Gardening with Native Plants

UC Master Gardeners of Monterey & Santa Cruz
Fall Fest October 2019

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Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties

Gardening with Beautiful Native Plants

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California is a Biodiversity Hotspot

- California is considered one of 34 Global Biodiversity Hotspots. We have a large number of plants and animals that do not occur elsewhere in the world.
- Our state has more plant species (7,000+) than any other state.
- We have 1,600 species of bees. (4,000 bee species in entire U.S.)
- Estimated 100,000 insects
- 650 bird, 220 mammal, 100 reptile, 75 amphibian, 70 freshwater fish and 100 marine fish and mammal species

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Habitat Loss and Biodiversity Initiative

- Over 75% of native habitat has been lost in California
- 300 species are Federally listed as threatened and endangered.
- The State Biodiversity Initiative was launched in 2018 to provide a roadmap and funding to protect our biodiversity.
- http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20180907-CaliforniaBiodiversityActionPlan.pdf
- Photos of local endangered species: Western Snowy Plover, Menzies' wallflower, Santa Lucia Purple Amole, long-toed salamander

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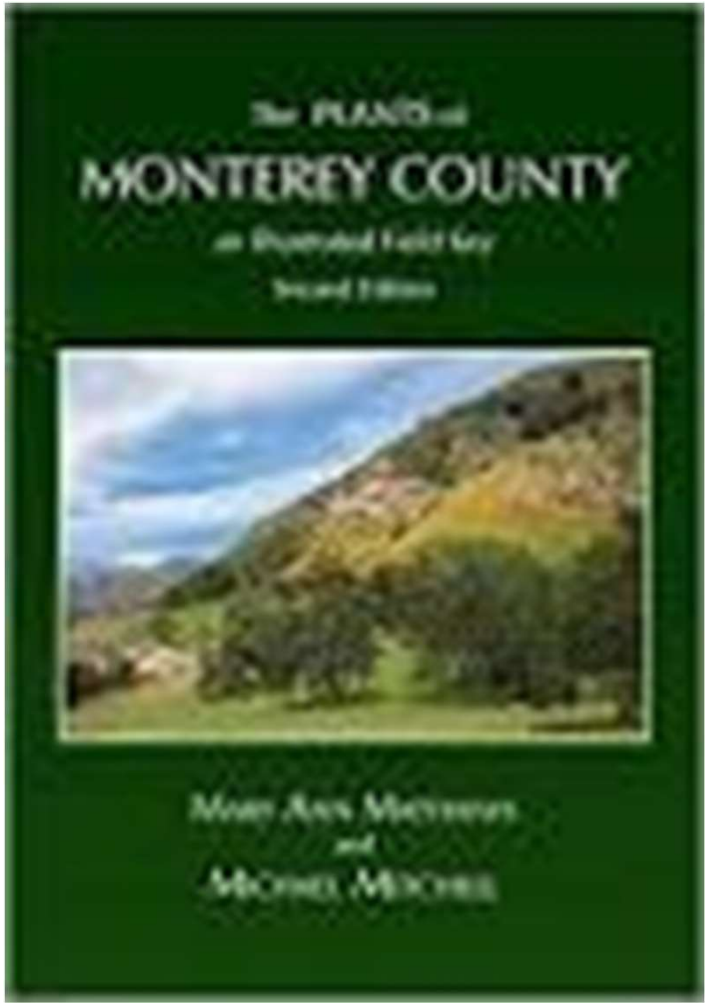
Monterey County Plants

- Large and diverse flora
- Over 1,500 native species
- Highest number - 68 of rare and endangered plants of all counties in California.



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Santa Cruz County Plants

- Santa Cruz County has over 1,000 native species. That's a lot for the second smallest county in the state. (S.F. is the smallest.)
- There are many choices for gardeners.
- Pictured: *Ribes sanguineum* var. *glutinosum* Pink-flowering currant

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Non-native and Invasive Species

- Our urban landscapes are dominated by non-native plantings.
- It's easy and simple to upgrade and replace plants.
- It helps stem the flow of invasive species into our natural areas.

Pennisetum setaceum
Purple Fountain Grass

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Many Benefits

- Adapted to our soils

- Adapted to dry summers
- Adapted to fire
- Attracts beneficial insects, pollinators and supports wildlife
- Controls erosion

Fewer Problems

- Few amendments or fertilizers needed
- Once established, little watering
- Fire rejuvenates many natives
- Native wildlife and plants are closely connected
- Extensive root systems hold soil

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Local Native Plants are Best Suited to Your Soil

- Soils vary in pH, depth, texture and chemical composition. Some of our soils are unique.
- More than 1,500 soil series are recognized in California.
- Twenty-seven types of soil have been identified on UCSC campus alone.
- Geologic events such as faulting and glaciation have influenced the mineral content of our soils.
- Combinations of parent rock, organic matter, moisture levels, salinity and topography add to the mix.
- If you are curious, you can access your soil data by entering your address at:
- https://casoilresource.lawr.ucdavis.edu/gmap/

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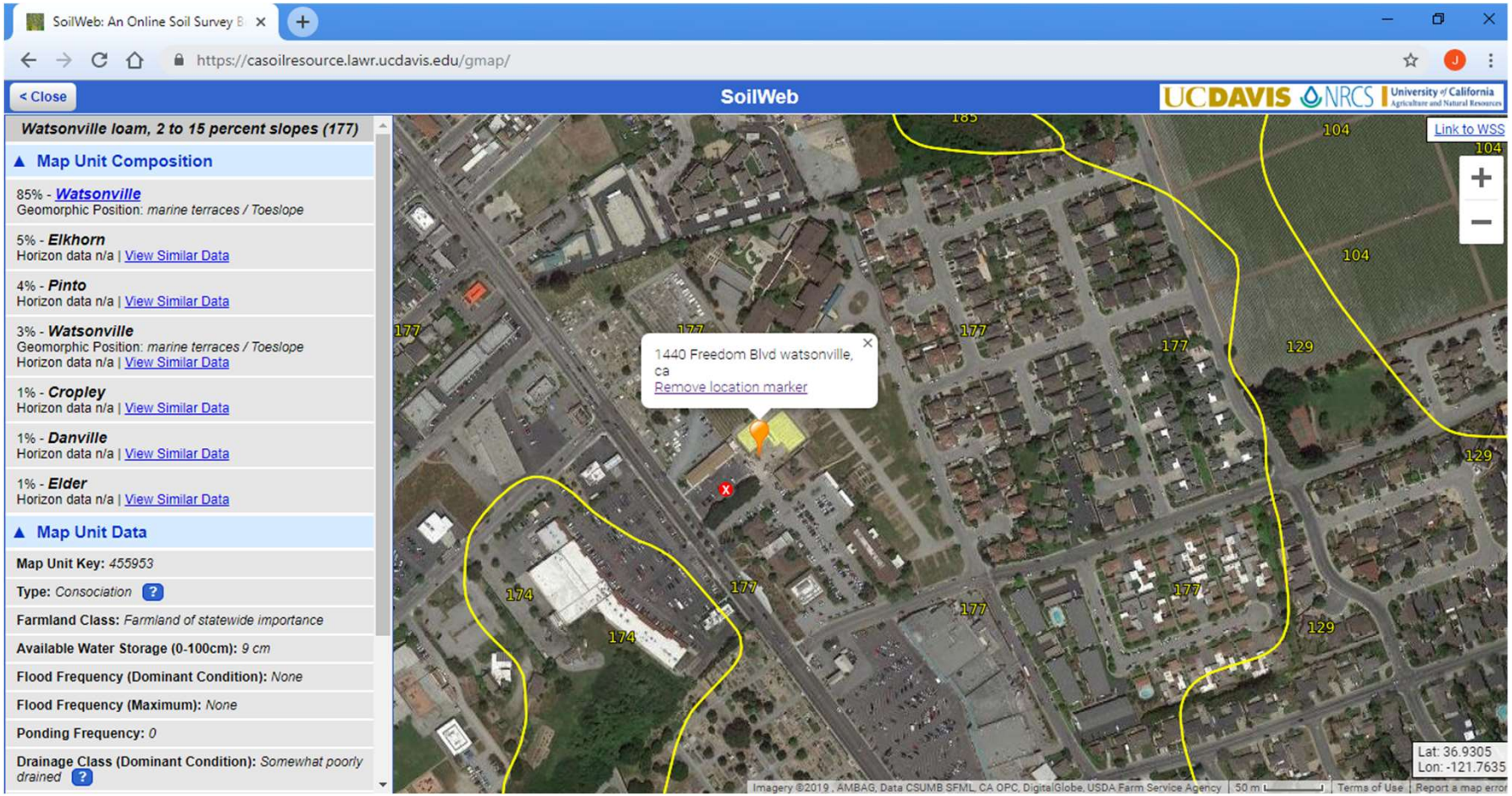
Example: Soil at UCMG Demo Garden – Watsonville Loam



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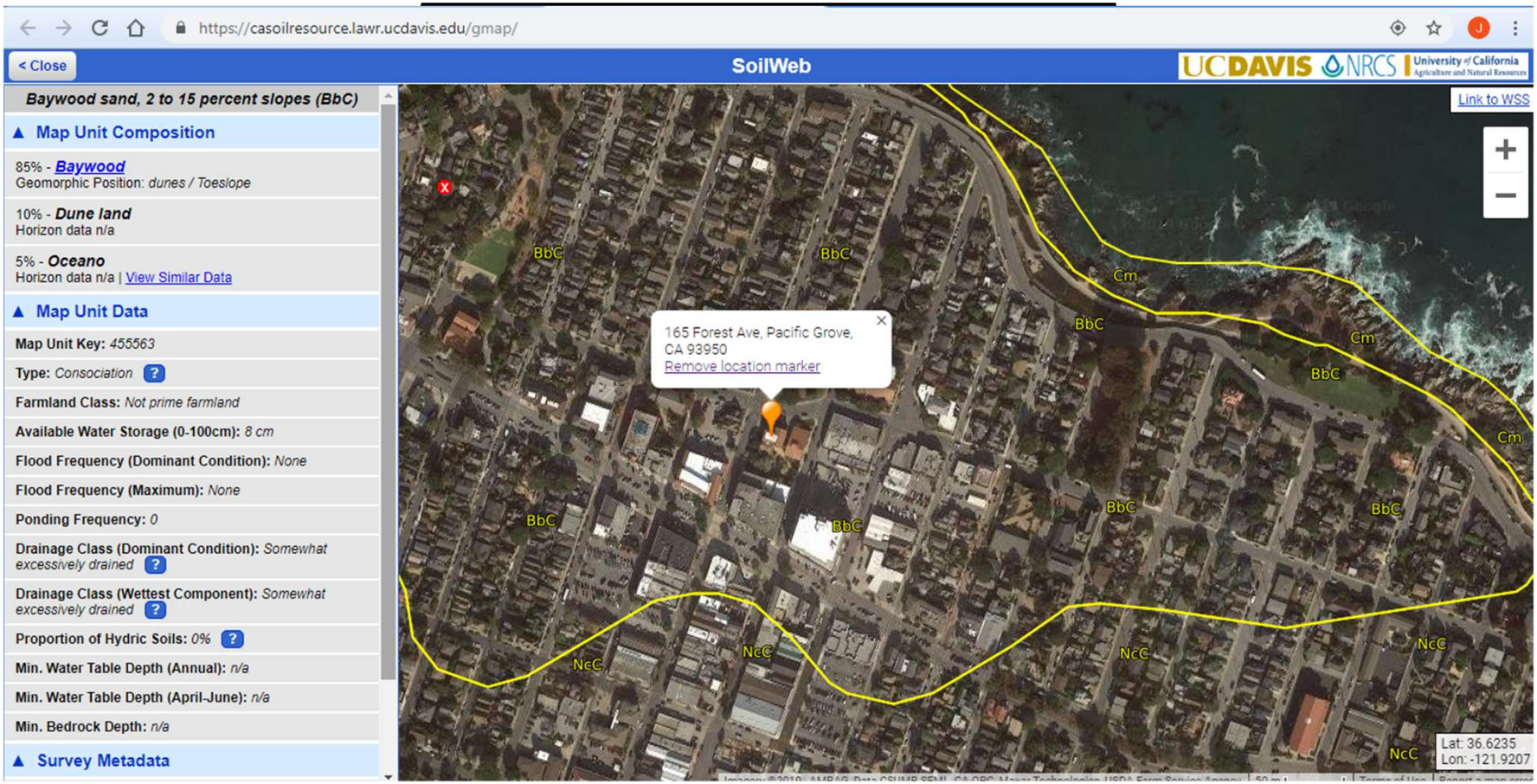
Example: Soil at the Pacific Grove Museum



