

San Francisquito Watershed Council

The San Francisquito Watershed Council is a nonprofit stewardship organization dedicated to fostering the health and diversity of the San Francisquito watershed.

www.SanFrancisquito.org
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Resources

Growing California Native Plants by Marjorie Schmidt

The Habitat Garden Book : Wildlife Landscaping for the San Francisco Bay Region by Nancy Bauer

Gardening with a Wild Heart: Restoring California's Native Landscapes at Home by Judith Larner Lowry

The California Landscape Garden: Ecology, Culture, and Design by Mark Francis

California Native Plants for the Garden by Carol Bornstein, David Fross, Bart O'Brien

www.sanfrancisquito.org • The San Francisquito Watershed Council website, featuring the downloadable *Streamside Planting Guide* for creekside landscaping.

www.cnps.org • The online home of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS), a nonprofit that promotes the conservation of native plants.

www.gardeningwithnatives.com • A site for the group of CNPS members dedicated to native plant gardening.

www.yerbabuenanursery.com • This site for a commercial native plant nursery in Woodside features a "how-to" guide and information on classes and native plant rebates.

www.laspilitas.com • This site for a commercial native plant nursery is filled with information, pictures, and ideas.

www.flowstobay.org • *The Bay-friendly Gardening Guide* put together by the San Mateo Countywide Stormwater Pollution Prevention program.

www.nativehabitats.org • This group works to restore and preserve native ecosystems, and their site includes a list of retailers and resources for native plants.

www.valleywater.org • The Santa Clara Valley Water District website includes information about rebates for county residents replacing lawns with water-efficient landscapes.



Cover photo by Arvind Kumar; upper left and lower right photos by Agi Kehoe.



Going native in your garden

Your yard can make a difference!

A watershed **is shaped by human activities as well as by topography, climate, rainfall, vegetation, and soil. By using native plants in your yard, you can help preserve the quality of water in our creeks and create a low-maintenance, erosion-resistant landscape that's part of the life-force of the natural communities in our watershed.**

Why go native?

Protect and restore the watershed. Native plants are part of our rich natural heritage. Some non-native plants seriously threaten the health of our watershed by invading creeks and dominating the riparian corridor. By planting natives, you help protect your local creek, its watershed, and San Francisco Bay.

Enjoy wildlife in your yard. You can transform your yard into a bird and butterfly retreat by providing the right habitat to attract these visitors. Even a small corner can make a big difference.

Create a low-maintenance garden. Natives are naturally adapted to the local climate. Incorporating them into your yard will help create a stable landscape that requires little maintenance.

Use less water. Native plants are better able to withstand drought than their non-native counterparts. By planting a water-efficient garden, you can reduce your water bill and conserve water resources.

Prevent erosion. Native plants are adapted to the weather, soil, and topography of our region. Their deep roots hold soil in place while slowing surface water runoff. This helps to prevent erosion.

Go chemical-free. Most native species have evolved to resist insects and disease and do not need chemical fertilizers or pesticides. This means savings for you and reduced pollution in our watershed.

A sampling from the native plant palette

Currants and gooseberries *Ribes species*

This large group of natives includes California pink currant (*Ribes malvaceum*) and golden currant (*Ribes aureum aureum*). These species have fragrant foliage with good fall color, and some grow as large as 6' tall. Their beautiful flowers are popular with hummingbirds and other birds, and some of the fruits are quite tasty. These plants grow well under oaks, and once established, don't need watering.



California fuchsia
Epilobium canum



This spreading, drought-tolerant perennial has beautiful silver-green foliage . It flowers from summer to fall, and its scarlet flowers provide nectar for hummingbirds.

Coyote brush *Baccharis pilularis*

This large, fast-growing evergreen perennial grows up to 12' tall and is very useful for hedges or fence lines, especially since it is deer-resistant and requires little water, once established. It flowers from August to December, attracting butterflies to its white flowers.

Hoary manzanita *Arctostaphylos canescens*

This beautiful small tree grows 3' to 6' high and has dark reddish-brown smooth bark and white or light pink flowers. Its name, "little apple" in Spanish, comes from its fruit, a bright red berry resembling a tiny apple. Manzanita makes a wonderful accent piece in a native garden and is attractive to birds.

California poppy *Eschscholzia californica*

True "California gold," these annual flowers begin blooming around April. Mix them with other flowers or use them in the borders of your rock garden. They reseed for future years' blooms.





Douglas iris *Iris douglasiana*

These perennials have tall, sword-shaped leaves and are easy to grow. They flower from March to May, with blooms ranging in color from cream or lavender to deep violet. Dormant in summer, they need minimal maintenance and can used for rock gardens, groundcover, borders, wetlands, ponds, and streams.

California wild lilac *Ceanothus griseus*

Also called Carmel creeper, this hardy, evergreen, fast-growing shrub is a favorite for groundcover and produces eye-catching small clusters of fragrant, light blue blossoms in spring.

Woodland strawberry *Fragaria vesca*

A spreading perennial with evergreen foliage, white flowers, and edible red fruits, this strawberry spreads by above-ground runners. This is a good groundcover for dry to damp shady areas or sunny areas with moderate water.



Yerba buena *Satureja douglasii*

A member of the mint family, this has aromatic, dark glossy green leaves, can withstand dry conditions, and does well as groundcover and in shady garden borders.

California fescue
Festuca californica



This broadleaf evergreen bunch grass is dense and clumping and produces showy flower stalks (green to purple) in April to June. It is excellent for landscaping, as it is visually interesting year-round. It grows in sun to part shade and needs very little water.

California meadow sedge *Carex pansa*

A short, rich green grass, this plant establishes quickly, remains evergreen, and spreads by rhizomes to form a carpet tolerant of moderate foot traffic, making it good ground cover around stepping stones. It grows in full sun to part shade and needs moderate water, but less than regular lawns.

Rosy buckwheat *Eriogonum latifolium grande* var. rubescens

Also called red buckwheat, this easy-to-grow, drought-resistant plant has rich blue-green foliage and pink or red flowers. It works well in rock gardens and dry borders, is an important butterfly plant, and also attracts house finches.

Photo credits: Currant, fuchsia, iris, strawberry, and fescue by Arvind Kumar; poppy by Loun-Loun Chua.