

ATTRACTING BIRDS TO YOUR GARDEN

(Using) Locally Native Plants of the Central Sierra Nevada



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The following is a list of California native plants commercially available as container plants at the time of compilation (10/27/98). Nursery plant selections are usually based on aesthetic values, hardiness, and adaptability to garden situations. Many beneficial native plants are not available based on their failure to meet some of these criteria but often they may be plants having no current demand, or they just haven't been given a try. If you can't find a particular plant in your favorite nursery, you may be able to order it through them from another nursery or ask them to consider putting it in their own inventory. Most of the plants on this list will be readily available, although some species may only be found through revegetation nurseries, many of which do not sell retail. (See last page for some nursery resource sites).

It cannot be overstated that for the majority of plants listed here, sufficient sunlight is essential for good fall color, and flower, seed, and fruit production, even for those woodland species associated with fairly dense overstory canopies. Aesthetically, plants may thrive with lower levels of sunlight but produce little or no flowers, fruit, or seed.

ACER (MAPLES)

Maples attract many beneficial insects and have highly-prized winged seeds, known as "samaras", both of which attract a variety of birds, including evening and black-headed grosbeaks. Tender leaf buds eaten by grosbeaks, Cassin's and purple finches, pine siskins. The sap of certain maples is as delicious to some birds as the maple syrup derived from the trees is to humans. Sap extracted by red-breasted, Williamson's, and red-naped sapsuckers, plus many woodpeckers.

Acer circinatum

vine maple

Deciduous shrub or small tree. Native to moist woods, stream banks in mountains of northern California. Crooked, sprawling, and vine-like in the forest shade, with many stems from the base, or single-trunked small tree 5-35 ft. high in full sun. Leaves 5-11 lobed, 2-6 in. wide and as long; light green turning orange, scarlet, or yellow in the fall; new spring foliage usually has reddish tints. Tiny reddish-purple flowers in clusters, April-May, followed by paired winged fruit which look like little red bowties among the green leaves. One of the most airy and delicate western natives. Use under a canopy of tall conifers where its blazing fall color is brilliant contrast. Its contorted, leafless branches make an intricate pattern in winter. Loses its vine-like characteristics in open situations. Select in fall for best forms of autumn color. Dependable fall color, even in shade. **A garden must.**

Acer macrophyllum

big-leaf maple

Deciduous tree 20 to 50 ft. high, smaller in the Sierras; broad crown, often multi-trunked. Deeply-lobed bright green leaves up to 1 foot across, long wisteria-like clusters of tiny yellow flowers in April, buttery-yellow fall color. Deer-resistant, a fine shade tree for moist or irrigated soils, foliage looks best with afternoon shade and regular watering. Handles heavy snow loads. Fast growing.

Acer negundo var. californicum

California box elder

Deciduous tree 20-60 ft. high, usually smaller; broad, rounded crown. Native to moist stream banks and gullies. Bright green 3-parted leaves turn yellow in fall. Vigorous, fast growing, makes a good windbreak. An interesting feature is the unusual long, dangling strings (up to 1 foot long) of winged seeds, hanging like fringe all along the length of the branch. Especially attractive to evening grosbeaks.

Aesculus californica

California buckeye

Multi-stemmed shrub or small tree reaching 10-20 ft. high; broad-spreading crown. Fragrant, striking flowers in white foot-long clusters bloom in spring. New growth brilliant apple-green. Silvery-white branches and pear-shaped fruit. When leafless, creates an interesting fall and winter effect. Deciduous, triggered by summer drought, but holds leaves until fall with irrigation. Moist or dry soil, sun, or shade. Flowers attract several species of hummingbirds and this plant is a superior attractant of butterflies and other nectar-loving insects, and insectivorous birds.

ALNUS (ALDERS)

Alders are a common riparian species found along our rivers and streams. With over 90% of our historic riparian forests and habitat lost in California already, you can create a little endangered patch of the planet right in your own backyard. The *Alnus* genus is a great place to start. Other good choices would include *Acer macrophyllum*, *Acer negundo* (var. *californicum*), *Betula occidentalis*, *Calycanthus occidentalis*, *Salix* genus, *Cephalanthus occidentalis*, *Cornus* genus, *Physocarpus capitatus*, *Populus* genus, and *Platanus racemosa*. Alders produce catkins in abundance and provide an important food source at times when insects, fruit, and many seeds are in poor supply.