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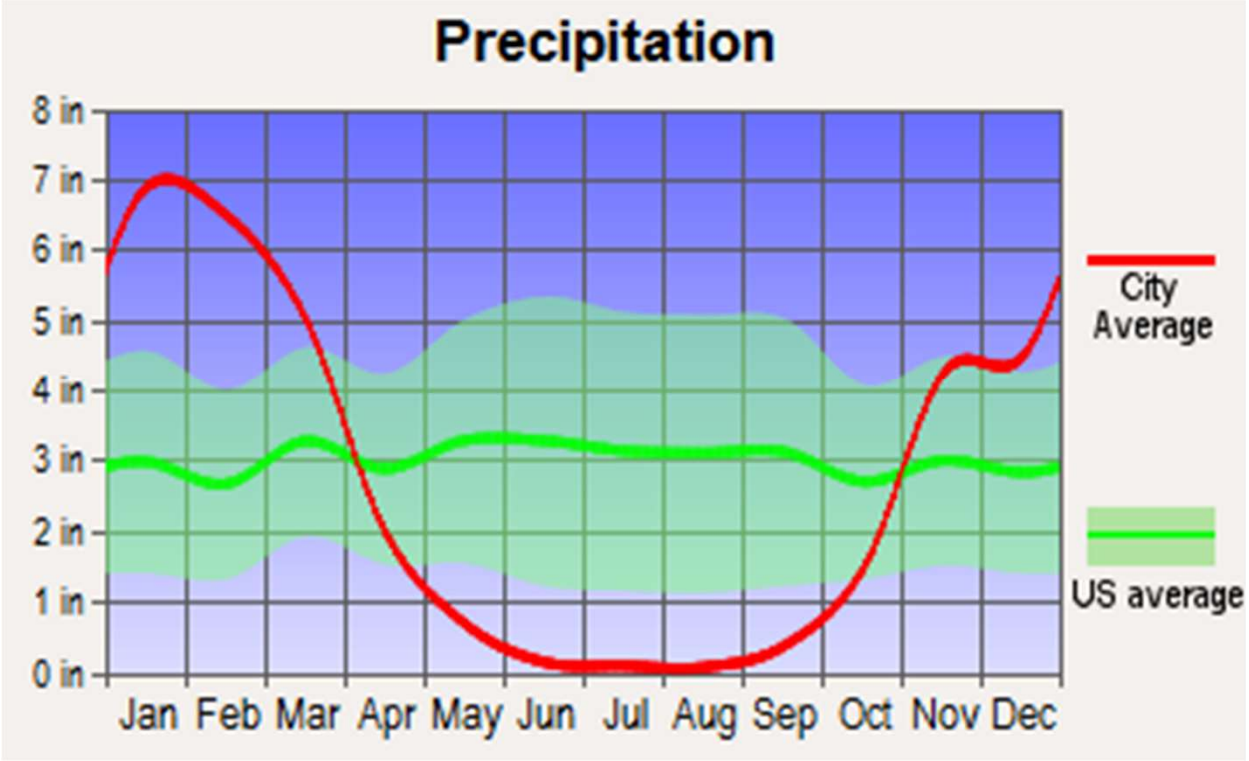
Winters are Wet, Summers are Dry

City of Santa Cruz Precipitation

Growing Season Oct-May



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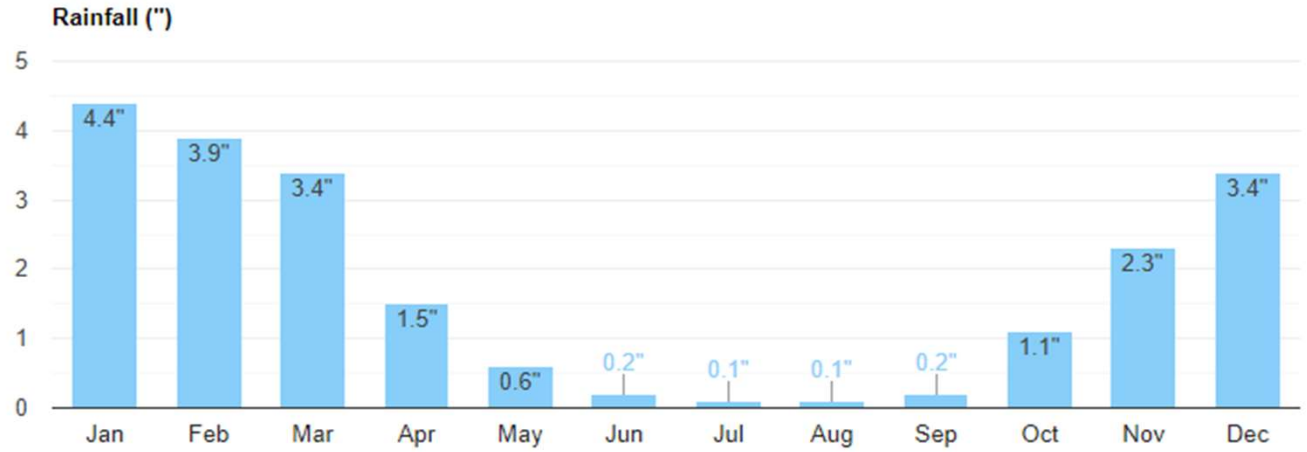
Monterey, CA Average Rainfall

https://www.weather-us.com/en/california-usa/monterey-climate

Average rainfall Monterey, CA



The average rainfall in January: **4.4"**
The average rainfall in February: **3.9"**
The average rainfall in March: **3.4"**
The average rainfall in April: **1.5"**
The average rainfall in May: **0.6"**
The average rainfall in June: **0.2"**
The average rainfall in July: **0.1"**
The average rainfall in August: **0.1"**
The average rainfall in September: **0.2"**
The average rainfall in October: **1.1"**
The average rainfall in November: **2.3"**
The average rainfall in December: **3.4"**

The wettest month (with the highest rainfall) is **January** (4.4"). Driest months (with the lowest rainfall) are **July** and **August** (0.1").

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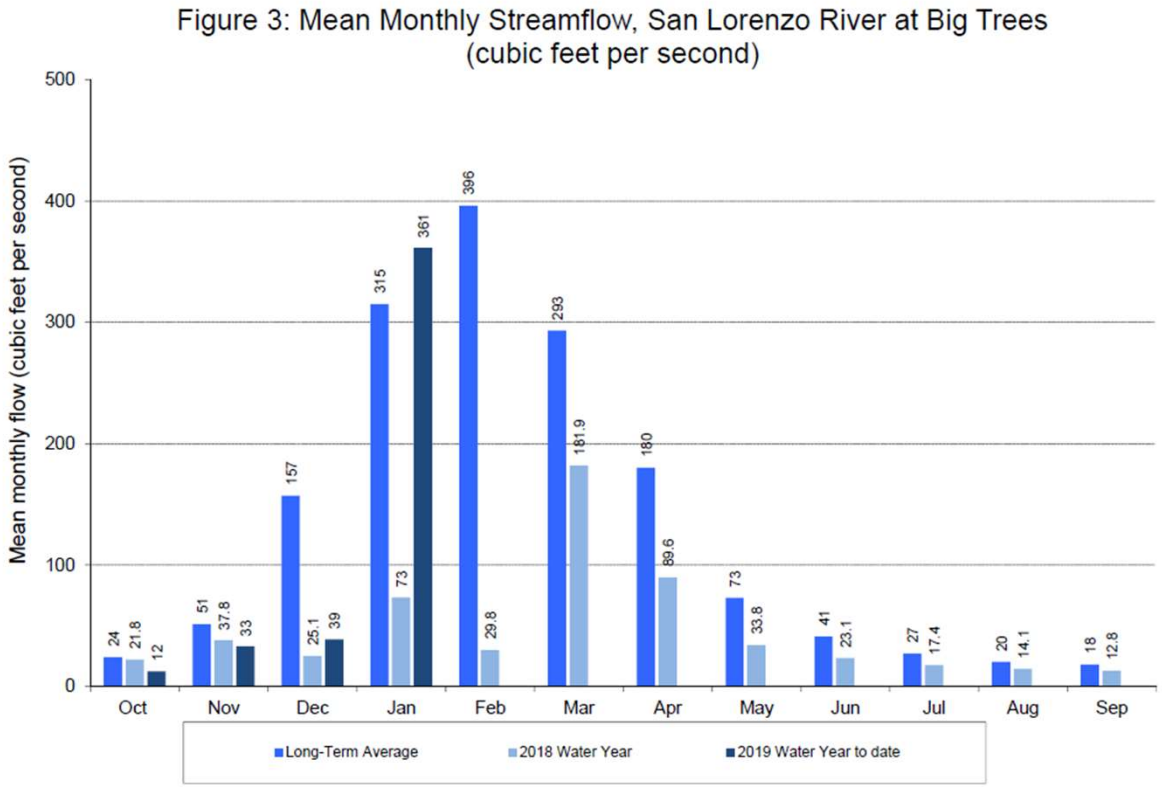
City of Santa Cruz Water Supply 2018/19

Native Plant Water Needs Match Supply

Figure 3.



