



Anstine-Audubon's Native Plant Favorites

25 Easy-to-Grow Species for Your Garden or Landscape

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The following 25 native plant species are among the more than 70 species used in the habitat restoration project here at the preserve. These species were selected as representatives of Southern California's coastal sage scrub and chaparral plant communities for several reasons. They are easy to grow, drought tolerant, and require minimal maintenance. They also are attractive and benefit wildlife by providing food and shelter. Please consider using native plants in your own garden or landscape.

While most of the species listed are true natives, some are cultivars that maintain the beneficial characteristics of the original native species but may be of a different size, color or growth pattern. Cultivars may be more acceptable in formal gardens or landscape applications. The manzanita (*Arctostaphylos*) and wild lilacs (*Ceanothus*) are examples of native species that have numerous cultivars.

More information on San Diego area native plants, native plant gardening and where to purchase native plants is available at the following websites.

Las Pilitas Nursery, Escondido www.laspilitas.com

Moosa Creek Nursery, Valley Center www.moosacreeknursery.com

Tree of Life Nursery, San Juan Capistrano www.treeoflifenuresery.com

California Native Plant Society www.cnps.org, San Diego Chapter www.cnpsd.org

Here are a few important terms used in the plant descriptions.

Cultivar – abbreviation for “cultivated variety,” intentionally created by cultivation

Drought deciduous – plants that adapt to periods of drought by losing their foliage

Hybrid – a plant derived from cross pollinating two different plant species

Native plant – a plant species that was present before the Europeans arrived

Perennial plant – a plant that lives for many years, as opposed to annuals

*Black-throated
Hummingbird*



Black Sage

Black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) is an aromatic shrub in the Mint family. It is characteristic of coastal sage scrub and chaparral, reaching 3 to 6 feet tall when mature. Numerous small, white to pale-lavender, short-tubular blossoms are borne in clusters on upright flowering stems from March to June. During this period it is attractive to honeybees and hummingbirds. Black sage naturally sheds some of its leaves in summer and fall when it is hot and dry, replacing them in response to winter rain. Despite this, it is acceptable for use in yard landscaping where a rustic look is desired.

Bladderpod

Bladderpod (*Peritoma arboyea*) is a distinctive shrub native to coastal sage scrub, growing from 3 to 6 feet tall. Its gray-green foliage is comprised of three leaflets per leaf which emit a slightly unpleasant odor. Bladderpod attracts and supports Harlequin Bugs (*Murgantia histrionica*), which feed on the plant's sap but are harmless. Unusual and showy deep-yellow flowers bloom primarily from February to May. The namesake bladder-shaped seed pods form shortly thereafter. It is drought-adapted and acceptable for use in garden landscaping.

Blue-eyed Grass

Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*) is a perennial grass-like plant in the Iris family. It forms distinct clumps within grassland and coastal sage scrub. It looks best in the spring when it grows 1 to 2 feet tall. Its narrow, blade-like leaves grow stiffly upward and are flatter compared to true grasses. The striking violet-blue flowers bloom from March to June on thin upright stems. Each blossom looks like a bluish, six-pointed star with a bright yellow center. Blue-eyed grass plants go dormant in summer and fall, becoming brown and wilted in appearance like the grasses and herbs around them. This species can be used as an accent with other drought-tolerant and native plants.

Bush Monkey-flower

Bush monkey-flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) is a shrub reaching 3 to 5 feet tall when mature. It is nicknamed “sticky monkey-flower” from its newer leaves and stems which have a sticky coating. Commonly associated with coastal sage scrub, it is very attractive in spring and early summer when showy red to orange and yellow, tube-shaped flowers are in bloom. They are a favorite natural food source for hummingbirds. Most of their narrow leaves turn brown and shed when it gets hot and dry. Once established, bush monkey-flower is drought-tolerant and is recommended for native plant gardens. It can be trimmed back in the fall to maintain a compact structure.