Alnus rhombifolia

white alder

Deciduous tree, 30 - 90 ft. high. Young trees have smooth, gray bark, very open branching, with pyramidal form; older tree becomes denser with a more rounded crown. Hardy, vigorous, handsome tree with glossy, dark green, veined, oval, toothed leaves. Interesting yellow-green spring catkins turn yellow in winter. A widespread and common riparian species. Although found right at water's edge, this species does quite well in average garden soils when given moderate amounts of water. The catkins of this tree provide important food for birds of the finch family: pine siskins, goldfinches, and grosbeaks, and many migratory species.

Amelanchier alnifolia

western serviceberry

Deciduous shrub or small tree 3 ft. to 20 ft. high, usually under 8 ft. in the Sierras. Pure white, forsythia-like flowers in early spring, followed by 1/4" to 1/2" blue-purple fruits that **drive birds wild**. 1" blue-green leaves turn shades of purple, crimson, orange, and yellow in fall. Tolerates heat, cold, drought, poor soil. A fine background shrub for sun or light shade. One of the best bird attractants: lures some of the most reclusive species, such as the spectacular pileated woodpecker, out into the open. Other species might include Townsend's solitaire, black phoebe, downy and other woodpeckers, chickadees, thrushes, western tanager, northern oriole, and northern mockingbird. **A garden must.**

Aquilegia formosa

western columbine

Hardy perennial 1-1/2 - 3 ft. high, loosely erect. Decorative scarlet-yellow, nodding, spurred flowers bloom spring-fall. A color not found in the hybrid columbines, and longer blooming. Lacy blue-green foliage like maidenhair fern. Best in shade. Tolerates full sun in cool climates or with abundant moisture. Often, hummingbirds will establish their territories based on individual plants and will stake their claim in your yard if it includes this graceful species. Attracts rufous, calliope, and Anna's hummingbirds. **A garden must.**

Arbutus menziesii

madrone

Evergreen tree or large shrub from 20 - 60 ft. high; broad, round crown. Stately tree with large, glossy, dark green, magnolia-like leaves, satiny mahogany-red, peeling bark, and large clusters of creamy white flowers in spring, followed by orange to scarlet berries. Best in well-drained soil. An extremely important mast crop, providing an abundance of food high above the ground where migrating flocks can stop over and feast. Berries attract band-tailed pigeons, cedar waxwings, evening grosbeaks, wild turkeys, and the crow-sized pileated woodpecker, which has been seen awkwardly hanging upside down like a giant chickadee from the berry clusters. Flowers attract hummingbirds, including the pugnacious rufous hummingbird.

ARCTOSTAPHYLOS (MANZANITAS)

Versatile group of ornamental evergreen shrubs ranging from mat-forming to upright shrubs. All have handsome, leathery, small to medium leaves usually with a refined appearance, interesting branch structure and colorful bark, and require no supplemental water once established. Small, decorative, bell-shaped, fragrant flowers appear in winter to early spring followed by attractive apple-shaped berries. Most require average to fast drainage and infrequent summer water, though many cultivars have improved tolerance to heavy soils and garden water. Except for a few basic requirements, they are exceptionally pest free and easy to grow foundation plants, large-scale ground covers. Many cultivars with enhanced berry production.

Attracts many birds that consume the colorful manzanita fruits. Species might include the fox sparrow, California and spotted towhees, cedar waxwing, grosbeaks, mountain and western bluebirds, scrub jay, Steller's jay, band-tailed pigeon, wren, mockingbird, California and mountain quails, and other sparrows. This is one of the earliest-blooming Sierran plant groups, providing valuable nectar to hummingbirds (including calliope, rufous, and year-round resident, Anna's) when other plants have not yet bloomed and are unavailable as a food source.

***Arctostaphylos bakeri* 'Louis Edmunds'**

pink manzanita

Evergreen shrub 5 - 6 ft. high, upright branching. A tasteful combination of blue-green leaves, pale pink bell-shaped flowers, burgundy-purple bark and good garden watering tolerance.

