

# USE OF LOCAL NATIVE SPECIES

## INTRODUCTION

The use of locally native plants for all landscaping and revegetation projects adjacent to streams and riparian areas is required for new and major redevelopment. It should also be the preferred choice for homeowners involved in any landscaping and revegetation projects within the riparian corridor since native plants are ecologically best suited to a particular creek environment and will provide the most habitat and slope protection with the least amount of maintenance over time.

## HOW TO FIND AND SELECT NATIVES IN THE WATERSHED

When vegetating the creek, choose species growing nearby and make sure the plants used were propagated from seeds, cuttings or divisions collected from the same local creek or watershed. Try local home-grown native plants via direct installation of seeds, divisions and cuttings on the creek bank. Oaks, buckeye and bay trees are easy to grow from seed planted directly into moist creek bank soil. Cottonwood and willow are easy to grow from cuttings stuck directly into moist sandbars. California rose, California blackberry, snowberry, mugwort, beardless wildrye and others can be propagated readily from vegetative offsets and division.

## GUIDELINES FOR PLANTING NATIVE SPECIES

- Geared toward establishing or enhancing the native habitat.
- **Ensure that the initial planting density is high**, averaging 6 to 12 feet on center, to create canopy coverage and closure quickly. Include a range of species in the plant palette to fill in the understory, mid-story and overstory.
- **Avoid hardscape** such as patios, walkways and decks within these areas to minimize human impacts and maximize habitat value.
- **Maintain and monitor plantings** for a 3 to 5 year period to ensure healthy establishment. Performance and success criteria include percentage of allowable mortality and goals for an annual percentage of vegetative cover.
- Slowly eliminate the need for human intervention, including irrigation, weed control, replanting, pruning, etc. The final goal is to discontinue maintenance activities when habitat is self sustainable.

California Native Plant Society's Web site:  
[www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org)

**LIST OF NATIVE PLANT SPECIES**

The following list is a conglomerate of riparian plant species that exist within the boundaries of Santa Clara County. The distribution of one plant may or may not overlap with the next one on the list. Some of them would never be seen together in the wild due to preferences for different

microclimates, soil substrates and hydrologic regimes. If you are unfamiliar with local native plant ecology, consult local experts for help selecting the best plant palette for your particular creek or follow Nature’s example and copy what you see in a wild area located close to your project site.

**TREES:**

- Big Leaf Maple**  
*Acer macrophyllum*
- California Box Elder**  
*Acer negundo var. californicum*
- California Buckeye**  
*Aesculus californica*
- White Alder**  
*Alnus rhombifolia*
- Western Sycamore**  
*Platanus racemosa*
- Fremont Cottonwood**  
*Populus fremontii ssp. fremontii*
- Black Cottonwood**  
*Populus trichocarpa*
- Coast Live Oak**  
*Quercus agrifolia*
- Valley Oak**  
*Quercus lobata*
- Narrow-leaved Willow**  
*Salix exigua*
- Red Willow**  
*Salix laevigata*
- Yellow Willow**  
*Salix lucida ssp. lasiandra*
- Arroyo Willow**  
*Salix lasiolepis*
- Blue Elderberry**  
*Sambucus mexicana*
- California Bay Laurel**  
*Umbellularia californica*

**SHRUBS AND VINES:**

- California Sagebrush**  
*Artemisia californica*
- Mule Fat**  
*Baccharis salicifolia*
- Virgin’s Bower**  
*Clematis ligusticifolia*
- Toyon**  
*Heteromeles arbutifolia*
- Coffeeberry**  
*Rhamnus californica*
- California Wild Grape**  
*Vitis californica*
- Brown Dogwood**  
*Cornus glabrata*
- California Rose**  
*Rosa californica*
- California Blackberry**  
*Rubus ursinus*
- Snowberry**  
*Symphoricarpos albus var. laevigatus*

- Douglas’ Baccharis**  
*Baccharis douglasii*
- Western Goldenrod**  
*Euthamia occidentalis*
- Beardless Wildrye**  
*Leymus triticoides*
- Sticky Monkey Flower**  
*Mimulus aurantiacus*
- California Figwort**  
*Scrophularia californica*

**GROUND COVERS AND HERBACEOUS PERENNIALS:**

- Mugwort**  
*Artemisia douglasiana*
- Western Aster**  
*Aster chilensis*

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