

50 GREAT PLANTS FOR CENTRAL VALLEY GARDENS

Are you baffled when you visit a nursery or plant sale, unsure which plant to choose? Have you bought plants and watched them wither and die in your home landscape because they were just not suited to your garden conditions? Don't despair—help is on the way for Central Valley gardeners!

The horticultural staff of the UC Davis Arboretum have identified 50 tough, reliable plants that have been tested in the Arboretum, are easy to grow, don't need a lot of water, have few problems with pests or diseases, and have outstanding qualities in the garden. Many of them are California native plants and/or support native birds and insects. We are pleased to recommend these Arboretum All-Stars, and over the course of the year we will introduce several new ways for you to learn about these great plants.

SIGNS IN THE GARDENS

When you visit the Arboretum demonstration gardens, you will see a series of beautiful, brightly-colored signs (right) identifying the Arboretum All-Stars, each with a photo of the plant in bloom, a list of its outstanding features, and information about how to grow it. Also look for metal plant labels with the All-Star logo at the Arboretum Terrace and the Mary Wattis Brown Garden.

SEARCHABLE DATABASE

Look for the new Central Valley Gardening section on the Arboretum's website (arboretum.ucdavis.edu/AllStars). There you will find a searchable database of the All-Star plants, with color images and information on the plant and its requirements. The easy search feature allows you to look for plants that meet the criteria you specify—for example, plants that grow in shade, or that have white flowers in June, or that attract hummingbirds.

PUBLICATIONS

You can download and print out information on water-saving gardens, wildlife gardening, growing



Cut leaf lilac
Syringa x laciniata

- Attractive, lacy foliage
- More drought tolerant and disease resistant than other lilacs
- Fragrant flowers

Prune lilacs of bright lavender flowers attracts beneficial insects in the spring.

Grow it!

PLANT TYPE	deciduous shrub
HEIGHT	5-8 ft.
WIDTH	4-8 ft.
BLOOM SEASON	March-April
PLACEMENT	full sun or part shade
WATER NEEDS	deep watering every one to two weeks
PRUNING NEEDS	little to none; prune to shape
NATIVE TO	China

Available for Purchase at UC Davis Arboretum Plant Sales
See our website for more information: <http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu>
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California native plants, and other topics at the Arboretum website. Each article includes descriptions and color photographs of recommended All-Star plants.

PLANT SALES

Many of the All-Star plants will be for sale at the Plant Faire on Oct. 1, and we plan to have most of them available by next spring. Look for the All-Star symbol on the plant tag. Arboretum volunteers have planted a beautiful demonstration garden at the Orchard Park Nursery, featuring many All-Star plants, and all the sales assistants at the Plant Faire will be able to direct you to the All-Stars and help you choose the very best plants for your garden conditions.

Recommended for Central Valley Gardens

- Adapted to Central Valley conditions
- Tested in the UC Davis Arboretum
- Easy to grow
- Attractive for most of the year
- Drought tolerant
- Attractive to birds, butterflies, or beneficial insects

Learn More About Arboretum All-Stars

- Look for All-Star information signs in the Ruth Storer Garden, White Flower Garden, Mary Wattis Brown Garden, and Arboretum Terrace Garden.
- Find searchable database and articles to download at the Arboretum website, arboretum.ucdavis.edu/AllStars.
- Pick up All-Star information sheets at the Terrace and Arboretum Headquarters.
- Visit the demonstration plantings at the Arboretum Nursery at Orchard Park.
- Shop for All-Stars at Arboretum plant sales.

ARBORETUM All Stars

50 GREAT PLANTS FOR CENTRAL VALLEY GARDENS

SERPENTINE COLUMBINE

Aquilegia eximia

This native perennial is a striking addition to a shady garden. Much larger than the common columbine, it may reach 4-5 feet tall. The large, boxy red and yellow flowers are attractive to hummingbirds.

VINE HILL MANZANITA

Arctostaphylos densiflora 'Howard McMinn'
Beautiful dark red, smooth bark, glossy green leaves, and charming clusters of bell-shaped, pinkish-white flowers in winter add year-round interest to this evergreen native shrub. It is one of the few manzanitas that will tolerate heavy garden soils.

OREGON GRAPE

Berberis aquifolium 'Compacta'

This tough, adaptable, evergreen native shrub will grow in full sun, part shade, or full shade. The attractive, edible, blue-black fruits resemble grapes and can be used to make preserves.