***Arctostaphylos densiflora* 'Howard McMinn'**

McMinn's manzanita

Evergreen shrub 4 - 6 ft. high, 5 - 7 ft. wide; dense, mounding. Compact foliage, mahogany-red stems, clusters of pink bell-shaped flowers. Neat and tidy; low in leaf litter. Probably the easiest to grow and most used manzanita. **A garden must.**

***Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* 'Big Bear'**

bearberry

Similar to *A. uva-ursi* 'Point Reyes' (below) but with larger berries. **A garden must.**

***Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* 'Point Reyes'**

Pt. Reyes bearberry

Small scale ground cover 1 - 2 ft. high with a 3 - 5 ft. spread. Small, rounded, dark green leaves are whorled around wine-red stems. Clusters of pink flowers in mid-winter. Tolerance to a variety of soils, heat, and cold.

***Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* 'Woods Red'**

bearberry

Compact and cold hardy cultivar 6 - 12 in. high spreading to 8 ft. wide. Refined with neat rows of densely set, dark green leaves on red stems, pink flowers, and reliable crop of bright red berries. **A garden must.**

ASTER (ASTERS)

California native varieties and their cultivars, when available in nurseries, offer abundant color summer through late fall. One of many freely self-sowing wildflowers that produce ample amounts of small seed valuable to quail, towhees, sparrows, and other ground-feeding birds.

Aster alpigenus

mountain meadow aster

Hardy perennial 2 - 16 in. high. Large, showy, sky-blue asters with yellow centers above compact clumps of attractive grass-like leaves. Full sun or light shade with water. Blooms June - September. Fine edging or rock garden plant, or small scale ground cover. In many gardens, asters are often the last big showy flower display of the year.

***Betula occidentalis* (*B. fontinalis*)**

western river birch

Large shrub or clumping small tree to 12 - 15 ft. Bark smooth, shiny, cinnamon-brown. Leaves 2 in. long, turning pale clear yellow in fall. A native streamside tree, it likes moisture but needs good drainage as well. Produces catkins, a valuable food source for many birds. **A garden must.**

Calycanthus occidentalis

spice bush

Deciduous shrub 4 - 12 ft. high and wide, arching. Exotic mahogany-red flowers like small water lilies, long summer bloom. Lush, glossy, bright green, 2 - 6 in. long, pointed, oval leaves with a spicy, wine-like fragrance when crushed. Yellow fall color. Best with afternoon shade inland. Interesting background shrub or vigorous screen plant. Associated with small wooded streams, an excellent choice for woodland gardens. Mix with other riparian plant species, and the associated bird species will feel right at home. This shrub provides habitat in the form of cover, nest sites, and fragrant flowers that attract insects by the hordes. Great plant for insectivorous birds. **A garden must.**

CEANOOTHUS (WILD LILACS)

A major component and genus throughout the entire Sierra mountains and foothills, occurring in many elevational zones with many different species -- "common as dirt" and having a major influence on associated plant and tree species and the wildlife habitats that they support. What pines and firs are to the tree canopy of the Sierras, ceanothus is to the shrub and ground cover layers. Consequently, birds are closely interlinked with this plant group, as it affects their feeding, nesting, and migration patterns. Seeds provide food for many species, especially ground feeders. Flowers attract hummingbirds, beneficial predatory insects, butterflies, and other nectar-loving insects. Plants furnish excellent deer fodder.

Ceanothus cordulatus

mountain white thorn

Evergreen shrub 3 - 4' high, 3 - 6' wide. Small, narrow, rounded, soft blue-green leaves, sparsely situated along, and nicely contrasted with, the whitish branches, terminating in multiple 2 - 3" long thorny branch tips. The minimal leaf mass gives *C. cordulatus* a very spare, twiggy, open-framed appearance. Excellent color contrast to a dark-green backdrop. Masses of tiny, white flowers. Not suitable for gardens below 2,500 ft.

Ceanothus lemonii

Lemon's ceanothus

Low mounding, compact shrub with masses of small clusters of tiny, cobalt-blue flowers, a shade of blue not often found in the plant world. Leaves dark-green, leathery, 1/2" wide, 1" long. **A garden must.**

Ceanothus prostratus

Very low, mat-forming, evergreen shrub 2 - 4 in. high, stems rooting as they trail 2 - 8 ft. across. A much loved and recognized forest native that forms carpets of neat and refined, forest green, holly-like, 1/4 in. leaves. At its happiest in loamy, well-drained soil and afternoon shade, or with protection from wind, in cool summer or mid- to high elevations. It blooms puffy little clusters of powder blue or pastel lavender flowers. Slow-growing and fussy out of its range. Much more attractive than astroturf and almost as low-growing. Looks great cascading down banks and over walls.

