

Recommended Plants for Pollinators & Beneficial Insects

California Central Valley Region



Monarch butterfly on showy milkweed¹; California native wildflower field border blooming in mid-spring². (Photographs by the Xerces Society / Stephanie McKnight¹ & Jessa Kay Cruz².)

Plant Selection

The plants on this list are recommended for use in pollinator habitat restoration and enhancement projects in agricultural landscapes. These species have been selected because they are attractive to a diversity of different bee species, and provide pollen and nectar resources throughout the season, provided that a minimum of three different plant species from each blooming period (early, mid, and late season) are selected. A majority of plants recommended are native, drought tolerant, easy to establish, and don't serve as alternate hosts to crop pests or diseases.

Native Species for Pollinators and Beneficial Insects

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	BLOOM	LIFE	FORM	SUN	WATER	SOIL TEXTURE	ADDITIONAL DETAILS
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Common yarrow	MID	P	F	☀️	L	ANY	🦋🐝🌿🚫🚫
<i>Agastache urticifolia</i>	Nettleleaf giant hyssop	MID-LATE	P	F	☀️	M	MEDIUM-COARSE	🦋🐝🚫
<i>Arctostaphylos densiflora</i> 'McMinn'	McMinn manzanita	EARLY	P	W	☀️	L	MEDIUM	🦋🐝🌿🐝
<i>Asclepias eriocarpa</i>	Woollypod milkweed	MID	P	F	☀️	M	ANY	🦋🐝🌿🐝🚫
<i>Asclepias fascicularis</i>	Narrowleaf milkweed	MID	P	F	☀️	M	ANY	🦋🐝🌿🐝🚫
<i>Asclepias speciosa</i>	Showy milkweed	MID	P	F	☀️	M	MEDIUM-COARSE	🦋🐝🌿🐝🚫
<i>Atriplex lentiformis</i>	Big saltbush	MID-LATE	P	W	☀️	L	ANY	🌿🚫
<i>Baccharis pilularis</i>	Coyotebrush	LATE	P	W	☀️	L	ANY	🦋🐝🌿🚫
<i>Baccharis pilularis</i> 'Pigeon Point'	Dwarf coyotebrush	LATE	P	W	☀️	L	ANY	🦋🐝🌿🚫
<i>Baccharis salicifolia</i>	Mule's fat	EARLY-MID	P	W	☀️	M	ANY	🦋🐝
<i>Berberis aquifolium</i>	Oregon grape	EARLY	P	W	☀️	L	ANY	🦋🐝🚫🚫
<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Concha'	California lilac 'Concha'	EARLY	P	W	☀️	L	MEDIUM-COARSE	🦋🌿🐝
<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Frosty blue'	Frosty blue California lilac	EARLY	P	W	☀️	L	ANY	🦋🌿🐝
<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	Common buttonbush	MID-LATE	P	W	☀️	M	ANY	🦋🐝🌿🐝
<i>Cercis occidentalis</i>	Western redbud	EARLY	P	W	☀️	L	ANY	🌿🐝🚫🚫
<i>Clarkia unguiculata</i>	Elegant clarkia	EARLY-MID	A	F	☀️	L	ANY	🌿🚫🚫
<i>Clarkia williamsonii</i>	Fort Miller clarkia	EARLY-MID	A	F	☀️	L	MEDIUM	🌿🚫🚫
<i>Collinsia heterophylla</i>	Chinese houses	EARLY	A	F	☀️	M	ANY	🌿

KEY

LIFE CYCLE—Annual; Biennial; Perennial

FORM—Forb; Woody; Grass

WATER NEEDS—Low; Medium; High

SUN ☀️ Full sun
 ☀️🌿 Full sun—partial shade
 🌿 Partial shade

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

🦋 Monarch nectar plant
 🐝 Larval host (butterfly, moth, specialist bee)