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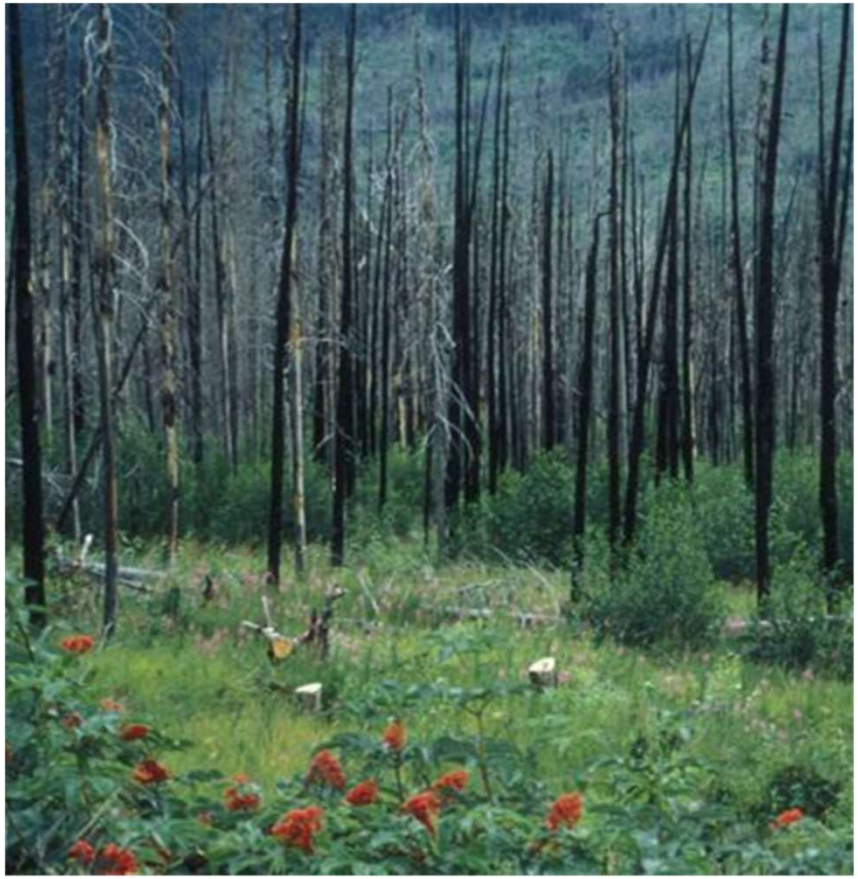
Native Plants and Fire Recovery



- Many native plants rapidly regenerate after a fire and their roots prevent erosion.
- Native California Oaks are adapted to survive periodic burning and will recover if the cambium is intact.
- The invasion of non-native grasses has increased the ignition, spread and severity of wildfires.
- Eucalyptus trees have flammable resins, peeling bark and dead wood that cause fires to spread especially fast.
- Our Riparian ecosystems act as moist buffers and don't burn severely except when they are infested with weeds.
- New Fire Recovery Guide:https://www.cnps.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/CNPS-fire-recovery-guide-LR-040618.pdf

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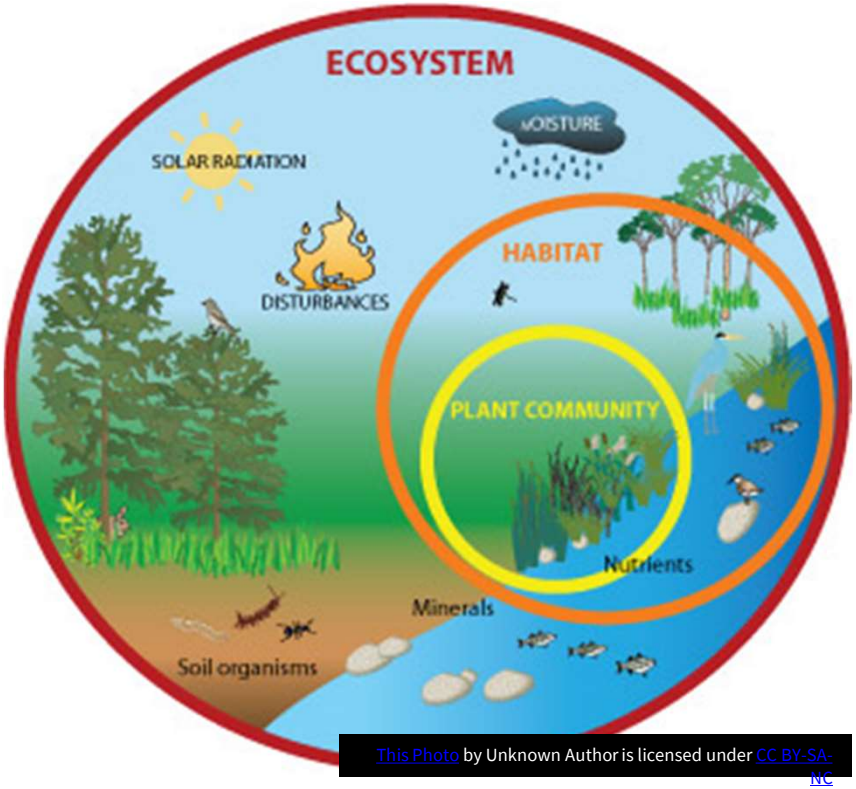
Gardening for Wildlife is Important

- There is a 40% loss of insects worldwide
- Biodiversity increases the resilience of ecosystems
- The health of planetary life depends on food webs, which depend on the health of interdependent species from fungi and microorganisms to plants, invertebrates, herbivores and carnivores



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Native Plants Support Wildlife

Native plants coevolved with native species and provide:

- Nesting materials, cover and places to live
- Food
  - Pollen
  - Nectar
  - Seeds and Nuts
  - Berries & Other Fruit
  - Foliage
  - Insects…

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Native Plants Support Native Insects

- Insects play a large role in transferring energy from plants to other animals.
- An estimated 90% of insect herbivores are specialists needing particular host plants.
- While Buddleia – butterfly bush, native to Asia – produces nectar, not a single species of butterfly in North America can reproduce on it. (Tallamy 2007)

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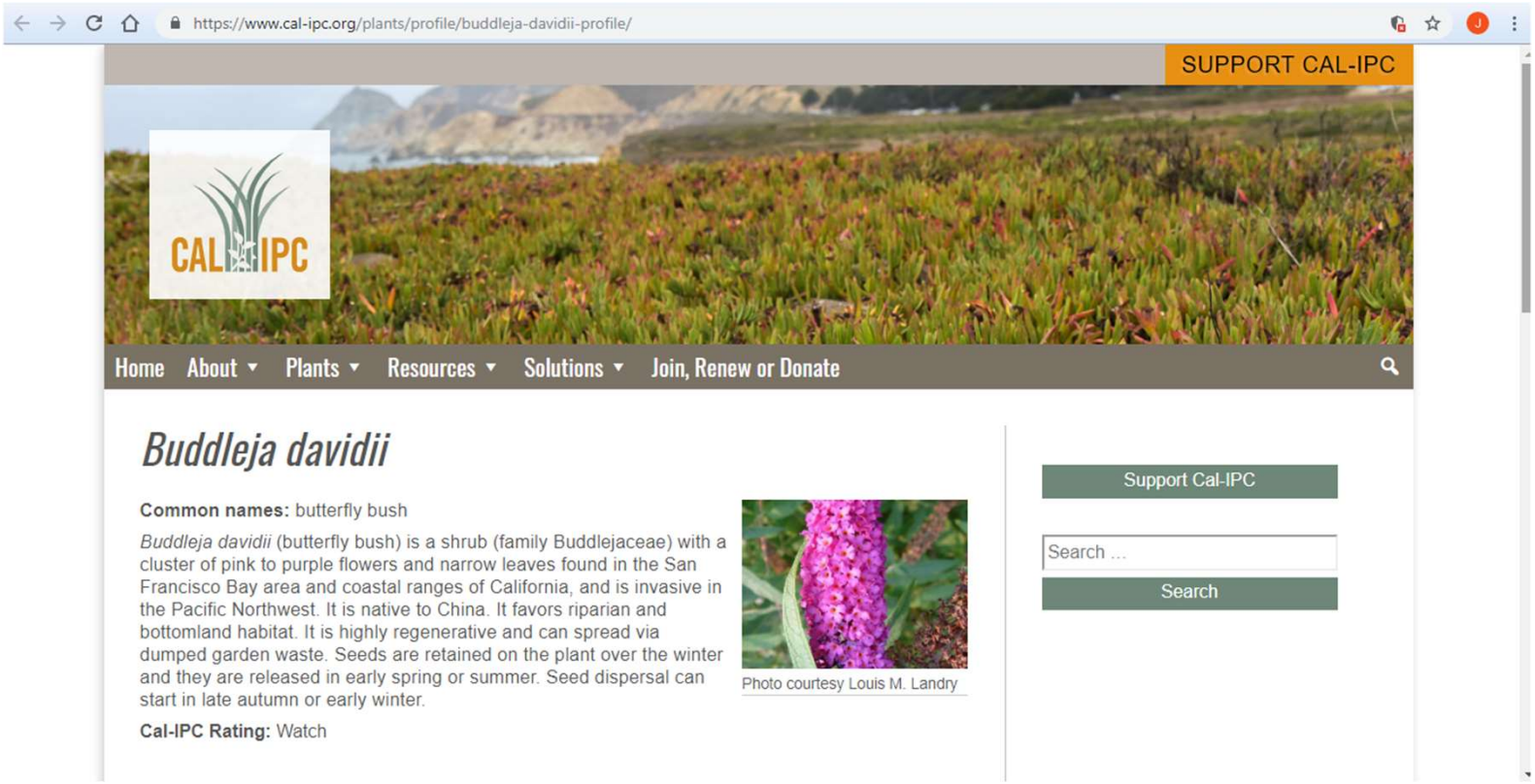
Cal-IPC California Invasive Plant Council Helps Stop the Spread of Invasives