California Buckwheat

California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), sometimes referred to as flat-topped buckwheat, is a robust shrub that characterizes coastal sage scrub. It commonly grows 3 to 5 feet tall when mature. Its narrow leaves are arranged in tight bundles on its stems. From mid-spring to early-fall it produces conspicuous clusters of white to pale-pink flowers. They are important nectar sources for bees and butterflies. California buckwheat plants are also used for nesting by towhees and finches. This is the main food plant for the larvae of a local butterfly called Behr’s Metalmark (*Apodemia virgulti*). Like other sage scrub plants, it becomes dry and drops some of its foliage in hot and dry weather. It is an attractive and valuable choice for use in drought-tolerant garden plantings.

California Thrasher



California Fuchsia

California fuchsia (*Epilobium canum*) is a ground-hugging shrub rarely getting above 2 feet tall. Typically found on rocky ground within coastal sage scrub, its bold-red, tubular flowers appear in mid-to-late summer when other flowers are finished blooming. California fuchsia is another important food source for hummingbirds. Their narrow leaves dry up during the fall but reappear in response to spring rain. Its attractive flowers, later blooming season, and drought-tolerance make it worthy for native plantings. It can be cut back in January to promote attractive new growth.

California Sagebrush

California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*) is a strongly aromatic shrub that often is co-dominant with California buckwheat in coastal sage scrub. It grows 3 to 5 feet tall when mature and is most attractive when its feathery foliage is at its peak during the spring. Although a member of the Daisy family, its flowers are not showy and usually appear in summertime. Its narrow leaves are arranged in tight bundles on the stems. From mid-spring to mid-fall the plant produces conspicuous clusters of white to pale-pink flowers. They are important nectar sources for bees and butterflies. It is also used for nesting by wrens and towhees. Like other sage scrub plants, California sagebrush becomes dormant in hot dry weather, shedding much of its foliage. Mature plants become leggy if not trimmed. A good low growing alternative for the garden or landscape that remains compact is the cultivar “Montara Sagebrush” (*Artemisia californica* ‘Montara’).

California Sunflower

California sunflower (*Encelia californica*) is a mound-forming shrub native to coastal sage scrub that typically grows 2 to 4 feet tall. It is most attractive when covered by numerous brown-centered yellow flowers resembling large daisies. Honeybees love it. The smooth-edged leaves are usually shed during the summer and fall dormancy. California sunflower is hardy once established and recommended for drought-tolerant native landscaping. It can be cut back in the fall to keep a compact shape. Light summer watering will keep it green.

Chaparral Mallow

Chaparral mallow (*Malacothamnus fasciculatus*), also called bush mallow, reaches 4 to 6 feet tall and sometimes is equally wide. The branches are long and intertwined. Their gray-green leaves are lobed and slightly serrated, with a soft, sand-papery texture. Medium-sized pink flowers are arranged in bundles on the stems. Chaparral mallow is tolerant of heat and dry condition. It is a good candidate for use in landscaping. The blossoms are attractive to honeybees and other insects, as well as birds such as Bushtit, Bewick's wren, and Lesser goldfinch.

Cleveland Sage

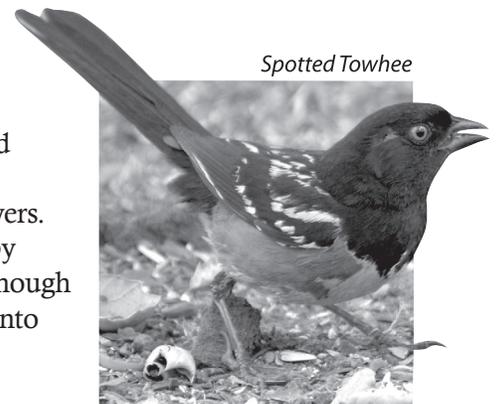
Cleveland sage (*Salvia clevelandii*), also known as fragrant sage, is a member of the Mint family. The scent of its strongly aromatic foliage is often detected from a distance. Cleveland sage reaches 3-6 feet tall at maturity, a typical height for coastal sage scrub species growing inland. Compared to other sages, this species features larger and richer lavender blossoms in clusters on upright flowering stems that bloom from March to May. During this period it is attractive to honeybees and hummingbirds. Like other sages, Cleveland sage naturally sheds some of its leaves in summer and fall during hot and dry conditions. New leaves grow in response to winter rain. It is an excellent garden plant and considered by most people to have the best fragrance of all the local sages. Fall trimming of most of the new growth will maintain a compact structure. Autumn sage (*Salvia greggii*), Purple sage (*Salvia leucophylla*) and its low growing variety (*Salvia leucophylla* 'PointSal') are other sage alternatives that will fit well in any garden.

