

Why Garden with Natives?

CA natives are adapted to their local climate, water availability and soil. Therefore, they generally require less maintenance (water and fertilizer) than traditional landscape plants.

Natives attract 10 to 50 times as many wildlife species as nonnatives! Natives blend the home landscape with the surrounding natural environment and provide a stopping point for wildlife in the urban setting.

California native plants are unique and diverse. California has the greatest number of endemic plants of any state in the U.S.! Approximately one third of native California plants are classified as rare, endangered or threatened. Adopting them in your landscape helps preserve these treasures.

General Garden Maintenance

Optimal planting time is in the fall and early spring when the soil is cool and rains have begun.

Native plants generally do not require fertilizers. However, depending on the condition of your soil, an organic soil amendment or mycorrhizal inoculants may be recommended to enhance the soil and improve plant health.

Native plants will require water regularly until they have established. Once established, little watering is required.



The Native Grassland Garden

California Native Grasslands

California grasslands are composed of perennial bunchgrasses and sedges with wildflowers and bulbs dispersed throughout.

Native grassland species can improve soil quality and soil stabilization in the garden, as well as providing habitat for a multitude of species.

Additionally perennial grasses have a long green foliage period, which creates a garden rich in green color with vibrant splashes of spring wildflower color.

Few are aware that California has lost 99% of its native grasslands. By creating your own garden grassland you can help preserve this diverse ecosystem.

Plant Suggestions

Achillea millefolium—Yarrow
Aster chilensis—California Aster
Carex species—Sedges
Chlorogalum pomeridianum—Soap Root
Eshscholzia californica—California Poppy
Festuca species—Fescue species
Grindelia species—Gumplant species
Lupinus species—Lupines
Muhlenbergia rigens—Deer Grass
Nassella species—Needlegrasses
Prunella vulgaris var *lanceolata*—Selfheal
Ranunculus californica—Buttercup
Sidalcea malviflora—Checkerbloom
Solidago californica—CA Goldenrod
Sisyrinchium bellum—Blue-Eyed Grass
Viola adunca—Western Dog Violet

Lawn Substitutions

A garden meadow is a perfect lawn substitute because native bunchgrasses and sedges require less water to irrigate than a traditional turf lawn, and most handle foot traffic and lawn mowers. Switching to a meadow is an excellent method of reducing water use and saving money in the home landscape. Meadow species are versatile, they can suit most soil types and tolerate sunny to partially shady sites. Additionally, these species provide a wide display of foliage color and texture.

Plant Suggestions

Agrostis hallii—Hall's Bentgrass
Carex pansa / *tumulicola* / *praegracilis*—Sedge species
Danthonia californica—CA Oatgrass
Deschampsia caespitosa—Tufted Hairgrass
Festuca idahoensis—Idaho Fescue
Festuca occidentalis—Western Fescue
Festuca rubra 'molate blue' - Red 'Molate Blue' Fescue
Festuca 'Siskyou Blue' - 'Siskyou Blue' Fescue
Koeleria macrantha—June Grass
Leymus triticoides—Creeping Wild Rye
Melica californica—CA Melic Grass
Poa secunda—Pine Bluegrass