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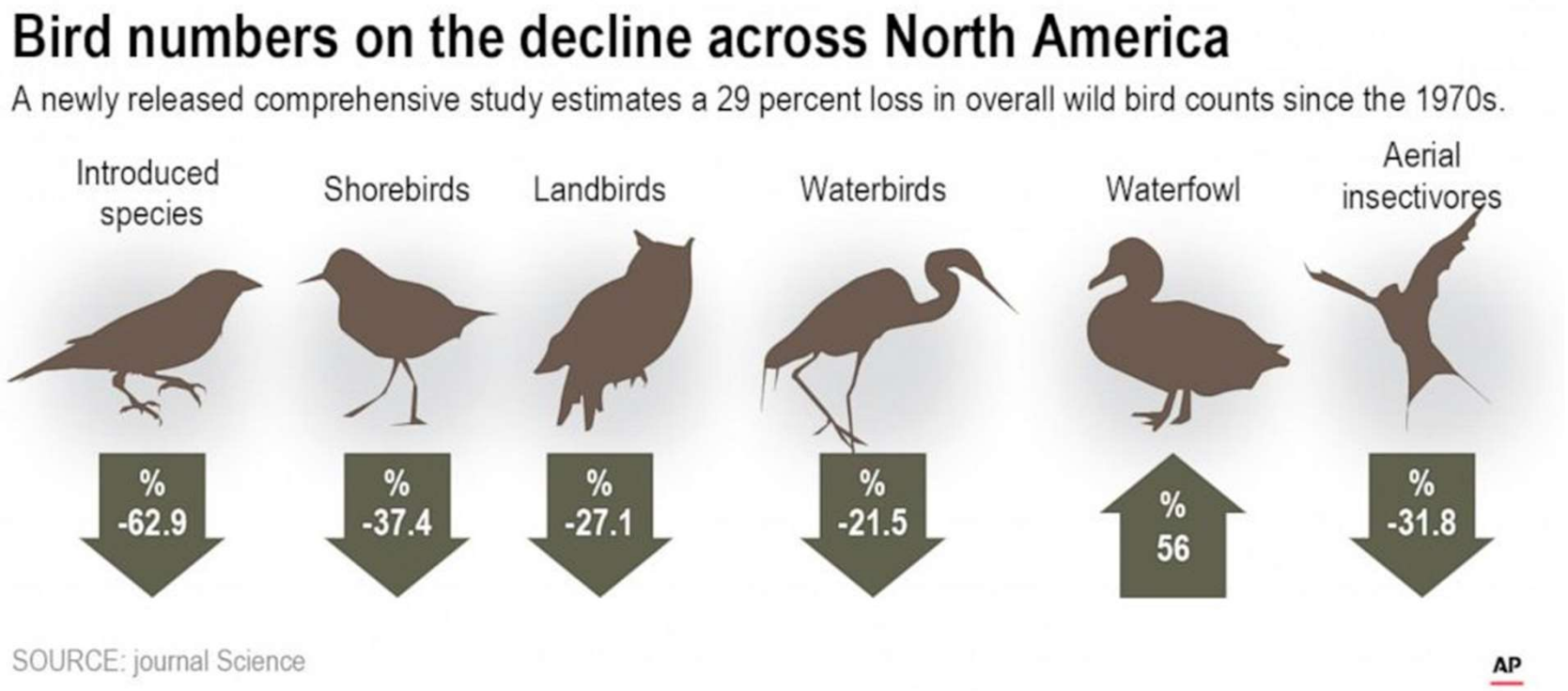
Birds Rely on Insects

- 96% of terrestrial birds of North America raise their young on insects
- Caterpillars and other insects are fatty, high protein foods needed in large quantities
- A mother bird may need 400 insects a day to feed her nestlings

Decline in Bird Population

https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2019/09/three-billion-north-american-birds-have-vanished-1970-surveys-show



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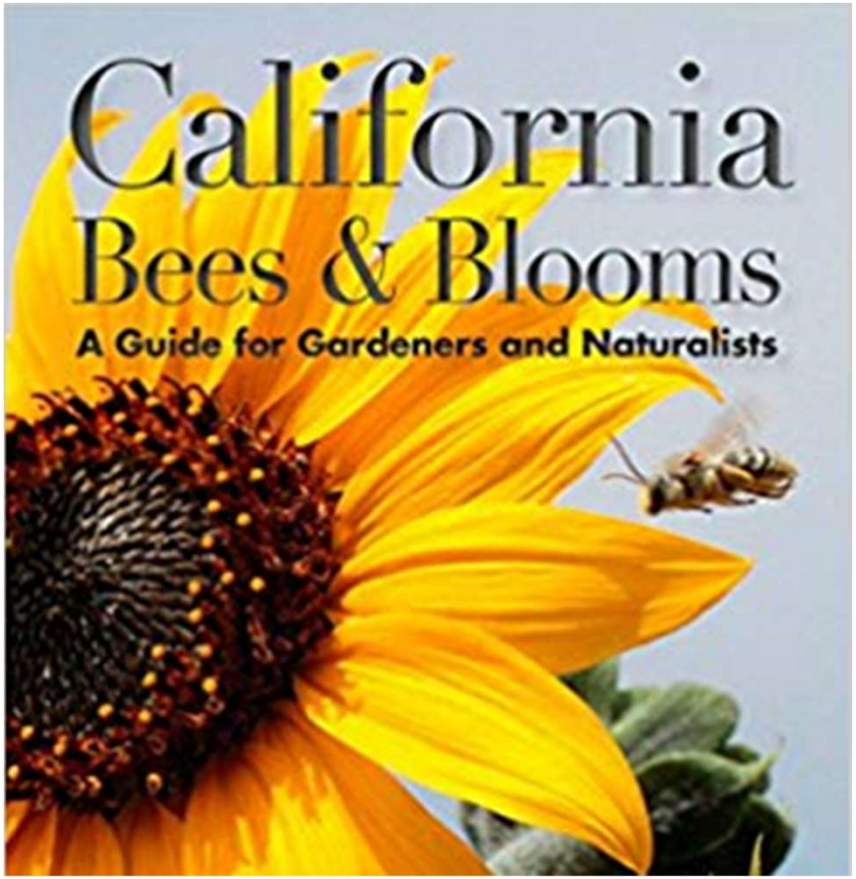
Native Plants Support Our Native Bees

Findings from the Berkeley survey of plants in front yards (2003)

- 1,000 different plants recorded
- 950 non-native, 50 native
- Non-native plants attracted 8% of bees
- Native plants attracted 80% of bees
- One small urban garden can attract 40-50 species of bees if planted with native “bee plants”



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Oaks are "Super Plants"

Coast Live Oak *Quercus agrifolia*

- One of the most important wildlife plants
- Easy to grow
- Can reach 40' in 20 years

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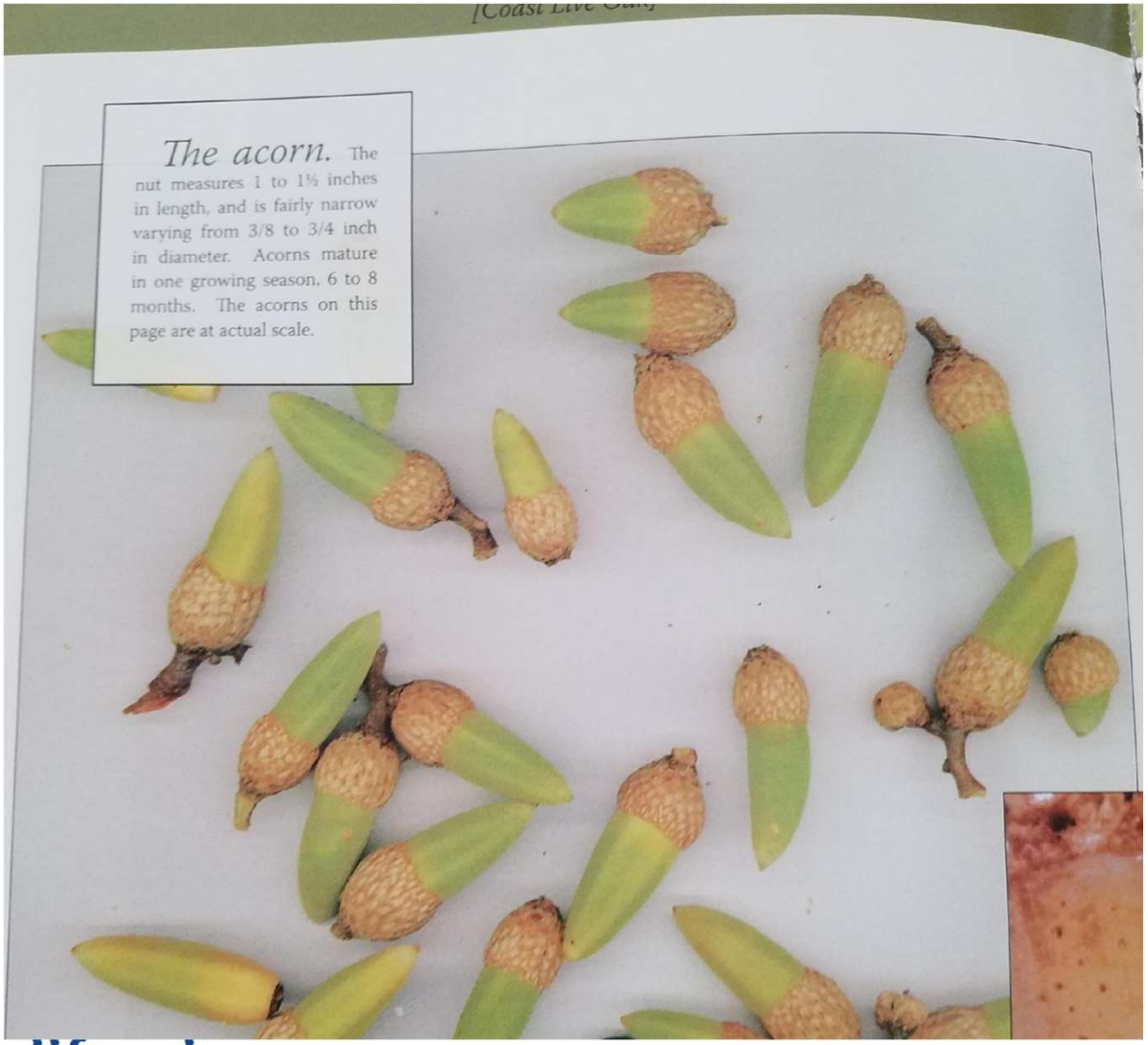
Coast Live Oak Acorns

- From little acorns, mighty oaks grow.
- Tens of thousands of acres of oaks have been lost to agricultural conversion, fires and urbanization.
- There are 9 species of oaks in Santa Cruz County.
- Oaks sequester more carbon than other urban trees.
- Re-Oaking programs are now a statewide effort.