BLUE GRAMA GRASS

Bouteloua gracilis

This warm season grass is a tidy accent plant for the perennial border. It has a neat, upright form and soft texture with unusual reddish flowers in summer that bleach to white over the season. It retains its attractive shape even when dormant.

BERKELEY SEDGE

Carex tumulicola

This low, mounding, grass-like native sedge is a good ground cover and works well in containers. Its shiny dark green leaves have a lush appearance with little water. It is easy to grow and can be used to create a nice shady meadow.

RAY HARTMAN CALIFORNIA LILAC

Ceanothus 'Ray Hartman'

Early spring brings a spectacular flush of bright blue, honey-scented flowers to this evergreen native shrub. One of the best ceanothus for garden use, it can tolerate summer irrigation and can be trained as a small tree. Its flowers are a nectar source for beneficial insects.

SNOW-IN-SUMMER

Cerastium tomentosum

Silvery foliage and profuse white flowers give a cool, fresh look to hot Central Valley gardens. This vigorous, low-growing groundcover is adaptable--it will grow in sun or part shade, and thrives with little water or regular garden irrigation.

WESTERN REDBUD

Cercis occidentalis

This graceful, small multi-trunked tree or large shrub produces a spectacular cloud of magenta-pink blossoms in early spring, followed by attractive dark seed pods. Native to our nearby foothills, it thrives with minimal water and provides nectar for native pollinators.

ISLAND MOUNTAIN MAHOGANY

Cercocarpus betuloides var. *blancheae*

This fast-growing tree will form an upright evergreen screen in full sun and dry soil. The attractive silvery bark contrasts nicely with the light and dark green foliage.

CHINESE FRINGE TREE

Chionanthus retusus

Fragrant, pure white flowers in lacy clusters, deep yellow fall color, and attractive grooved or peeling bark make this mid-sized tree a good choice for a patio or other prominent site. It requires minimal pruning and has no known diseases.

WASHINGTON HAWTHORN

Crataegus phaenopyrum

This mid-sized deciduous tree offers many seasons of interest with profuse white spring flowers, ornamental fruit clusters, and brilliant orange, scarlet, or purplish foliage in fall. Its graceful open limb structure makes it an attractive patio specimen.

CHILEAN LILY-OF-THE-VALLEY TREE

Crinodendron patagua

Masses of delicate white bell-shaped flowers cover this small tree in spring. It makes a good screen or patio tree with its upright form and narrow profile, and is very drought tolerant.

WINTER DAPHNE

Daphne odora 'Aureomarginata'

This evergreen shrub stands out in the winter garden with fragrant pink and white flowers. The shiny variegated leaves are attractive year-round. This variety is hardier and easier to grow and requires less maintenance than the species.

CALIFORNIA FUCHSIA

Epilobium canum

Spreading ground cover, somewhat invasive, good for low water landscapes. Beautiful red flowers produced profusely, attract hummingbirds.



Oregon grape (*Berberis aquifolium* 'Compacta') has bright yellow flowers in early spring and beautiful shiny blue-black fruit.

WAYNE RODERICK SEASIDE DAISY

Erigeron 'Wayne Roderick'

The native perennial sports cheerful lavender flowers over a long bloom season, providing food for butterflies and beneficial insects in spring, summer, and into the fall.

SANTA BARBARA DAISY

Erigeron karvinskianus

This tough, adaptable perennial blooms over a long period with dainty, 3/4 in. pinkish-white flowers. Good in containers or for trailing over a wall, it spreads by seed in the garden.

LENTEN ROSE

Helleborus x hybridus

Winter blooming perennial adds color in shady areas with pink, maroon or white to green tinted flowers. Naturalizes in suitable climates.

CORAL YUCCA

Hesperaloe parviflora

This striking plant adds a strong architectural note to the garden with its spiky leaves and long stalks of dark coral-pink flowers. It is especially heat and drought tolerant and can take full sun, even reflected heat. The flowers are attractive to hummingbirds.

TOYON

Heteromeles arbutifolia

This evergreen native shrub has attractive dark green leaves, large sprays of fragrant white flowers in spring, and profuse clusters of brilliant red berries all winter. The berries are favorites of migrating cedar waxwings and other local birds.

