



NATIVE PLANTS FOR COASTAL GARDENS

Theodore Payne Foundation for Wild Flowers and Native Plants

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These plants are recommended for gardens on the immediate coast. Exposure requirements apply only to coastal gardens; the same plants may require more shade, if planted inland.

TREES

Lyonthamnus floribundus ssp. aspleniifolius (Santa Cruz Island ironwood) – 15-35' H x 15' wide – Rare species with fern-like foliage, attractive bark and clusters of white flowers in spring. Evergreen.

Platanus racemosa (western sycamore) – 30-80' H x 30' W – Big, fast-growing, winter-deciduous beauty. Great for wildlife; appreciates water but moderately drought-tolerant, once established.

Prunus ilicifolia ssp. lyonii (Catalina cherry) – 10-40' H x 15' W – Small-to-medium evergreen tree with edible fruit that birds enjoy.

Quercus agrifolia (coast live oak) – 20-75' H x 30-60' W – Large, slow-growing and evergreen – a local icon.

SHRUBS

Arctostaphylos auriculata, A. catalinae, A. glauca, A. hookeri, A. insularis, A. pajaroensis (manzanita) – Size varies by species. – Full to part sun. Beautiful, sculptural evergreen shrubs or small trees, most with late fall or winter flowers that attract hummingbirds.

Ceanothus arboreus (Catalina ceanothus) – 25' H x 12' W – Full to part sun. Lovely tree size lilac with large leaves and pale blue to white flowers in late winter or early spring. Lightly fragrant.

Ceanothus thyrsiflorus and cultivars (blueblossom) – 6-20' H x 15' W – A large ceanothus with lightly fragrant blue flowers.

Dendromecon harfordii (Island bush poppy) – 8' H x 6'+ W – Full to part sun. Stunning evergreen shrub with showy yellow flowers almost year round.

Eriogonum arborescens, E. cinereum, E. giganteum, E. grande var. rubescens, E. latifolium, E. parvifolium (buckwheat) – Size varies by species. – Full sun. Wide variety of growth habits, leaves and flower colors – to fit any garden! Wonderful butterfly plants.

Garrya elliptica 'James Roof' (James Roof coast silktassel) – 12' H x 12' W – Full sun to part shade. A large hedge with foot-long flower clusters.

Heteromeles arbutifolia (toyon) 10-15' H x 10-15' W – Full to part sun. A handsome evergreen shrub with red berries in winter. Local native; great for wildlife.

Malva (Lavatera) assurgentiflora and cultivars (Island tree mallow) – 10' H x 10' W – Full to part sun. Broad maple-like leaves and magenta hibiscus-like flowers on a fast-growing evergreen shrub.

Morella (Myrica) californica (Pacific wax myrtle) – 20-30' H x 10-20' W – Full to part sun. Excellent evergreen hedge or privacy screen. Native to the Santa Monica Mountains.

Peritoma (Isomeris) arborea (bladderpod) – 4' H x 4' W – Full sun. An interesting shrub with intricate nearly year-round yellow flowers and unique seed pods. Foliage smells somewhat peppery.

Rhus integrifolia (lemonade berry) – 10' H x 10-30' W – Full sun to part shade. Good as an informal hedge. Berries are sticky and tart and can be used to make a lemonade-like drink.

Salvia apiana, S. leucophylla, S. mellifera (sage) – Size varies by species. – Full sun. All are fragrant and attractive to pollinators.

(over)

GROUNDCOVERS

Achillea millefolium (common yarrow) – 18 in. H x 2-3' W, spreading by rhizomes – Full to part sun. A good lawn substitute that tolerates mild foot traffic and occasional mowing. Flowers attract beneficial insects.

Arctostaphylos groundcovers (manzanita) – Size varies by species/cultivar. – Full to part sun. All are drought-tolerant with the characteristic red-brown bark. Flower color ranges from white to pink.

Baccharis pilularis 'Pigeon Point', ***B.*** 'Twin Peaks' (dwarf coyote brush) – 2' H x 6-8' W – Full sun. Lovely, evergreen low-care groundcover; great for erosion control and attracting beneficial insects.

Camissoniopsis (Camissonia) cheiranthifolia (beach sun cups) – 6-12 in. H x 3' W – Full sun. This sprawling dune plant has soft grey green foliage and bright cheery yellow flowers.

Ceanothus maritimus groundcovers (CA lilac) – Size varies by species/cultivar – Full to part sun. All are drought-tolerant. Flower color ranges from blue to white.

Fragaria chiloensis (coast strawberry) – Less than 6 in. H x spreading – Full to part sun. Pretty white flowers and small edible fruit.

Heliotropium curassavicum (salt heliotrope) – 6 in. H x spreading – Full to part sun. This unusual plant has curious flowers and succulent stems and foliage. Spreads aggressively.

Ribes viburnifolium (Catalina perfume, evergreen currant) – 2'H x 5'W – Full sun to shade. An attractive drought-tolerant groundcover for shade. Leaves are fragrant when crushed.

Salvia spathacea (hummingbird sage) – 1-2' H x spreading slowly by rhizomes – Full sun to light shade. Low-growing sage with fragrant foliage and magenta flowers.

PERENNIALS

Erigeron glaucus and cultivars (seaside daisy) – 1' H x 2' W – Full sun. Tidy mounding plants with cheerful daisy-like flowers that bloom almost year-round. Excellent for borders and parkways.

Iris douglasiana and cultivars (Douglas iris) – 1' H x 2' W – Full sun to shade. Color varies by cultivar, charming and beautiful in spring.

Leptosyne (Coreopsis) gigantea (giant coreopsis) – 4' H x 1' W – Full sun. A remarkable succulent daisy with yellow flowers. This local coastal native is usually noticed during spring bloom. Summer deciduous.

Mimulus aurantiacus (sticky monkeyflower) – 2' H x 2-3' W – Full to part sun. Showy yellow flowers in spring; many cultivars with flowers in other colors.

GRASSES AND GRASS-LIKE PLANTS

Carex praegracilis (slender sedge) – 1' H x spreading – Sun to shade. Lush grass-like texture.

Elymus (Leymus) condensatus 'Canyon Prince' (Canyon Prince giant wild rye) – 4' H x 4' W – Full sun. Blue-green upright foliage similar to flax.

Festuca species & cultivars (fescue) – Size varies by species/cultivar; most about 1-2' H x 1-2' W – Full to part sun. Neat bunchgrasses with green or blue-green foliage.

Festuca rubra (creeping red fescue) – 1-2' H, spreading by rhizomes – Full to part sun. A suitable lawn alternative; needs regular water. The cultivar 'Molate' grows 6-12 in. high.

Juncus species (rush, wiregrass) – 2-3' H x spreading – Sun to shade. Vertical accent for moist or dry areas.

Muhlenbergia rigens (deer grass) – 2-4' H x 4' wide – Full sun. Large, ornamental bunchgrass with tall (to 6') graceful flower spikes in summer.

Sisyrinchium bellum (blue-eyed grass) – 1' H x 1-2' W – Full to part sun. Iris relative with lovely blue-purple flowers in spring. Summer dormant.