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Calscape.org

Restore Nature One Garden at a Time

- Launched in 2016, Calscape is an online tool that lets you identify the plants that are native to where you live.
- Developed through a strategic partnership with the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) and the Jepson Herbarium at U.C. Berkeley
- Maps are based on over 2 million GPS field observations

California Native Plant Society

University & Jepson Herbaria

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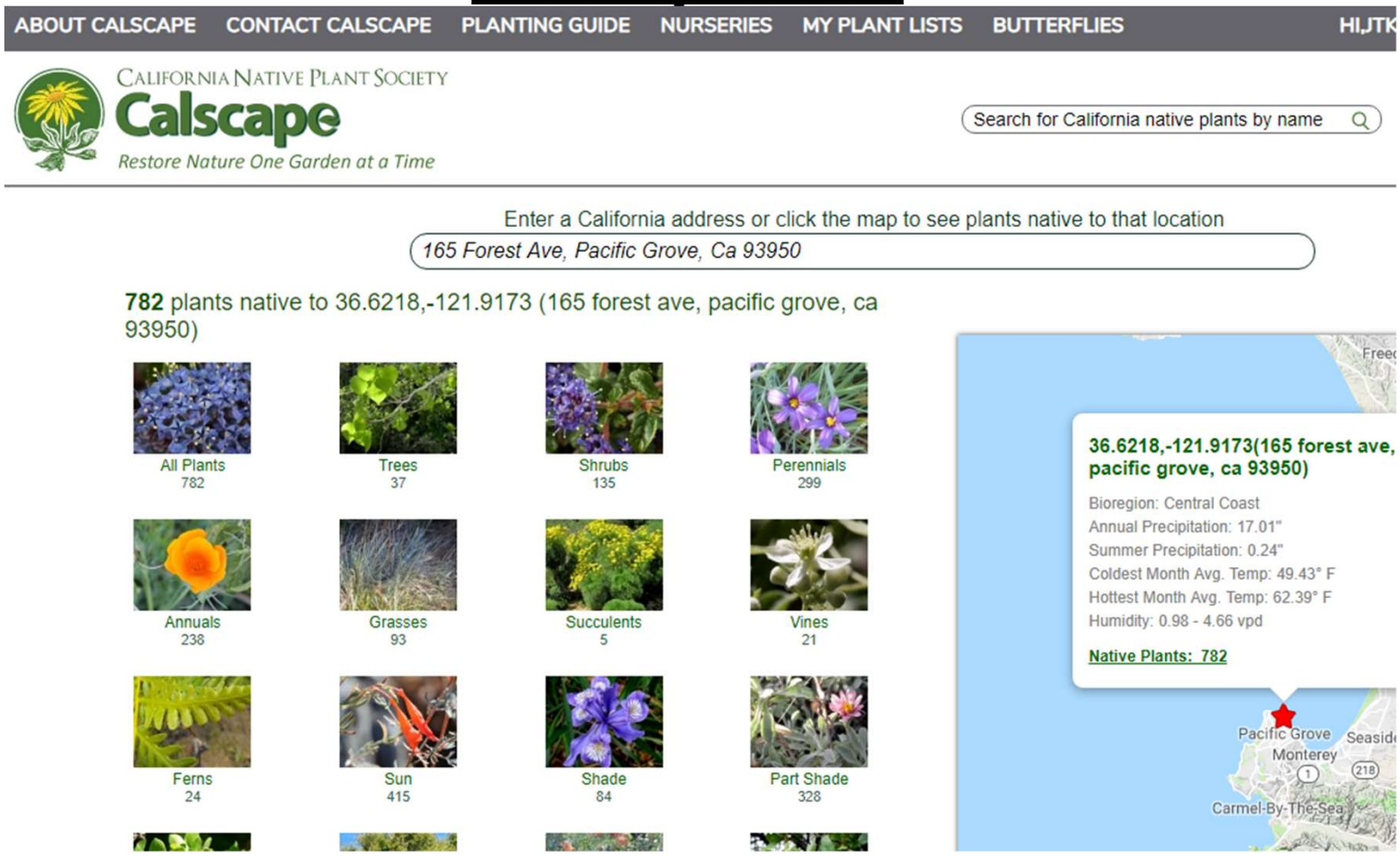
Calscape – It's easy to find your most local plants



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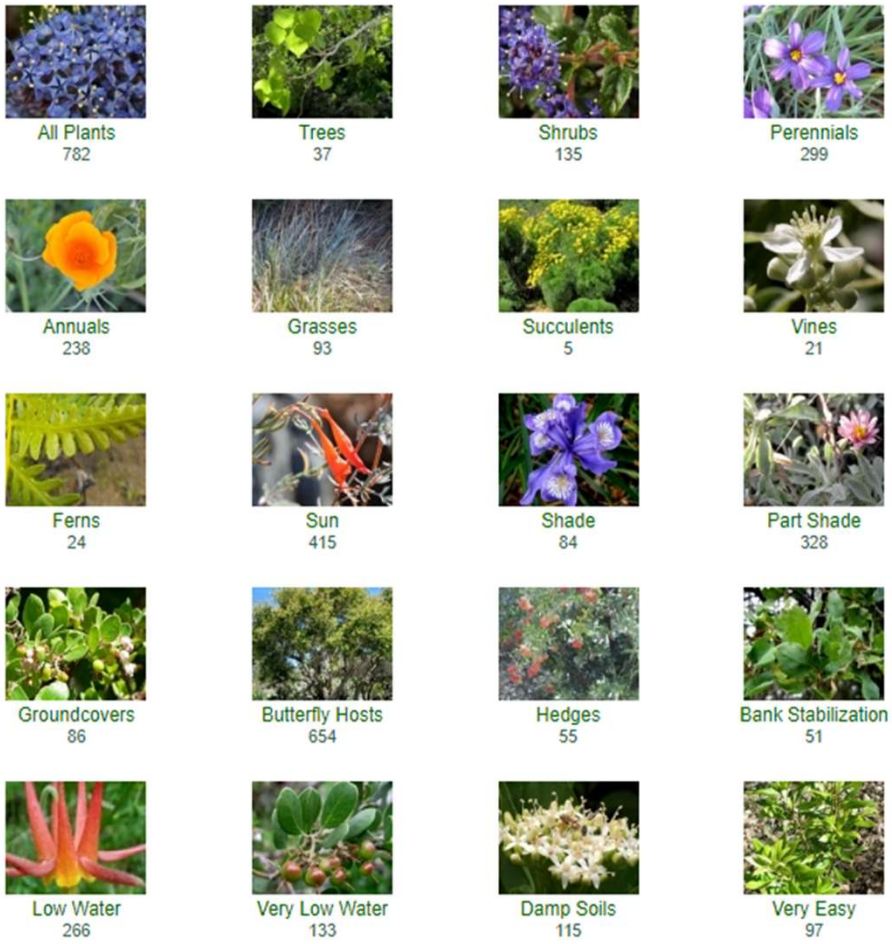
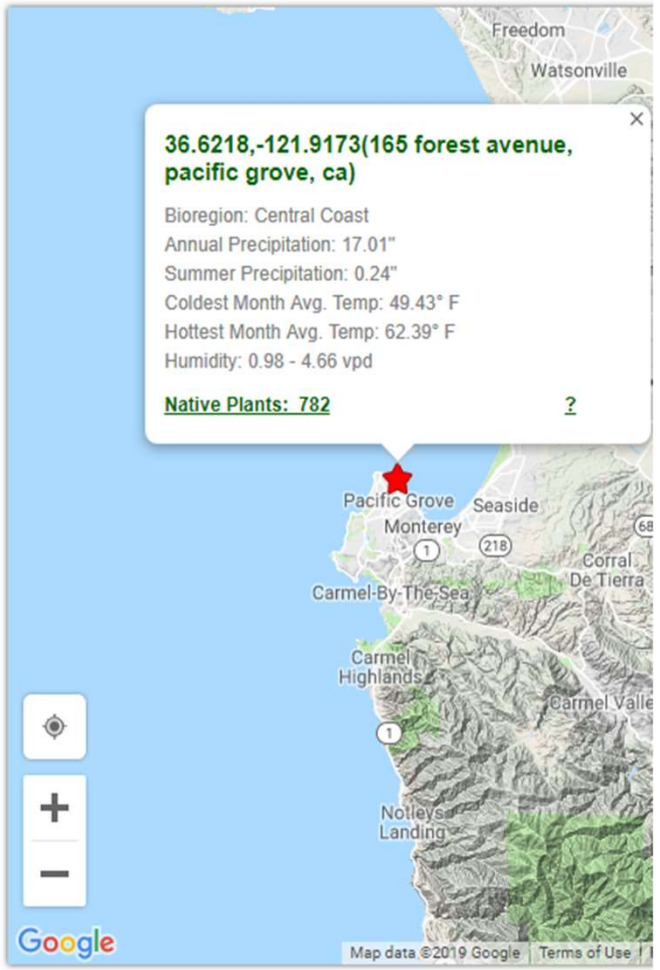
Plants are sorted into useful categories

782 plants native to 36.6218,-121.9173 (165 forest avenue, pacific grove, ca)





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Very Easy Plants – Tough & Reliable

97 very easy plants native to 165 Forest Ave, Pacific Grove, Ca 93950 Options

1 
Blue Eyed Grass
Sisyrinchium bellum

2 
California Fuchsia
Epilobium canum

3 
Douglas Iris
Iris douglasiana

4 
Carmel Ceanothus
Ceanothus thyrsiflorus var. griseus

5 
Little Sur Manzanita
Arctostaphylo edmundsii

6 
Western Columbine
Aquilegia formosa

7 
California Wax Myrtle
Morella californica

8 
Gumweed
Grindelia stricta var. platyphylla

9 
Pajaro Manzanita
Arctostaphylos pajaroensis

10 
Hollyleaf Redberry
Rhamnus ilicifolia

11 
California Goldenrod
Solidago velutina ssp. californica

12 
Scrub Oak
Quercus berberidifolia

13 
Malva Rosa
Malva assurgentiflora

14 
Giant Chain Fern
Woodwardia fimbriata

15 
One Leaf Onion
Allium unifoli

16 
Yellow Eyed Grass
Sisyrinchium californicum

17 
California Fescue
Festuca californica

18 
Purple Needlegrass
Stipa pulchra

19 
Yerba Buena
Clinopodium douglasii

20 
Incense Ced
Calocedrus decurrens

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Butterfly and Moth Host Plant Info

86 butterfly & moths species hosted by Red Flowering Currant (Ribes sanguineum) in California **Options**

1 species confirmed

1 **Ceanothus Silkmoth**
Hyalophora euryalus

85 species likely

2 **Hoary Comma**
Polygonia gracilis

3 **Milbert's Tortoiseshell**
Aglais milberti

4 **Satyr Comma**
Polygonia satyrus

5 **Green Comma**
Polygonia faunus

6 **Tailed Copper**
Lycaena arota

7 **Oreas Comma**
Polygonia oreas

8 **White-lined Sphinx**
Hyles lineata

9 **Polyphemus moth**
Antheraea polyphemus

10 **Alfalfa Looper Moth**
Autographa californica

11 **Elegant Sheepmoth**
Hemileuca eglanterina

12 **Wandering Tiger Moth**
Spilosoma vestalis

13 **Speckled Green Fruitworm Moth**
Orthosia hibisci

14 **Isabella Tiger Moth**
Pyrrharctia isabella

15 **Brown Woodling**
Egira perlubens

16 **Silver-spotted Tiger Moth**
Lophocampa argentata

17 **Manto Tussock Moth**
Orgyia antiqua

18 **Marbled Carpet**
Dysstroma truncata

19 **Spotted Tussock Moth**
Lophocampa maculata

20 **Virginian Tiger Moth**
Spilosoma virginica

21 **Fruit-Tree Leafroller Moth**
Archips argyrospila

22 **Filament Bearer**
Nematocampa resistaria

23 **Wavy-Lined Emerald**
Synchlora aerata

24 **Salt-and-Pepper Geometer**
Biston betularia

25 **Sulphur Moth**
Hesperumia sulphuraria

26 **Yellow-Headed Cutworm Moth**
Apamea amputatrix

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Calscape – Info on Individual Plants