ROSADA CORAL BELLS

Heuchera 'Rosada'

This tough and beautiful perennial, a hybrid of two native species, is an attractive mounding groundcover and produces a showy display of creamy pink flowers



The fruits of Washington hawthorn (*Crataegus phaenopyrum*, above left) are a favorite food for birds. The iceberg rose (*Rosa 'Iceberg,'* above right) is covered all season with clusters of pure white flowers.

on 24-36 inch stems over a long bloom period in spring. One of the best flowering plants for dry shade, it is a UC Davis introduction.

ISLAND ALUMROOT

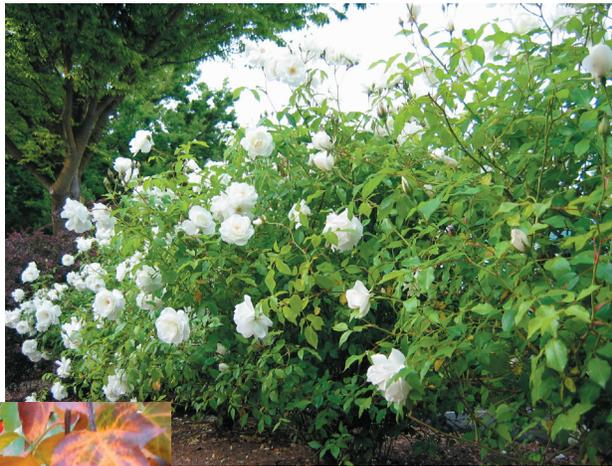
Heuchera maxima

Sprays of frothy, greenish-white flowers tower over the attractive mounding foliage of this native perennial in spring. A good casual groundcover for dry shade.

CANYON SNOW PACIFIC IRIS

Iris 'Canyon Snow'

This is the toughest hybrid of the native Pacific coast iris--it grows with virtually no maintenance and thrives in sun or dry shade. Its beautiful white flowers with yellow markings are good for cutting. The narrow leaves form an attractive, evergreen, grass-like clump.



CRAPE MYRTLE

Lagerstroemia spp.

This deciduous shrub or small tree provides year-round interest in the garden with showy summer flowers, fall color, graceful form and handsome ornamental bark in winter, and bronzy new growth in spring. Select your plant in bloom to choose from white, lavender, pink, or red flowering varieties.

GOODWIN CREEK LAVENDER

Lavandula 'Goodwin Creek Grey'

This lavender variety stands out for its silvery-gray foliage and tall spikes of fragrant, dark violet flowers. It has a long bloom season, is more resistant to heat and humidity than English lavenders, and is easier to prune back to renew when it gets woody than other lavenders.

OTTO QUAST SPANISH LAVENDER

Lavandula stoechas 'Otto Quast'

This variety is the best of the Spanish lavenders for this area, with a more compact form, larger flowers, and a darker flower color. The gray foliage is attractive all year, and the fragrant flowers can be used for sachets, perfumes, or soaps. It is a good container plant for a sunny location.

SILVER CARPET

CALIFORNIA-ASTER

Lessingia flaginifolia var. *californica* 'Silver Carpet'

This California native is an excellent groundcover or container plant; it looks good spilling over low walls or down steps. It is covered with light purple flowers in summer and the flowers attract butterflies and beneficial insects.

CENIZO

Leucophyllum frutescens

This southwestern shrub is very heat

and drought tolerant and striking in the garden, with silvery foliage and a profuse show of bell-shaped lavender flowers. It requires little pruning as a shrub but can be successful as a hedge if sheared.

JAPANESE SILVER GRASS

Miscanthus sinensis (dwarf varieties)

Many varieties of this highly ornamental grass are available, with different patterns of leaf variegation and a range of sizes. It is easy to divide and propagate, and the flowers are good for arrangements fresh or dried. The leaves turn vivid reds, oranges and yellows in fall.

MEXICAN DEERGRASS

Muhlenbergia dubia

A striking accent plant for a low-water garden, this clump-forming grass has dense tufts of light green, fine-textured leaves. It requires little maintenance other than cutting to the ground in winter.

DEERGRASS

Muhlenbergia rigens

This large-scale grass makes a good informal screen and adds structure to the garden. It produces flowering stalks up to five feet tall that remain upright through the winter. Tough and drought tolerant, it needs little maintenance.

FRUITLESS OLIVE

Olea europaea 'Swan Hill'
This slow-growing, evergreen Mediterranean tree has soft gray-green willow-like foliage, beautiful smooth gray bark, and attractively gnarled branches. It is adaptable, drought tolerant, requires little maintenance, and can be trained to a single or multiple trunks.

