

NATIVE PLANTS ATTRACT BENEFICIAL INSECTS

Poster designed and information compiled by:
Heather Kohlmeister in 2025 for use by CNPS-Sac Valley Chapter

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Q: WHO EATS APHIDS?
A: BENEFICIAL INSECTS!

Here are just a few of our
beneficial insects:

Q: WHO EATS
THE MOST
APHIDS?

Lacewings



Ladybugs



Hoverflies



A: LARVAE EAT
THE MOST IN
ORDER TO GROW!

These
California
native plants
ATTRACT
Lacewings,
Ladybugs &
Hoverflies

California Aster
*Symphyotrichum
chilense*



Buckwheat Species
Eriogonum species



Wild Lilac
*Ceanothus
species*



Poster design by Heather Kohlmeister 2025 for:



CALIFORNIA NATIVE
PLANT SOCIETY
Sacramento Valley Chapter

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Native Plants

California Aster (*Symphyotrichum chilense*)

The California Aster is a type of perennial herb that is small and grows low to the ground. It is a very useful plant for pollinators of all sizes. Butterflies and moths are attracted to the California Aster's nectar, and it is a host plant for several species of both insects, as well. Birds eat the seeds after blooming and it can be useful for meadow restoration and erosion control. California Aster will bloom in the summer through fall months with its little happy flower in shades of lavender, blue and yellow and is dormant during the winter months.



Interested in adding California Aster to your garden?

California Aster is an easy plant to grow with no pest issues. Transplant it in loamy clay soil and full or partial sun exposure. It does well in moist soil, but is also drought-adapted and can tolerate receiving little to no supplemental summer water once adapted. It grows by rhizomes and spreads easily. You can cut it back to the ground in late fall or early winter, and deadheading when in bloom will encourage more flowers. It is also often left to go to seed in wildlife gardens with new growth appearing in late winter.

https://plants.usda.gov/DocumentLibrary/factsheet/pdf/fs_sych4.pdf

[https://calscape.org/Symphyotrichum-chilense-\(California-Aster\)](https://calscape.org/Symphyotrichum-chilense-(California-Aster))

Buckwheat Species (*Eriogonum* species)

Buckwheat plant species are perennial and can range greatly in size from small herb to bushy shrubs. They are wonderful for pollinators and beneficial insects as they attract flies, parasitic wasps, lacewings and ladybugs. In general they have basal leaves as well as a few leaves along the stem, which are usually narrow and woolly. The flower cluster has long, straight branches which may be hairless to woolly and have flower clusters and sometimes small leaves at the nodes. The flowers are usually white and cream to light pink and bloom through summer.



Interested in adding Buckwheat Species to your garden?

Buckwheat Species can brighten up your ornamental or landscape garden and provide important food sources for birds, bees, butterflies, and other pollinators spring thru fall. All thrive in full sun and fast-draining, sandy or loamy soil. Once established, little to no supplemental water is needed, though appearance is more attractive with occasional summer irrigation. You can leave flower heads to dry on the stem, or cut some of them back, hang them upside down for later use in dried flower, foliage, and ornamental grass arrangements.

[https://calscape.org/Eriogonum-wrightii-\(Bastardsage\)](https://calscape.org/Eriogonum-wrightii-(Bastardsage))

<https://ucanr.edu/site/uc-master-gardener-program-sonoma-county/erigonum-buckwheat>

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Native Plants (continued)

Wild Lilac (Ceanothus species)

Wild Lilac species are evergreen shrubs that can grow tall and flower abundantly in spring. They may vary in appearance due to their wide distribution and easy hybridizations with similar species. Wild Lilacs attract butterflies, parasitic wasps, and bees that love its dense bunches of tiny intensely fragrant flowers that range from white to blue or lavender and sometimes pink. Wild Lilacs support many insects and are known to host at least 9 species of butterfly and moth.



Interested in adding Wild Lilac Species to your garden?

You can find various species of Wild Lilac throughout the region and they are very useful as hedges and erosion control. They are tough and drought-adapted and take full sun. They are adaptable to different types of soil so long as it is well-draining soil, and fertilizing is not normally recommended. Ceanothus plants are better left fending for themselves since several members of the genus can form a symbiotic relationship with soil microbes and fungi, forming root nodules that fix nitrogen the plant can use.

<https://ucanr.edu/site/uc-master-gardener-program-sonoma-county/ceanothus-wild-lilac>

[https://calscape.org/Ceanothus-cuneatus-\(Buck-Brush\)](https://calscape.org/Ceanothus-cuneatus-(Buck-Brush))

Beneficial Insects

Planting native plants supports native habitats, which provide food, shelter, and refuge from pesticides for many beneficial insects that can help keep pests that attack your garden at bay. These beneficial insects are predators that hunt and eat aphids, and sometimes also rely on pollen or nectar during their development or when other food is scarce. Creating gardens that are hospitable to beneficial insects is a type of biological control helping to manage pest insects, mites and their damage.

<https://ucanr.edu/sites/default/files/2020-04/323624.pdf>

<https://ucanr.edu/site/small-and-organic-farm-advisor/beneficial-insects>

<https://www.beriverfriendly.net/beneficial-insects/>

<https://ipm.ucanr.edu/home-and-landscape/biological-control-and-natural-enemies-of-invertebrates/#gsc.tab=0>

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Beneficial Insects (continued)



Lacewing larvae prey on aphids, leafhoppers, mites, psyllids, whiteflies and the eggs of insects, too.

<https://ipm.ucanr.edu/natural-enemies/green-lacewings/#gsc.tab=0>



Ladybugs, adults and larvae, help rid your garden of aphids. They are hungry predators that can feed ravenously on aphids that may bother or damage your garden.

<https://ipm.ucanr.edu/QT/ladybeetlescard.html>



Hoverflies, also known as Syrphid flies, prey on aphids, young cabbage worms, and mealybugs.

<https://ipm.ucanr.edu/natural-enemies/syrphids/#gsc.tab=0>