Deerweed

Deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*) is a mound-forming member of the Pea family that has undergone recent taxonomic study. Sometimes referred to as "California broom," deerweed is more commonly known by its former scientific name, *Lotus scoparius*. It is a familiar component of coastal sage scrub. The roots of this plant use nitrogen-fixing bacteria to enhance the soil, thus benefiting other nearby plants. At maturity it is 2 to 4 feet tall and looks its best following winter rains. Its thin stems become covered by small, trifoliate leaf and numerous small, yellow flowers in clusters. Deerweed is a good nectar source for bees. It is also the main food-plant for the larvae of the Acmon blue, (*Plebejus acmon*), a native butterfly. It is suitable for native plant gardens that don't require species that remain green throughout the year.

Fuchsia-flowered Gooseberry

Fuchsia-flowered Gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*) is a spiny shrub with upright-to-arching branches that reach 4 to 6 feet tall and is native to coastal sage scrub and chaparral. This species is most attractive in spring and early-summer when its scalloped leaves are present and its branches are festooned with tubular red flowers. The blooms hang downward like little red lanterns and, are commonly visited by hummingbirds. Numerous round and bristly-hairy fruits appear afterwards. Although fuchsia-flowered gooseberry drops its leaves in summer, it can be incorporated into native plant landscapes for the flowers and as a natural spiny barrier.



Spotted Towhee

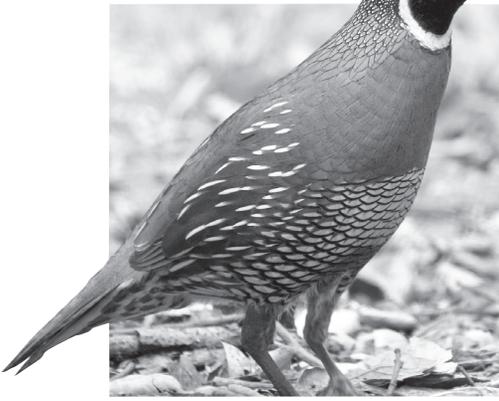
Giant Wild Rye

Giant wild rye (*Elymus condensatus*), formerly known as *Leymus condensatus*, is a perennial native grass forming clumps that grow 5 to 8 feet tall with flower stalks that reach even higher. These appear in spring and summer. They are found primarily in coastal sage scrub and prefer well-drained, drier soils rather than more moist environments which support other large, undesirable grasses. Giant wild rye can be used as an accent plant in native plant landscapes. A cultivar alternative that does not become as large or rangy is *Leymus condensatus* 'Canyon Prince'.

Island Snapdragon

The Island or Island Bush Snapdragon (*Gambelia speciosa*), formerly known as (*Galvesia speciosa*), with its bright red flowers is an excellent plant for attracting hummingbirds. The leaves are deep green and maintain their color all year. The native species forms long, brittle stems that can reach 15 feet if given support from adjacent shrubs or trees. It is easy to grow and requires minimal water. A more compact cultivar, without the vine-like stems, is *Gambelia* 'Firecracker' which forms a 3-4 foot mound about 5 feet wide. It can be trimmed to maintain a smaller size.