calscape.org/Ribes-sanguineum-(Red-Flowering-Current)?srchcr=sc5da512dbe87e4

California Native Plant Society
Calscape
Restore Nature One Garden at a Time

Search for California native plants by name

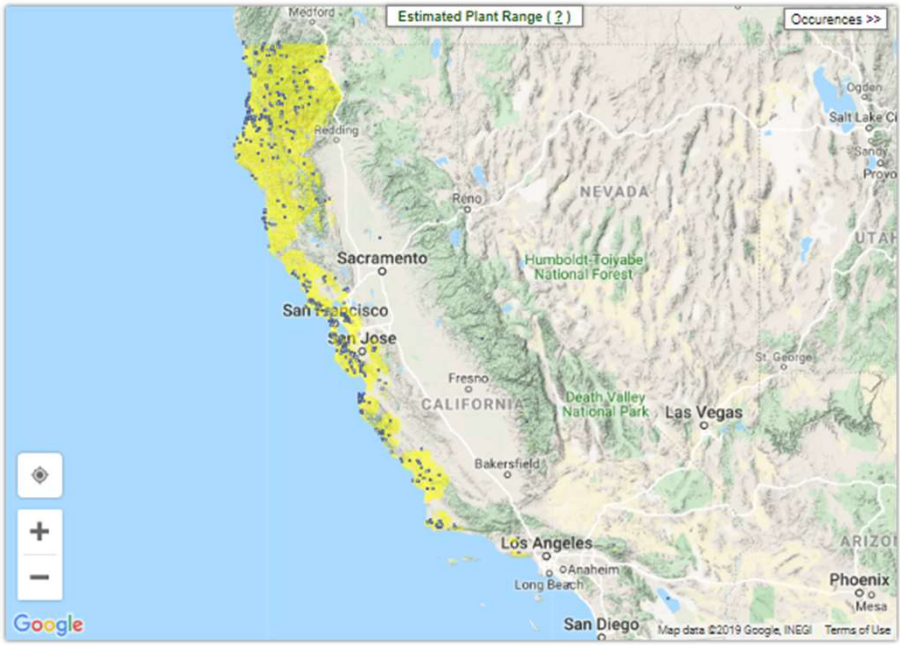
ADVANCE

HOME > RIBES

Red Flowering Currant
Ribes sanguineum

© 2006 Walter Siegmund

Show All Photos



About Red Flowering Currant (Ribes sanguineum) 39 Nurseries Carry This Plant Add to My Plant List

Flowering Currant or Red-flowering Currant is a species in the Grossulariaceae (Currants and Gooseberries) family that is native to western coastal North America from central British Columbia south to central California. It is a deciduous shrub growing up to 13 feet tall. The bark is dark brownish-grey and the leaves are 1-3 inches long and broad. When young in spring, they have a strong resinous scent. The flowers are produced in early spring at the same time as the leaves emerge, on racemes of 5-30 flowers; each flower is 5-10 millimeters in diameter, with five red or pink petals. The fruit is a dark purple oval berry 1 centimeter long, edible but with an insipid taste, best left for the birds. Near the coast it is flexible as to water and exposure. Inland it prefers more water and shade.

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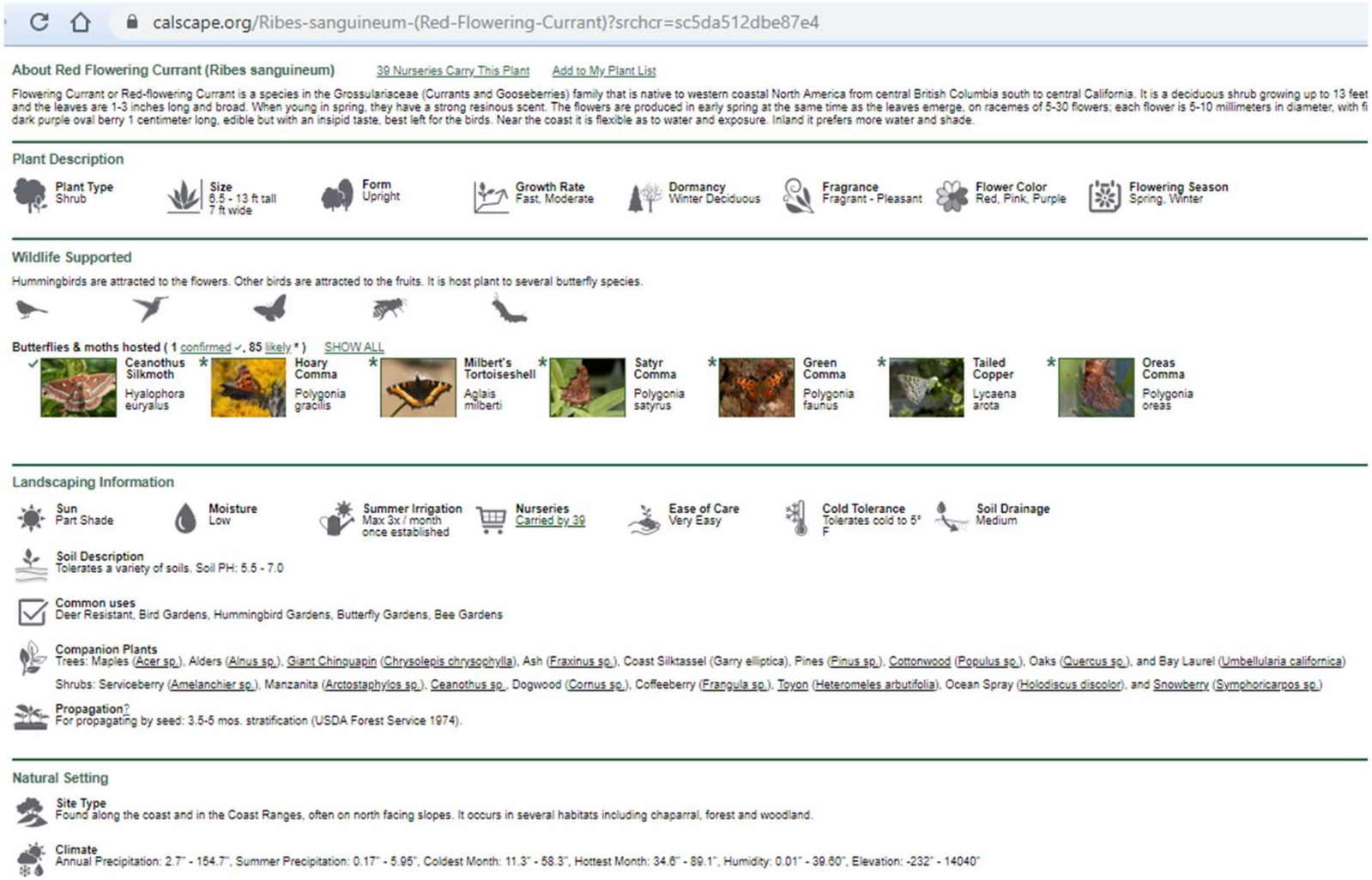
Landscaping tips and Nursery Availability



calscape.org/Ribes-sanguineum-(Red-Flowering-Currant)?srchcr=sc5da512dbe87e4

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Plant Description

Plant Type: Shrub
Size: 6.5 - 13 ft tall, 7 ft wide
Form: Upright
Growth Rate: Fast, Moderate
Dormancy: Winter Deciduous
Fragrance: Fragrant - Pleasant
Flower Color: Red, Pink, Purple
Flowering Season: Spring, Winter

Wildlife Supported

Hummingbirds are attracted to the flowers. Other birds are attracted to the fruits. It is host plant to several butterfly species.

Butterflies & moths hosted (1 confirmed ✓, 85 likely *) SHOW ALL

- ✓ Ceanothus Silkmoth — Hyalophora euryalus
- * Hoary Comma — Polygonia gracilis
- * Milbert's Tortoiseshell — Aglais milberti
- * Satyr Comma — Polygonia satyrus
- * Green Comma — Polygonia faunus
- * Tailed Copper — Lycaena arota
- * Oreas Comma — Polygonia oreas

Landscaping Information

Sun: Part Shade
Moisture: Low
Summer Irrigation: Max 3x / month once established
Nurseries: Carried by 39
Ease of Care: Very Easy
Cold Tolerance: Tolerates cold to 5° F
Soil Drainage: Medium

Soil Description: Tolerates a variety of soils. Soil PH: 5.5 - 7.0

Common uses: Deer Resistant, Bird Gardens, Hummingbird Gardens, Butterfly Gardens, Bee Gardens

Companion Plants: Trees: Maples (Acer sp.), Alders (Alnus sp.), Giant Chinquapin (Chrysolepis chrysophylla), Ash (Fraxinus sp.), Coast Silktassel (Garry elliptica), Pines (Pinus sp.), Cottonwood (Populus sp.), Oaks (Quercus sp.), and Bay Laurel (Umbellularia californica)
Shrubs: Serviceberry (Amelanchier sp.), Manzanita (Arctostaphylos sp.), Ceanothus sp., Dogwood (Cornus sp.), Coffeeberry (Frangula sp.), Toyon (Heteromeles arbutifolia), Ocean Spray (Holodiscus discolor), and Snowberry (Symphoricarpos sp.)

Propagation: For propagating by seed: 3.5-5 mos. stratification (USDA Forest Service 1974).

Natural Setting

Site Type: Found along the coast and in the Coast Ranges, often on north facing slopes. It occurs in several habitats including chaparral, forest and woodland.

Climate: Annual Precipitation: 2.7" - 154.7", Summer Precipitation: 0.17" - 5.95", Coldest Month: 11.3° - 58.3°, Hottest Month: 34.6° - 89.1°, Humidity: 0.01" - 39.60", Elevation: -232' - 14040'

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Sourcing Plants
What's Available?
Saving Money

- Native plant nurseries, local growers
- Local nurseries – most have a Native plant section or can order plants for you
- Plant Sales – CNPS, Watsonville Wetlands, Cabrillo College (Annually on Mother's Day weekend), UC Master Gardeners Fall Fest & Plant Sale
- Seeds
- Bulbs
- Propagating your own plants
- Mail-order sources

Short Lists of Easy, Reliable and Beautiful Native Plants for Central Coast Gardens

- Perennials
- Annual WIldflowers
- Groundcovers
- Shrubs
- Container Plants
- Other Favorites

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California Fuschia
Epilobium canum