Mahala mat / squaw carpet***Ceanothus velutinus***

A large, dense evergreen shrub, 2 - 4' high, and twice as wide. Soft, glossy, dark-green leaves, slightly cupped or down-turned along their edges, give this shrub a very lush appearance. Used as tobacco by Native Americans. Large, puffy, clear-white flower clusters, 2 - 3" across. A common east slope species.

tobacco bush***Cephalanthus occidentalis var. californicus***

Deciduous shrub or small tree 6 ft. to 30 ft. high, usually under 8 ft. In the Sierras. Very fragrant, globose clusters of tiny white flowers at the ends of branches in summer, attracts birds and beneficial insects. Luxuriant, bright green willow-like leaves turn yellow in fall. Fast and easy-to-grow with ample water, good for around ponds and perennial streams or the edges of watered lawns. **A garden must.**

buttonwillow***Cercis occidentalis***

Deciduous shrub or small tree 6 to 15 ft., usually smaller. The quintessential flowering shrub of the foothills; profusion of 1/2" sweet pea-like flowers open magenta from purple buds, mature to pink. Blooms early spring on bare branches. Heart-shaped, blue-green leaves turn yellow, orange, and red in fall. Decorative purple seed pods. Specimen patio tree or shrub for the border in well-drained soils. Deer resistant, drought-tolerant, tolerates regular irrigation in well-drained soils, sun, or light shade. **A garden must.**

western redbud***Clematis lasiantha***

Small deciduous vine 12 - 15 ft. Attractive clusters of 1-in. white flowers with many long stamens bloom March-June, followed by billowy clusters of feathery-tailed seeds that catch the sunlight. Light green compound leaves. Full sun or light shade. Tolerates drought and heat. An interesting small vine for fences and arbors. Viny tangles provide good cover and nesting material.

chaparral virgin's bower***Clematis ligusticifolia***

Hardy deciduous vine to 20 ft. Vigorously flowering, April-August. Clusters of fragrant, 1-in., creamy-white petaled flowers with showy stamens. Lime-green leaves divided into 5 - 7 tri-lobed leaflets, turn yellow in fall. Fall display of silvery-plumed seeds in large rounded clusters attracts birds. Like other clematis, prefers shaded root zones. Fast-growing choice for chain link fences, screening utility yards.

western clematis***Cornus glabrata***

Deciduous shrub or small tree 4 to 12 ft., usually smaller. Smaller, narrower lance-shaped leaves create a finer-textured appearance than other dogwoods; good red to burgundy fall color. Thicket-forming, good for erosion control. Easy-to-grow shrub for sun or part shade with irrigation. Thrives in low-elevation gardens. Fall display of white berry-like fruit is very attractive to birds, including the western kingbird. **A garden must.**

brown / smooth dogwood***Cornus nuttallii***

Deciduous tree 12 to 75 ft., usually under 30 ft. in the Sierras. All season interest; aristocratic, heavy-textured 3" wide flowers are actually large white bracts surrounding a center cluster of tiny green flowers. Stately, open habit, horizontal branching. Scarlet-red clusters of berry-like fruit in fall. Prominently-veined oval leaves turn all shades of yellow, orange, pink, and purple. Difficult to grow unless grown in an area with moist but well-drained forest or woodland soils. Attracts band-tailed pigeon, northern flicker, hermit thrush, cedar waxwing, warbling vireo, purple finch, pileated woodpecker. **A garden must.**

western dogwood***Cornus sessilis***

Deciduous shrub or small tree 9 to 12 ft. Colorful all year; lime green winter stems, shining, rich green leaves are prominently veined, turn shades of yellow and pink in fall. Small creamy- white flowers in 1" clusters followed by decorative, shiny black, egg-shaped fruit at the branch tips. Easy-to-grow shrub or patio tree for part shade with irrigation. Provides important food for grouse, quail, woodpeckers, and bluebirds.

blackfruit dogwood

Corylus cornuta* var. *californica**California western hazelnut**

Hardy deciduous shrub 5 - 12 ft. high; open, multi-trunked. Many season interest. Pendulous, chartreuse catkins showy on bare branches in winter-spring, followed by delicious hazelnuts. Velvety, 3-in., rounded leaves turn bright yellow in fall. Distinctive horizontal branching attractive in winter. In sun, needs moisture. Drought tolerant in shade. The large hard-shelled nut of this shrub is no match for the likes of hairy, downy, and other woodpecker species. **A garden must.**

