 3 hours and no afternoon sun		
Botanical Name	Common Name	Bloom	Height	VL	Some	High	Sun	Part Sun	Shade	E or D	Who Uses? Birds, Butterflies, Native Bees, Honey Bees, Hummingbirds? How many species of butterfly or moth caterpillar use it as a host?	
<b>TREES</b>												
<i>Ceanothus 'Ray Hartman'</i>	Ceanothus 'Ray Hartman'	May-Jun	15-30'		X		X	X		E	Native and Honey Bees love this plant!	
<i>Cercis occidentalis</i>	Western Redbud	Feb-Apr	15-25'	X	X	X	X	X	X	D	Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Birds. Host: 11 likely	
<i>Quercus lobata</i>	Valley Oak	Mar-May	60-99'	X	X		X	X		D	An important food sources for birds. Host: 168 likely. Acorn flour is gluten free	
<i>Quercus wislizeni</i>	Interior Live Oak	Mar-May	30-50'	X	X		X			E	An important food sources for birds. Host: 158 likely. Acorn flour is gluten free	
<i>Sambucus nigra caerulea</i>	Blue Elderberry	Mar-Jul	15-30'		X		X	X		D	<b>Edible uses.</b> An important food sources for birds. Host: 23 likely	
<b>SHRUBS</b>												
<i>Arctostaphylos viscida</i>	Whiteleaf Manzanita	Jan-Feb	8-18'	X			X			E	Insects, Hummingbirds, Birds. Host: 56 likely	
<i>Baccharis pilularis</i>	Coyote brush	Sep-Jan	4-8'	X			X	X		E	Important for many insects. Host: 29 likely	
<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>	California buckwheat	Apr-Sep	3-4'	X	X		X	X		E	Bees, Butterflies. HOST: 47 likely	

<i>Frangula tomentella</i>	Hoary coffeeberry	Jun-Aug	6-10'	X	X		X	X		E	Birds, Bees. Host: 33 likely
<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>	Toyon	Jun-Aug	8-15'	X			X	X	X	E	Bees, Birds, Butterflies. Host: 8 likely
<i>Lupinus albifrons</i>	Silver Bush Lupine	Apr-Jul	3-5'	X			X	X		E	Bumblebees. Host: 56 likely
<i>Rhamnus ilicifolia</i>	Holly-leaf Redberry	Apr-Jun	5-15'	X	X		X	X		E	Birds. Butterflies & moths hosted: 19 likely
<i>Rosa californica</i>	California Wildrose	May-Jul	8'	X	X			X	X	D	Bees. Butterflies. Host: 72 likely. <b>Spreads easily.</b>
<b>ANNUALS</b>											
<i>Claytonia perfoliata</i>	Indian Lettuce (Miner)	Feb-May	8-12"		X			X	X	D	<b>Entire plant is edible. Great as salad!</b> Birds, Bees. Host: 3 likely
<i>Eriogonum roseum</i>	Wand Buckwheat	May-Sep	1-2'	X			X	X		D	Native bees, Butterflies. Host: 46 likely
<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	Sunflower	Jun-Aug	5-10'		X		X			D	Birds, Bees, Butterflies. Host 37 likely. <b>+ 7 Specialist bees.</b>
<i>Lupinus benthamii</i>	Spider Lupine	Mar-Jun	.7-2'		X	X	X	X		D	numerous insects. Moths, Butterflies, host: 51 likely
<i>Phacelia tanacetifolia</i>	Tansy (Lacey) Phacelia	Mar-May	2-3 ½'		X		X	X		D	Bees, Butterflies. Host: 9 likely. <b>Reseeds easily. + 15 Specialist Bees</b>
<b>PERENNIALS</b>											
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Common Yarrow	Apr-Aug	1-3'		X			X	X	E	Carnivorous insects, Butterflies, Bees. Host: 5 caterpillars
<i>Asclepias fascicularis</i>	Narrowleaf Milkweed	Jun-Sep	2-3'		X		X	X		D	Butterflies. Sole host family for Monarch butterflies
<i>Diplacus aurantiacus</i>	Sticky Monkeyflower	Mar-Aug	3-5'	X	X		X	X		E	Bees, Birds, Butterflies. Host: 8 likely. <b>+ 2 specialist bees</b>
<i>Epilobium canum</i>	California fuchsia	Aug-Oct	1-1 ½'		X		X	X		D	Hummingbirds. Butterflies, moths host: 15 likely
<i>Eschscholzia californica</i> (Annual to Perennial)	California Poppy	Feb-Sep	2'	X	X		X	X		D	Birds, Bees, Butterflies. Host: 7 likely
<i>Grindelia camporum</i>	Great Valley Gum Plant	Apr-Oct	2-4'	X	X		X			D	Butterflies, Bees. Host: 11 likely. <b>+ 3 Specialist bees.</b>
<i>Monardella villosa</i>	Coyote Mint	Jun-Aug	1-2'	X	X		X	X		D	Leaves make tea. Butterflies. Host: 9 likely
<i>Oenothera elata hookeri</i>	Evening Primrose	Jun-Sep	3-6'		X		X	X		D	Goldfinches loves their seeds. Host: 15 likely
<i>Penstemon heterophyllus</i>	Foothill Penstemon	May-Jun	1-3'		X			X		E	Hummingbirds, Birds, Bees, Butterflies. Host: 17 likely; <b>+ 6 Specialist Bees</b>
<i>Phacelia imbricata</i>	Pine Bee Flower	Feb-Apr	12-14"	X	X		X			D	Bees, Butterflies. Host: 9 likely. <b>Reseeds easily. + 15 Specialist Bees</b>
<b>GROUNDCOVERS</b>											
<i>Epilobium canum</i>	California Fuchsia	Jun-Oct	6-12"		X		X	X		SD	Hummingbirds, Birds, Bees, Butterflies. Host: 17 likely
<i>Eriogonum Theodore Payne</i>	T.P. California Buckwheat	Jun-Aug	6-12"	X	X		X	X		E	Bees
<i>Phyla nodiflora</i>	Lippia	May-Aug	2-4"		X			X		D	Bees love this! Host: 2
<b>VINES</b>											
<i>Aristolochia californica</i>	Dutchman's Pipe	Jan-Apr	10-40'	X	X		X	X		D	Sole host for Pipevine Swallowtail butterfly
<i>Lonicera hispidula</i>	Pink Honeysuckle	May-Jul	8-20'		X			X		D	Hummingbirds, Birds, Butterflies. Host: 24 likely
<i>Lonicera interrupta</i>	Chaparral Honeysuckle	Apr-Aug	8-20'	X	X			X		D	Hummingbirds, Birds, Butterflies. Host: 24 likely
<i>Vitis Roger's Red</i>	Roger's Red Grape	May-Jun	15-30'	X	X		X	X		D	Birds, Bees. Host: 41 possible
<b>GRASSES</b>											
<i>Carex tumulicola</i>	Foothill Sedge	Apr-Jul	2'		X		X	X	X	E	Butterflies. Host: 7 likely
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Common Rush	Jun-Aug	18-24"		X	X	X	X		E	Butterflies. Host: 5 likely
<i>Melica torreyana</i>	Torrey's Melicgrass	Mar-Jun	1-3'		X				X	D	Butterflies. Host: 1 likely
<i>Muhlenbergia rigens</i>	Deer Grass	May-Jun	4-5'	X	X		X	X		E	Birds, Butterflies. Host: 1 likely