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Red Flowering Currant

Ribes sanguineum

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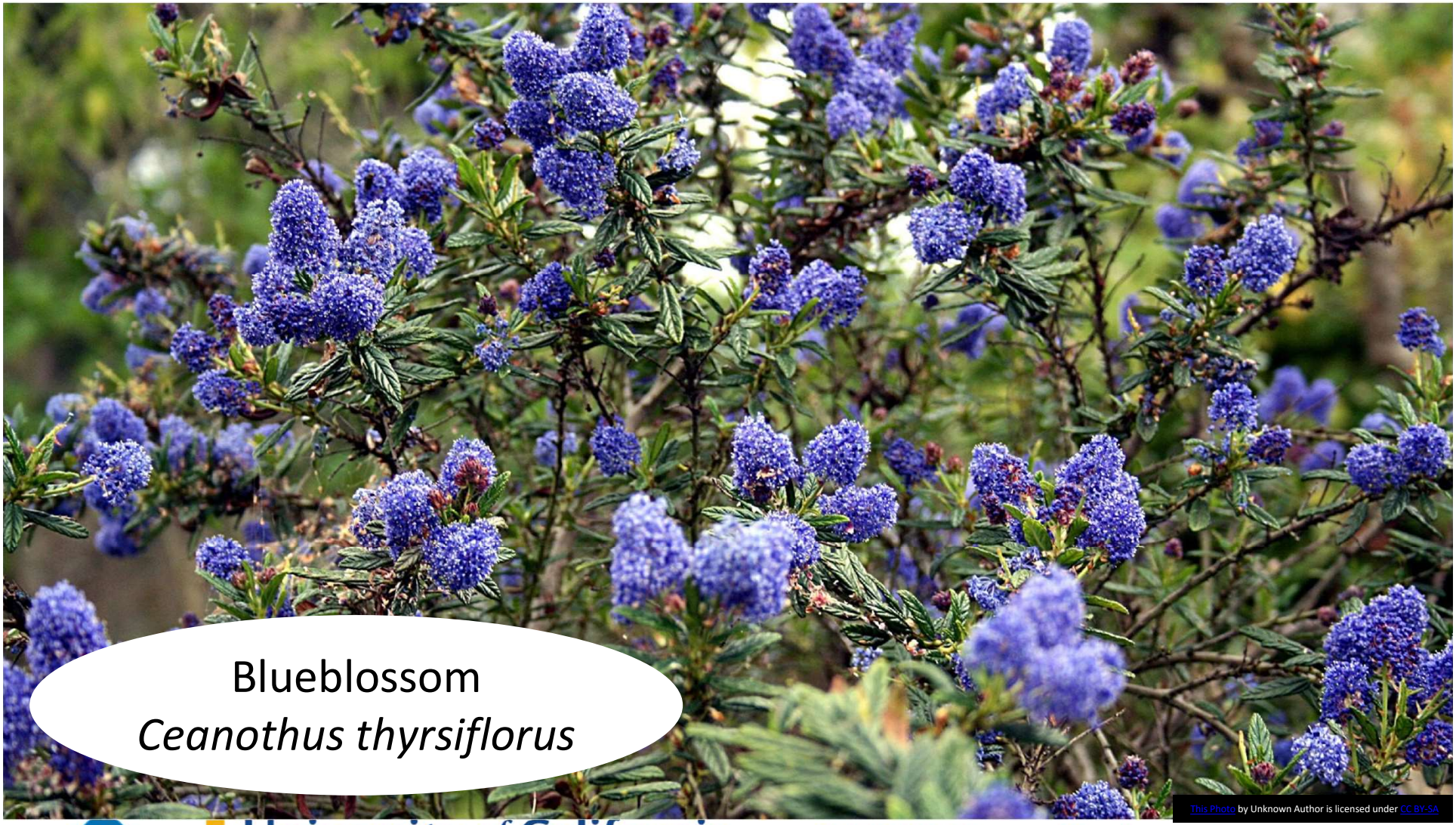

Blueblossom

Ceanothus thyrsiflorus

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California
Goldenrod
Solidago velutina

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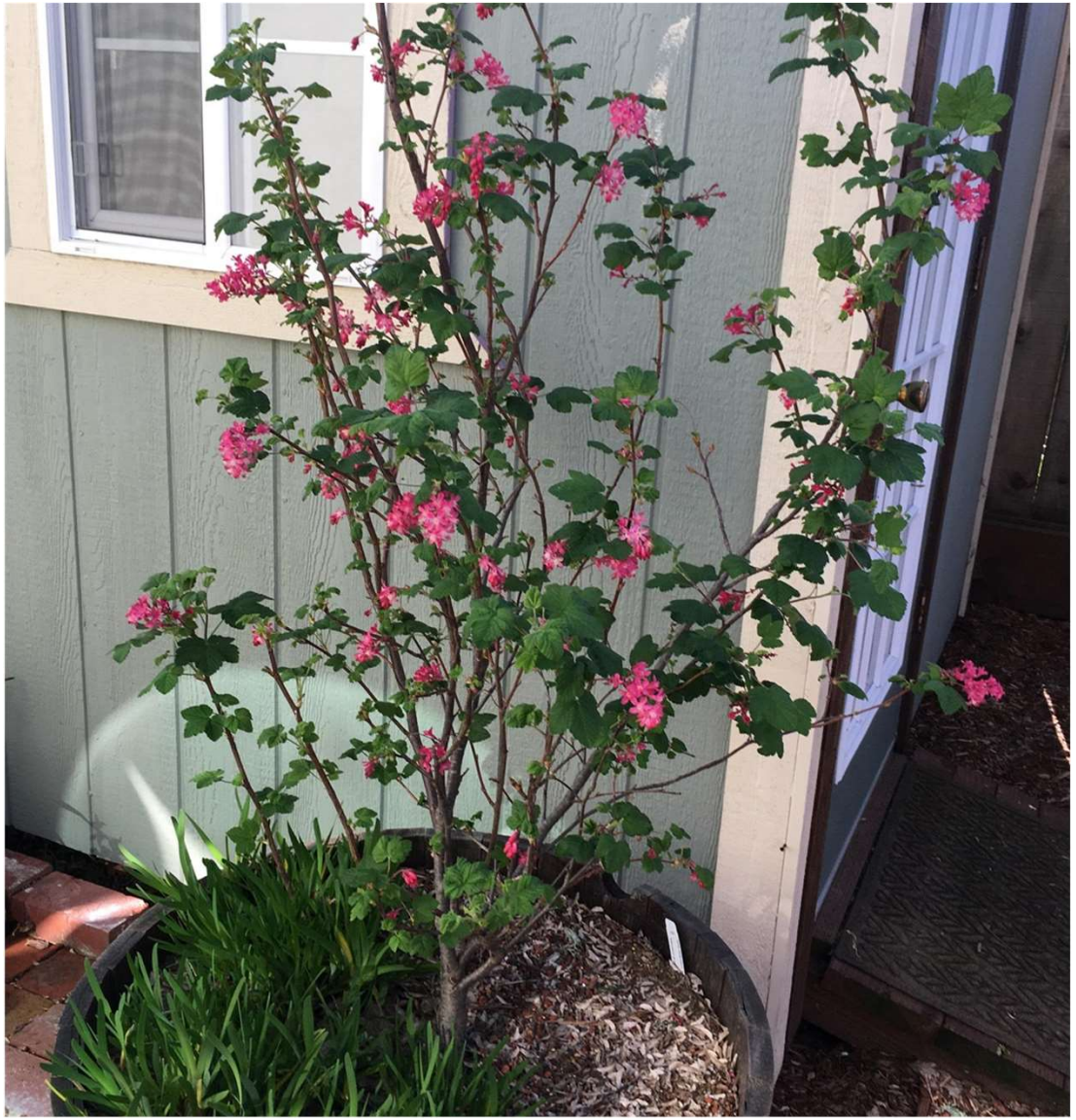
A Blood Currant in a Pot

Plants in containers will need more watering.

Some native plants have even been used for bonsai.

Nice to enjoy scented species up close.

Great for bulbs that are summer dormant.



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Things to Consider When Selecting Specific Plants for Your Garden

Microclimates on your property:

- Topography – slopes, trenches
- Existing trees and shrubs to be retained
- Existing irrigation and hardscape
- Nearby natural features – beach, creek, forest, cliffs, bluffs etc.

Size considerations. Many choices for tiny areas to large landscapes.

Year-round color, texture, scent, uses (erosion control, herbal, edible, wildlife, screening, espalier, children, etc.)

Ease of maintenance and availability……

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Defensible Space and Landscaping

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A Garden Near West Cliff Drive

- Includes a profusion of perennial and annual flowers
- Coyote bush pruned to take on a beautiful form
- Highly aromatic Cleveland sage and Woolly blue curls
- Plants in containers to meet their specific needs

K. Laing Garden

Photo by Anandi Paganini

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Special Considerations if you live in the Wildlife Urban Interface

- Maintain the biological integrity of wild populations of native plants by avoiding species that might cross-pollinate with them.
- Eliminate invasive species
- Reduce fuel loads

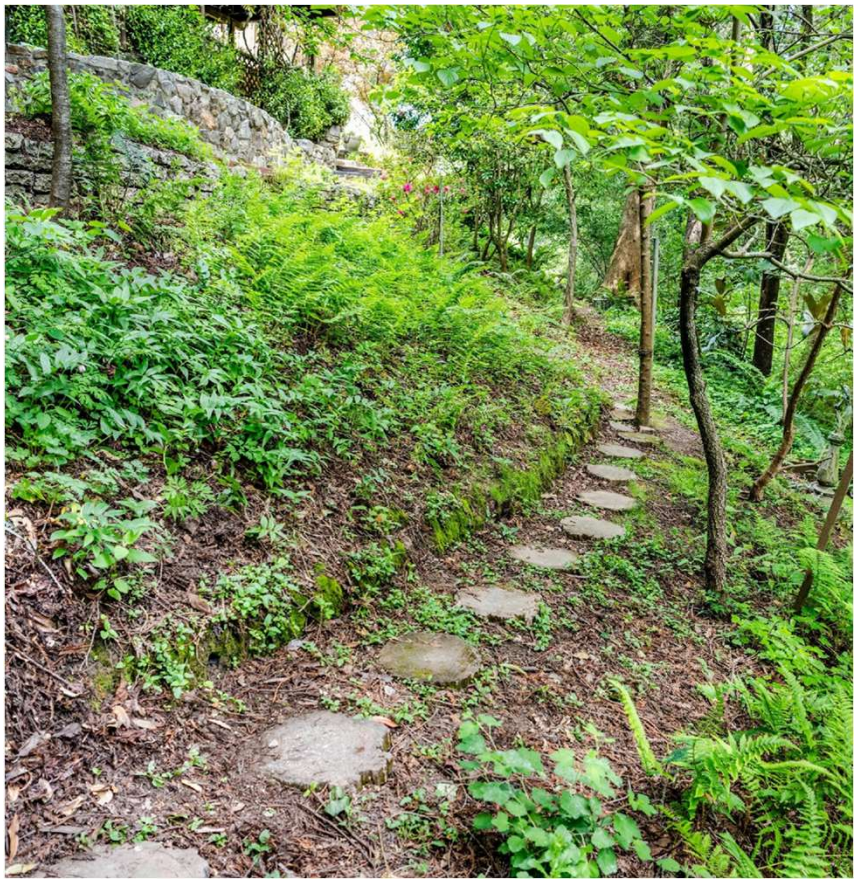

Photo of Master Gardener Karen Cozza's garden by Kevin Lohman

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Weed Eradication Before Planting

- Invasive weeds can outcompete your plants for resources
- Identify your weeds to determine optimal methods of removal
- Perennial weeds are more difficult to eradicate
- Weeds produce a lot of seed
- Weed seeds persist for many years
- Remove weeds before they set seed
- Sheet mulching can help suppress weeds
- Once established, many native plants will help suppress weeds
- http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/menu.weeds.html
- https://www.cal-ipc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/TheTopOffenders_20171114.pdf

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Planting

- Planting in late fall to winter is best.
- Calscape planting guide https://calscape.org/planting-guide.php
- Space plants for future growth.
- Spaces can be filled with wildflowers, bunchgrasses, stones or even art!
- Mulch to maintain moisture and suppress weeds.