Cupressus macnabiana**MacNab cypress**

Evergreen shrub or tree 10 ft. to 30 ft. high, very broad crown. A locally uncommon native conifer of serpentine and other harsh soils. Host plant to a disjunct population of a Coast Range butterfly. Handsome blue-green to gray-green juniper-like foliage, interesting silvery-gray cones persist for years. Fast-growing off serpentine, tolerates heat, drought, rocky soils, deer resistant. Handsome tall screen or background shrub. Good shrub for windbreaks. Provides year-round dense evergreen cover for birds and their nesting sites.

Dicentra formosa**western bleeding heart**

Leafless flower stalks 8 - 18 in. high, with clusters of pendulous pale or deep rose flowers on reddish stems April - June. Blue-green foliage. Variety 'Sweetheart', beautiful white flowers, light green leaves, blooms May - October. *D. F. oregana*, native of Siskiyou Mountains in northern California, grows about 8 in. high, has translucent blue green leaves, cream-colored flowers with rosy-tipped petals. Hummingbirds are highly attracted to tubular flowers; and although the flower of this species is not tubular, it is still an excellent attractant that flowers early, helping to establish hummingbird populations in your yard. **A garden must.**

Eschscholzia californica**California poppy**

Perennial usually grown as annual. Leaves blue-green, finely-divided. Single flowers vary from pale yellow to deep orange, about 2 in. wide, with satiny petals. Blooms close at night and on gray days. Can't be surpassed for naturalizing on sunny hillsides, in dry fields, vacant lots, along drives, in parking strips, in country gardens. Broadcast seed in fall on cultivated, well-drained soil; if rains are late, water to keep ground moist until seeds germinate. Summer watering not necessary but forces more bloom. Full sun. For large-scale sowing, use 3 - 4 lbs. of seed per acre. Reseeds freely if not crowded out by weeds. Birds attracted to seeds, especially quail.

FRAGARIA (WILD STRAWBERRIES)

Attracts a variety of ground-feeding birds, such as Brewer's blackbird, California quail, mountain quail, California towhee, spotted towhee, northern mockingbird, black-headed grosbeak, and northern flicker.

Fragaria californica**California strawberry**

Perennial ground cover. Plant form and foliage similar to the domestic strawberry plant, though leaves are not semi-evergreen, not as glossy, and fruit is smaller. Has nice fall color.

Fragaria vesca**wild strawberry**

Perennial ground cover similar to *F. californica*, but lower growing, neater foliage.

Fraxinus latifolia**Oregon ash**

Hardy deciduous tree 20 - 80 ft. high. Pretty 5-parted leaves grow 6 - 12 in. long, turn yellow in fall. In full sun this moderately fast growing tree creates a beautiful compact, broad crown; perfect as a shade tree. Easy to grow; tolerates summer drought. Winged seeds are a preferred food of evening grosbeak and purple finch.

Heteromeles arbutifolia**toyon/Christmas berry**

Evergreen shrub 6 - 10 ft. high; dense, rounded; or small, multi-trunked tree to 15 ft. Large clusters of scarlet-red berries, loved by birds, decorate plants November - January. Broad clusters of creamy white flowers showy in early summer. Leathery, dark green, smooth, and glossy leaves 2 - 4 in. long. Easy-to-grow, colorful screen or bank cover, for sun or light shade. Attracts wren-tit, northern flicker, hermit thrush, western bluebird, American robin, northern mockingbird, cedar waxwing and grosbeaks. **A garden must.**

Keckiella breviflora**gaping penstemon**

A semi-evergreen, 2 - 3' mounding to fountain-shaped shrub. Small orange-yellow penstemon-shaped flowers. Very drought tolerant. Easy to grow. Good hummingbird plant.

Lilium humboldtii**Humboldt's tiger lily**

The moist, fleshy stems, leaves, and flowers of this lily belie the dry habitats in which it is found. Tall, single stems from 3' to up to 10' tall are lined with many whorls of lanceolate leaves, up to 10 to 20 thick fleshy leaves per whorl, more than other lilies. Very large 3", downward nodding, orange flowers whose petals (modified sepals) are darkly spotted like a leopard, not a tiger! A perfect selection for drier areas of the garden.