California Quail



Laurel Sumac

Laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*) is a large shrub in the same plant family as cashew, mango, and poison-oak. It is native to coastal sage scrub, reaching a height of 8 to 15 feet. It has large curved and up-curved leaves that emit a strong odor when crushed. Numerous clusters of creamy-white flowers appear in spring. These develop into a multitude of small fruit in fall and winter that are important to many kinds of birds and other animals. The shrub's large size provides cover and nest sites for many wildlife species. Laurel sumac is sensitive to cold temperatures and will lose its leaves if hit by frost. It is drought-tolerant, stays green all year and is appropriate for native plantings if there is room.

Lemonade Berry

Lemonade berry (*Rhus integrifolia*) is a large native shrub related to laurel sumac. It is commonly found in coastal sage scrub where it grows from 8 to 15 feet tall. It has generally flat, leathery leaves that do not emit an odor. Dense clusters of white flowers, sometimes blushed with pink, appear in spring. These develop into waxy-covered berries that are sour or tart, the basis for its common name. The plant's large size provides cover and nest sites for many kinds of birds and other animals. Lemonade berry is hardy and drought-tolerant and can be used in native plantings if there is room for it to grow. Lemonade berry can easily be pruned to form a solid hedge or border since it stays green all year. It is not bothered by pests or disease.

Manzanitas

This is a group of hardy shrubs in the Heath family, with smooth, reddish-brown bark and evergreen leaves. Most manzanitas belong to the genus *Arctostaphylos*, and one is in the genus *Xylococcus*. The former generally have flat leaves that are gray-green, oval to round in outline. The latter have two-toned leaves that are curved. All manzanitas bear clusters of white-to-pink flowers. These are followed by small, round fruit resembling tiny apples, the basis for their common name. Three kinds of manzanitas were planted at the Anstine Preserve: *Arctostaphylos densiflora* 'Howard Mc Minn', *Arctostaphylos edmundsii* 'Carmel Sur' (a groundcover), and Mission manzanita (*Xylococcus bicolor*).

Mexican Elderberry

Mexican elderberry (*S. Niera subsp. coerulea*) is a large, sometimes tree-like, shrub attaining a height of 20 to 25 feet when mature. It typically occurs along creeks and around ponds, producing many clusters of creamy-white flowers from spring to late summer. These are important nectar sources for bees and hummingbirds. The flowers are followed by clusters of small berries that are utilized by other birds and small mammals. Elderberry plants have compound leaves that are shed in winter. Elderberry's large size and tangled branch structure makes this a dubious plant choice for most landscape settings. However, with regular fall pruning it can be an attractive plant if given room to grow.

Purple Needle-grass

Purple needle-grass (*Stipa pulchra*) is a perennial native grass that forms low mounds 1 to 2 feet tall in grassland and coastal sage scrub. It is sometimes referred to as "bunchgrass." Its flexible leaves and delicate flower stalks are most robust and attractive in spring. The plant becomes dry and dormant, shedding its seeds by summer. Purple needle-grass is drought-tolerant. Along with its cousin, the foothill needle-grass (*Stipa lepida*), it can be used as a filler or accent in native plant landscapes.

San Diego Sunflower

San Diego sunflower (*Bahiopsis laciniata*) is similar in many ways to its cousin, the California sunflower. It is a mound-forming shrub native to coastal sage scrub. It grows 2 to 4 feet tall and is very attractive when covered by numerous yellow, daisy-like flowers. San Diego sunflowers generally bloom later in spring and summer and they have wavy-edge leaves that remain longer on the plants. The plant is hardy once established and a good choice for drought-tolerant landscapes.

Scrub Oak

A compact cousin of the familiar tree oaks, scrub oak (*Quercus berberidifolia*) is an evergreen shrub growing 6 to 15 feet tall with dense foliage. The leaves have prickly edges. A widespread component of chaparral vegetation, its tough branches form a tangled canopy. Scrub oaks offer protective cover and nesting sites for birds and other wildlife. They also produce numerous acorns that are prized by jays and woodpeckers, as well as deer and woodrats. These trees can be cut back to keep their shape.