- Photo by Kevin Lohman

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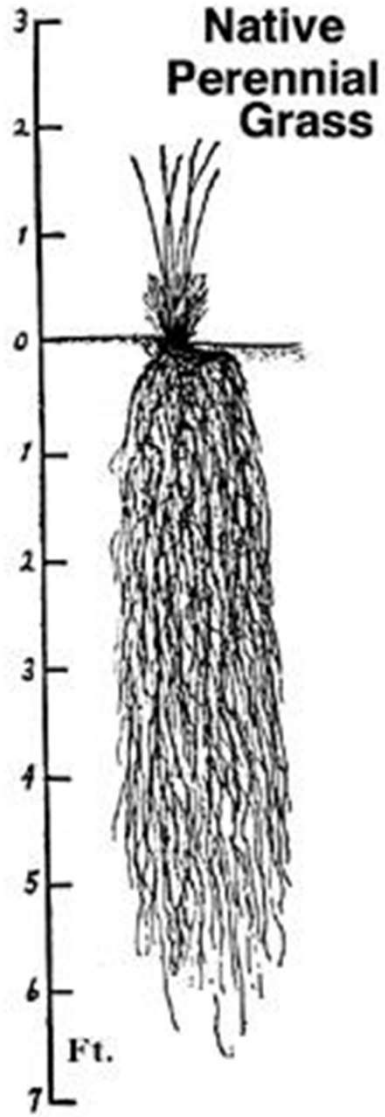
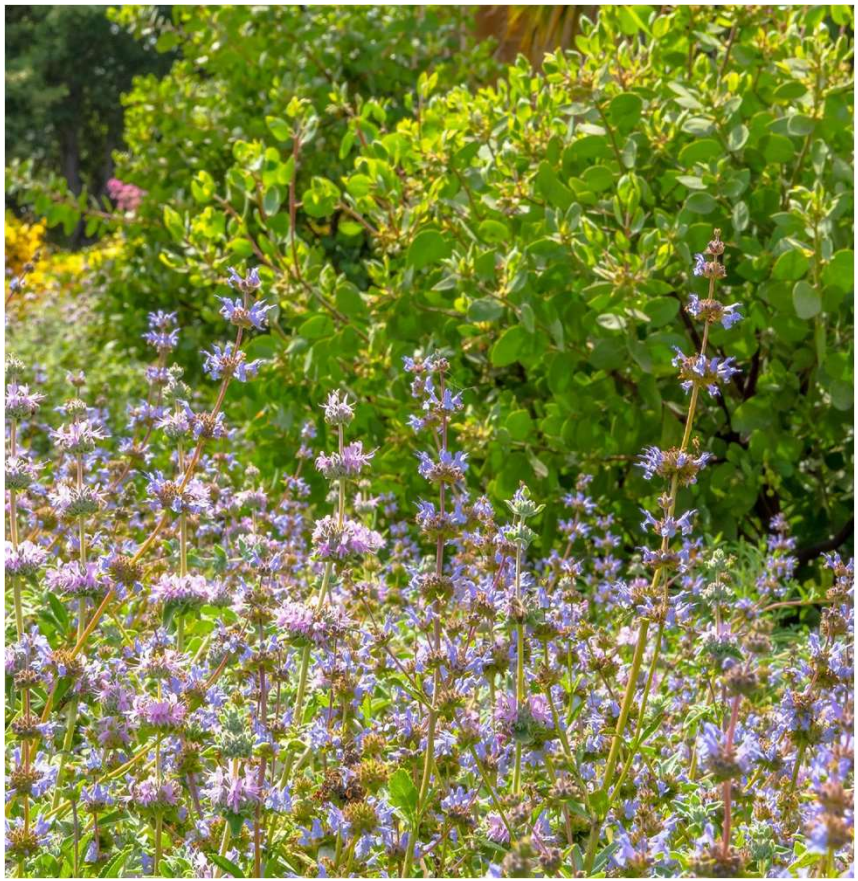


Watering to Establish Plants – Sleep, Creep then Leap!

- More extensive root growth occurs while plants are becoming established (great erosion control)
- Watering is needed to establish roots and during periods of drought
- In general, watering will taper off to once a month
- As a rule of thumb, plants are established if they have doubled or tripled in size or lived through 2 or 3 summers

Drawing: Typical root system of a perennial native grass.
Courtesy: Hastings Natural History Reserve – UC Natural Reserve System

Group Plants in Hydrozones



- Plants native to moist canyons and shady streams are water-needy.
- Plants of scrub or chaparral communities need a lot less water.
- Other plants fall somewhere in the middle.
- You may have 3 hydrozones on your property.

Photo by Kevin Lohman

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Careful Watering in Summer

- Native plants adapted to hot and dry soils are sensitive to fungi and bacteria that become active in warm, wet soils.
- New plantings are establishing the root systems needed to survive drought.
- Summer watering can be a balancing act but is fairly easy with our cool coastal climate.
- Water during cool periods.
- “Very Easy” plants can take summer watering

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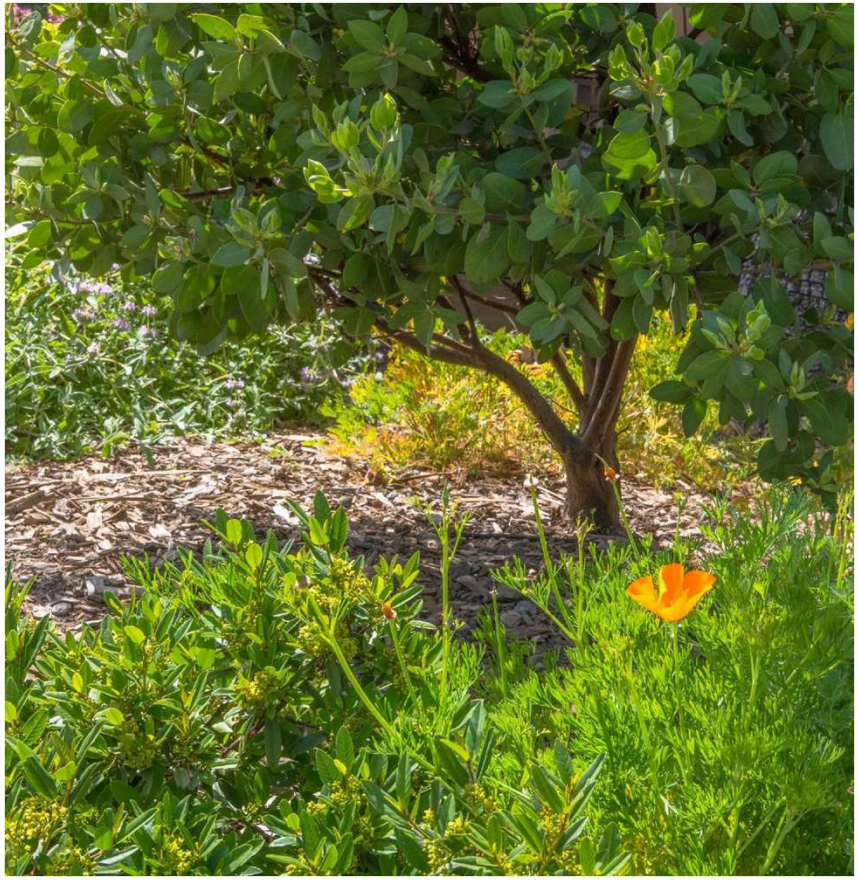
No Garden is No Maintenance-- That Would be No Fun!



- Mulching
- Weeding
- Pruning
- Seed sowing
- Transplanting
- Coppicing
- Harvesting bulbs
- Native American techniques for plant cultivation included all the above methods to ensure good supplies of the plants they depended upon.

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Places to View Native Gardens in Monterey County

- Pacific Grove Museum
- Lester Rowntree Native Garden
- Marina Coast Water Management District Well Site Community Gardens
- Carr Lake Garden in Salinas

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Public Places to View Native Gardens in Santa Cruz County

- Seymour Marine Discovery Center – UCSC
- Natural Bridges State Beach Visitor Center
- UCSC Arboretum and UCSC Farm
- Bay Street Reservoir – corner of Cardiff and Iowa next to the 7 Eleven
- Henry Cowell State Park Visitor Center
- Land Trust of Santa Cruz County – Water St.
- Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History
- Seabright Beach
- Sunset Beach
- UC Cooperative Center and UC Master Gardener Demonstration Garden in Watsonville
- Patrick J. Fitz Wetlands Educational Center (Pajaro Valley H.S.)

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Internet Resources

- Calscape https://calscape.org/
- Calflora https://www.calflora.org/
- UC Master Gardeners of Monterey Bay- Local Resourceshttp://mbmg.ucanr.edu/Read_An_Article/Local_Resources/
- California Native Plant Society https://www.cnps.org/
- Xerces Society https://xerces.org/
- Tilden Botanic Garden https:https://www.ebparks.org/parks/tilden/botanic_garden.htm
- Weed Gallery and Key to Identifying Weeds http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/menu.weeds.html
- California Native Grasslands Association: https://cnga.org/

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Helpful Books

- ***California Native Plants for the Garden*** by Bornstein, Fross & O'Brien. Cachuma Press 2005.
- ***Designing California Native Gardens*** by Keator, Middlebrook. University of California Press 2007.
- ***California Native Gardening*** by Helen Popper. University of California Press 2012.
- ***Growing California Native Plants 2nd Edition*** by Schmidt. University of California Press 2012
- ***Wild Suburbia: Learning to Garden with Native Plants*** *by Eisenstein*. Heyday 2016
- ***California Bees and Blooms*** by Frankie, Thorp, Coville, Ertter. Heyday 2014.

Additional References

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- Haff, T., Brown, M., Tyler, W. 2008. ***The Natural History of the UC Santa Cruz Campus.*** Santa Cruz: Environmental Studies Department University of Santa Cruz.
- Matthew, M., Mitchell, M 2015. ***Plants of Monterey County and Illustrated Field Guide 2nd Edition.*** : California Native Plant Society Monterey Bay Chapter.
- Ornduff, R., Faber, P., Keeler-Wolf, T. 2003. ***Introduction to California Plant Life Revised Edition.*** Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Tallamy, D.W., 2012. ***Bringing Nature Home – How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants***. Portland, Oregon Timber Press.

Sources of plant photos and gardens include Calflora, CalPhotos and independent photographers who have agreed to share their images.

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Help Us Grow!

Our follow-up survey provides us the tools we need to grow and improve the quality of our program.

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