Lilium pardalinum**leopard lily**

Hardy perennial 3 - 8 ft. high, erect. Stunning, waxy, orange, 3 in. trumpet-shaped flowers with recurved petals and maroon spotting in the throat. Nodding flowers of 1 - 10 bloom May - July. Lustrous, rich green, strap-shaped leaves to 6 in. long in whorls. Prefers, and grows taller in, moist shaded gardens. Attracts hummingbirds, including rufous, Anna's, and calliope.

Lilium washingtonianum**Washington lily**

Hardy perennial 2 - 6 ft. high, erect. One of the most aristocratic wildflowers, rivaling and resembling the Easter lily in flower. Magnificent 3 in., waxy, pure white, trumpet-shaped, fragrant flowers, up to 20 per plant, held horizontally to the main stem. Flowers mature to pink, then purple, bloom July - August. Unlike *L. pardalinum*, this is a lily of dry habitats, best with some shade in hot climates. Attracts hummingbirds, especially the rufous.

Lonicera hispidula* (var. *vacillans*)*pink wild honeysuckle**

Semi-evergreen vine or trailing ground cover, stems 3 to 6 feet long. Neat pairs of small, rounded dark blue-green leaves along stems, turn purplish in winter. Pink ½" long tubular flowers at branch tips followed by showy clusters of translucent orange berries in fall. Easy-to-grow vine or ground cover for dry shade but responds well to irrigation. Fruits eaten by Townsend's solitaire, American robin, cedar waxwing, towhees, and hermit thrush, among others. Excellent hummingbird attractant. **A garden must.**

Lonicera involucrata**twinberry**

Deciduous shrub. Native to moist areas, California to Alaska and eastward. Densely foliaged plants 5-10 ft. high. Dark green, oval leaves 2 - 5 in. long. ½ in. long, tubular, paired flowers, yellowish tinged red, each surrounded by 2 united bracts that enlarge as fruit forms, becoming bright red and finally black. The twin berries are black. Plants bloom March - July. Fruits eaten by Townsend's solitaire, American robin, cedar waxwing, towhees, thrasher, and hermit thrush, among others. Excellent hummingbird attractant.

Lupinus albus**silver bush lupine**

Semi-evergreen shrub 2 - 5 ft. high, rounded. Foot-long spikes of violet-blue sweet-pea shaped flowers with yellow banner petals in a big summertime display. Striking, silvery-silky, palmately compound leaves look good nearly all year. Beautiful dry bank cover or accent for the shrub border. Full sun, well-drained soil. Tolerates heat, nutrient-poor soil. Seed for ground-feeding birds, especially quail, and nectar for hummingbirds.

Mahonia pinnata* 'Ken Hartman' (syn. *Berberis*)*California Oregon-grape**

Evergreen shrub to 4 - 5 ft. high; rigid, upright branching. Similar to *M. aquifolium* but with wavy-edged, toothed and spiny leaves. Foliage emerges polished bronzy-red, then shining lime-green, maturing to a lustrous dark blue-green. Very architectural; a fine foundation shrub, barrier, or hedge for sun or shade. Deer resistant. Many birds eagerly consume the large blue berries of this shrub, including cedar waxwing, varied and hermit thrushes, American robin, and northern mockingbird.

Mahonia repens* (syn. *Berberis aquifolium* var. *repens*)*creeping mahonia**

Hardy, semi-prostrate shrub to 2 ft. high, 3 - 6 ft. wide; spreading by underground stems. 3- to 7-parted leaves to 6 in. long with soft bristles and oval leaflets. Leaves emerge bronzy-orange, mature dark blue-green. Plum winter coloring and scattered bright red older leaves. 3 in. clusters of primrose-yellow flowers followed by blue-purple berries. Excellent large-scale ground cover, low hedge or foundation shrub. Deer resistant.

MIMULUS (MONKEYFLOWERS)

An interestingly diverse group of plants, not only in foliage and flower color, but also in habitats and water requirements. They range from woody-stemmed, bushy shrubs growing on dry, rocky slopes, very drought tolerant (as in *M. aurantiacus*) to *M. cardinalis* with its moist, fleshy stems and leaves growing in conditions which can include standing water. They all have tubular flowers in a variety of showy colors ranging from yellow, to peach, pink, cardinal red, maroon, and shades in between. Seeds and flowers attract birds.