Toyon

Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) is a familiar native shrub inhabiting both coastal sage scrub and chaparral. It is also known as California holly. Hollywood got its name because the nearby hillsides were covered with Toyon, which the local residents thought was holly. Toyon is evergreen with slightly serrated leaves and can reach 6 to 20 feet tall. Clusters of white flowers bloom in spring and mature into berries resembling tiny apples which turn red during fall and winter. These are highly prized as food by many kinds of birds and small mammals. Toyon is drought-adapted once established and is highly recommended for native plant landscapes.

White-flowered Currant

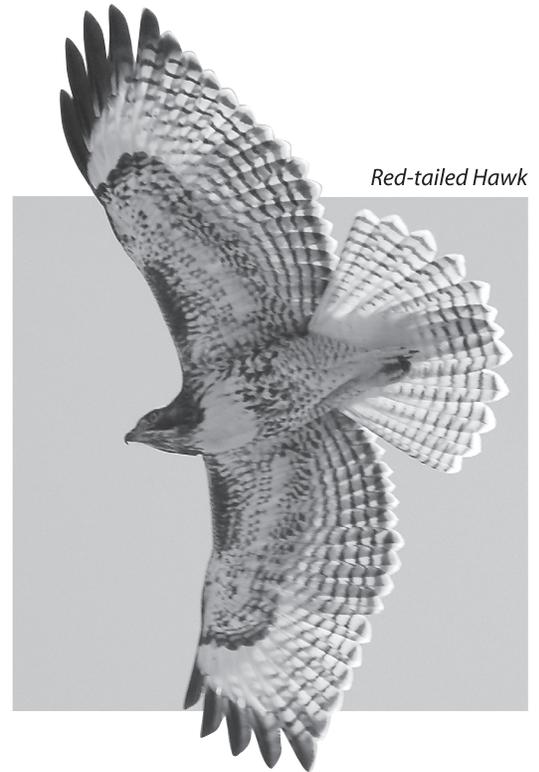
White-flowered currant, also known as winter currant (*Ribes indecorum*) is a kinder cousin of the spiny fuchsia-flowered gooseberry. It occurs in coastal sage scrub and chaparral, growing generally more upright from 6 to 15 feet tall. Its leaves and flower stems are covered with soft hairs. Pendant clusters of white flowers appear in winter and early spring. They mature into fleshy yellow berries that are eaten by various kinds of birds and other wildlife. They shed their leaves by fall. White-flowered currant is a worthwhile choice for use in native plant landscapes.

White Sage

White sage (*Salvia apiana*) is a shrub in the Mint family associated with coastal sage scrub. It can grow to be the largest of our native sages, reaching 4 to 8 feet tall when mature. Its smooth, white-to-pale green foliage has a distinctive, pungent aroma that distinguishes it from other sages. Numerous whitish flowers bloom in clusters on long and slender, ascending-to-upright stems. The stems persist after blooming season, which is from March to May. During this period white sage attracts bees and hummingbirds. It naturally sheds some of its leaves in summer and fall. New foliage grows in response to winter rains. It is drought-tolerant and recommended for use in yard landscaping.

Wild Lilac

Wild lilacs are evergreen shrubs in the genus *Ceanothus*. They are characteristic of chaparral vegetation and include many different species and cultivars. Some wild lilacs grow upright, from 5 to 8 feet tall, while others grow as low mounds or as prostrate ground cover. *Ceanothus* are known for showy displays of flowers ranging from white and lavender to deep-blue. Some varieties also offer a pleasant fragrance. They maintain their rich, green foliage all year and are drought tolerant and hardy once established. There are over 40 varieties of *Ceanothus* available so it is almost certain that one can be incorporated into a native plant garden or landscape. Some popular examples of *Ceanothus* cultivars are: *Ceanothus griseus horizontalis* 'Yankee Point' – a low growing groundcover, *Ceanothus* 'Joyce Coulter' – a medium size shrub, and *Ceanothus* 'Ray Hartman' – a small tree.



Red-tailed Hawk