🌿 Attracts beneficial insects
 🐝 Bumble bee plant

🌿 Nest site
 🚫 Fire resistant
 🚫 Deer resistant

Native Species for Pollinators and Beneficial Insects *continued*

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	BLOOM	LIFE	FORM	SUN	WATER	SOIL TEXTURE	ADDITIONAL DETAILS
<i>Epilobium canum</i>	California fuchsia	LATE	P	F		L	ANY	
<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>	California buckwheat	MID-LATE	P	F		L	ANY	
<i>Eriophyllum lanatum</i>	Common woolly sunflower	MID-LATE	P	F		L	ANY	
<i>Eschscholzia californica</i>	California poppy	EARLY-MID	A, P	F		L	ANY	
<i>Euthamia occidentalis</i>	Western goldentop	LATE	P	F		H	ANY	
<i>Gilia capitata</i>	Globe gilia	EARLY-MID	A	F		M	ANY	
<i>Grindelia hirsutula</i>	Gumplant	MID-LATE	P	F		L	FINE-MEDIUM	
<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	Common sunflower	MID-LATE	A	F		M	ANY	
<i>Helianthus bolanderi</i>	Bolander's sunflower	MID-LATE	A	F		M	FINE	
<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>	Toyon	EARLY-MID	P	W		L	ANY	
<i>Lasthenia glabrata</i>	Goldfields	EARLY	A	F		M-H	FINE-MEDIUM	
<i>Layia platyglossa</i>	Common tidytops	EARLY	A	F		L	ANY	
<i>Lupinus albifrons</i>	Silver bush lupine	EARLY-MID	P	F		L	ANY	
<i>Lupinus densiflorus</i> var. <i>aureus</i>	Golden lupine	EARLY	A	F		L	ANY	
<i>Lupinus formosus</i>	Summer lupine	MID	P	F		L	ANY	
<i>Lupinus succulentus</i>	Arroyo lupine	EARLY	A	F		L	ANY	
<i>Monardella villosa</i>	Coyote mint	MID	P	F		L	ANY	
<i>Muhlenbergia rigens</i>	Deergrass	—	P	G		L-M	ANY	
<i>Nemophila maculata</i>	Fivespot	EARLY	A	F		M	COARSE	
<i>Nemophila menziesii</i>	Baby blue byes	EARLY	A	F		L	ANY	
<i>Oenothera elata</i>	Hooker's evening primrose	MID-LATE	B, P	F		M-H	ANY	
<i>Penstemon heterophyllus</i>	Foothill penstemon	EARLY-MID	P	F		L	ANY	
<i>Penstemon spectabilis</i>	Showy penstemon	EARLY-MID	P	F		L	MEDIUM-COARSE	
<i>Peritoma arborea</i> var. <i>arborea</i>	Bladderpod	EARLY	P	W		L	ANY	
<i>Phacelia californica</i>	California phacelia	MID	P	F		L	FINE-MEDIUM	
<i>Phacelia ciliata</i>	Great Valley phacelia	EARLY	A	F		L	ANY	
<i>Phacelia tanacetifolia</i>	Lacy phacelia	EARLY	A	F		L	ANY	
<i>Prunus ilicifolia</i>	Hollyleaf cherry	MID	P	W		M	ANY	
<i>Rhamnus californica</i>	California buckthorn	EARLY-MID	P	W		L	ANY	
<i>Rhamnus ilicifolia</i>	Hollyleaf redberry	EARLY-MID	P	W		L	ANY	
<i>Rosa californica</i>	California wildrose	MID	P	W		M	MEDIUM	
<i>Salix exigua</i>	Narrowleaf willow	EARLY	P	W		H	ANY	
<i>Salix laevigata</i>	Red willow	EARLY	P	W		H	FINE	
<i>Salvia chamaedryoides</i>	Germander sage	MID	P	F		L	ANY	
<i>Salvia clevelandii</i>	Cleveland sage	MID	P	F		L	MEDIUM-COARSE	
<i>Sambucus nigra</i> ssp. <i>cerulea</i>	Blue elderberry	EARLY-MID	P	W		M	ANY	
<i>Solidago canadensis</i>	Canada goldenrod	LATE	P	F		M	MEDIUM-COARSE	
<i>Symphotrichum chilense</i>	California aster	LATE	P	F		L	ANY	
<i>Trichostema lanceolatum</i>	Vinegarweed	LATE	A	F		L	ANY	

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	FORM—Forb; Woody; Grass	Full sun-partial shade	Larval host (butterfly, moth, specialist bee)	Bumble bee plant	Fire resistant
	WATER NEEDS—Low; Medium; High	Partial shade			Deer resistant

NRCS Conservation Planners, PLEASE NOTE: Before purchasing or installing any plants for a project, check each species' suitability for different NRCS Conservation Practices by using the NRCS California eVegGuide (<https://www.calflora.org/nrcs/>).

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