HYBRID TEA OLIVE

Osmanthus x fortunei
This tough evergreen shrub, good for shady spots in the garden, is notable for its very fragrant flowers over a long bloom period.

SANTA MARGARITA FOOTHILL PENSTEMON

Penstemon heterophyllus 'Margarita B.O.P.'

This semi-evergreen native perennial has showy flowers that start as yellow buds, bloom sky blue and age to purple-pink. It is easy to grow and thrives in a wide range of garden conditions.

PURPLE SPOT MOCK ORANGE

Philadelphus 'Belle Etoile'
The delicious fragrance of its white flowers make this tough evergreen shrub a good choice for the back of a perennial border.

VALLEY OAK

Quercus lobata
The signature tree of the Central Valley, this majestic oak tolerates high heat, drought, and alkaline soil. Beloved for the dramatic form of its bare branches in winter, its tender green new leaves in spring and dense shade in summer.

GOLDEN CURRANT

Ribes aureum
This deciduous native shrub has beautiful golden flowers with spicy fragrance in late winter and early spring. A good choice to plant under native oaks.

EVERGREEN CURRANT

Ribes viburnifolium
This evergreen native perennial has attractive, shiny foliage. Good shade-tolerant groundcover for use under native oaks.

GRUSS AN AACHEN FLORIBUNDA ROSE

Rosa 'Gruss an Aachen'
This rose has beautiful, showy, fragrant pink flowers in clusters followed by attractive ornamental fruits. It requires afternoon shade to protect the flowers from sunburn.



Chilean lily-of-the-valley tree (*Crinodendron patagua*) is covered with delicate white bell-shaped flowers in spring.

ICEBERG ROSE

Rosa 'Iceberg'
This classic rose is covered with clusters of white blossoms over a long bloom period in summer and fall. It is disease resistant and tolerates some shade.

GOLDEN PEARL POLYANTHA ROSE

Rosa 'Perle d'Or'
A fine shrub rose for Central Valley gardens, with showy, fragrant flowers in constant bloom from spring until frost. It has few prickles and is disease-free.

BUTTERFLY ROSE

Rosa x odoratus 'Mutabilis'
This large shrub rose has beautiful, showy, single flowers nearly all year long. The flowers emerge creamy pink and fade through tangerine orange to deep rose red.

CALIFORNIA WHITE SAGE

Salvia apiana
This large evergreen native sage has bright white foliage with a pungent scent evoking the California chaparral. Flower stalks rise three feet above the foliage in spring. It is a striking accent plant for a low-water garden.

AUTUMN SAGE

Salvia greggii and *Salvia x jamensis*
This tough, adaptable evergreen shrub produces showy red flowers from spring through fall. The foliage has a pleasant citrusy scent.

MINT BUSH SAGE

Salvia microphylla
This large, shrubby perennial has red or pink flowers in spring and fall, tolerates full sun or part shade, and is a good choice for use under native oaks. The foliage has a fruity aroma when brushed.

HUMMINGBIRD SAGE

Salvia spathacea
This tough, drought-tolerant, native evergreen perennial has striking spikes of red flowers in spring and fall. The leaves have a pleasant fruity fragrance. It is an excellent groundcover for dry shade.

GIANT FEATHER GRASS

Stipa gigantea
This dramatic large grass is an excellent garden accent, with open sprays of yellowish flowers that turn into a golden cloud above the plant and last through summer. The tall, narrow arching leaves add movement to the garden.

CUT LEAF LILAC

Syringa x laciniata
This showy deciduous shrub has attractive, lacy foliage and produces a profuse bloom of lavender-pink flowers in spring. One of the few lilacs that thrives in the Central Valley.

BUSH GERMANDER

Teucrium fruticans
This tough, drought-tolerant shrub has silvery evergreen foliage and profuse pale blue flowers over a long season. With its loose, arching branches it makes a nice low informal hedge.

GIANT CHAIN FERN

Woodwardia fimbriata
This native fern has large, showy divided fronds, looks lush in shady gardens, and can tolerate neglect once established.

ARGENTINE RAIN LILY

Zephyranthes candida
This charming little plant grows from bulbs, forming clumps of shiny, grassy leaves crowned by cheerful white tulip-shaped flowers marked with yellow. A good edging plant, it can remain undisturbed for many years.

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