***Mimulus aurantiacus* (*Displacus aurantiacus*)**

sticky monkeyflower

California native to 4 ft. tall, with sticky foliage and 1-1/2 in., buff-orange, funnel-shaped flowers. Drought tolerant. **A garden must.**

Mimulus cardinalis

scarlet monkeyflower

Hardy perennial 2 - 4 ft. high. Long spring-fall bloom of large, velvety, cardinal-red tubular flowers takes you by surprise. Freely-branched, freely-flowered on erect to semi-erect leafy stems, gray-green ovate leaves. Full sun or part shade with water. Tolerates heavy wet soils. Excellent hummingbird plant. **A garden must.**

Mimulus guttatus

yellow or seep monkeyflower

Hardy perennial, sometimes biennial, 1 - 3 ft. high; erect, leafy stalks. Many 1-in. long, clear bright yellow, tubular flowers with spotted brown throats; long-blooming from spring to fall. 1 in. long-toothed triangular leaves. Spreads by creeping rootstocks to form large colonies in wet places. Sun or shade with moisture. Tolerates heavy wet soil.

PENSTEMON (PENSTEMONS OR BEARDTONGUES)

First-class hummingbird attractant with beautiful tubular flowers in a variety of blues, purples, reds, and pinks, more than 50 species native to California, ranging from low mat-forming types to more upright, shrubby forms.

Penstemon azureus

azure penstemon

Hardy sub-shrub 1-1/2 - 2 ft. high, basal tufts. A striking combination of large, gaping, indigo-blue tubular flowers, and powder blue, waxy, lanceolate leaves that clasp the stem. Flowers open from violet-blue, yellow-tipped buds, on many-flowered stems. Long summer bloom from May - August. Handsome edging, border perennial or rock garden plant for well-drained soil. Tolerates heat, cold, wind, and drought.

Penstemon heterophyllus* ssp. *purdyi

foothill penstemon

Sub-shrub 1 - 2 ft. high stems upright to spreading. Big displays of showy violet-blue tubular flowers in spike-like clusters attract attention from June - September. Linear dark green leaves 1 - 3 in. long. A beautiful blue-flowered border perennial, striking mixed with shrubs in dry gardens. Sun or light shade. Very drought and heat tolerant.

Penstemon newberryi

mountain pride

Hardy evergreen sub-shrub to 1 ft. high; compact, and mounding or mat-forming. One of the showiest wildflowers; spectacular display of large, hot-pink, trumpet-shaped flowers decorate our mountain highways in summer. Small, leathery, dark-green leaves densely set. A collector's item and fine edging, small-scale ground cover or rock garden plant for well-drained soil. Full sun or light shade; tolerates drought, cold, wind.

Philadelphus lewisii* var. *californicus

wild mock-orange

Hardy deciduous shrub 3 - 9 ft.; upright, arching. Masses of sweet-scented, pure waxy white, 1 in. cross-shaped flowers, with a tuft of yellow stamens, bloom several weeks in late spring to early summer. 3 in. pointed, oval, light-green leaves turn clear yellow in fall. Easy, vigorous and beautiful shrub for sun or light shade, any soil. Fragrant flowers attract an abundance of insects for insectivorous birds. **A garden must.**

Physocarpus capitatus

ninebark

Deciduous shrub, hardy in any climate. Name comes from peeling bark, which often shows several layers. Resemble spiraeas and are closely related, with round clusters of tiny white flowers in spring or early summer. A very beautiful riparian species forming large colonies along wooded streams. To 8 ft. tall, with toothed and lobed 2-in. leaves and dense clusters of white flowers. Sun or shade, average soil. Average water requirement. Attracts many species, including American goldfinch, yellow warbler, and flycatchers, which nest and forage for insects in the foliage of this showy shrub.

PINUS (PINES)

Pines dominate the Sierras and their foothills with a variety of species. They have a major influence on most California bird species, providing nesting sites high in the branches for some and nesting cavities in the decaying parts of both live and dead trees. They also supply nutritious sap that exudes from maturing cones and wounds in the bark caused by insects, tree falls, fire, sapsuckers, and some woodpeckers. The manipulated appropriations of the sap by sapsuckers and woodpeckers bestow feeding opportunities on many other bird species. But especially important are the nutritious, high-protein seeds which are eaten by a long list of birds. A partial list may include pygmy, white-breasted, and red-breasted nuthatches, chickadees, junco, some woodpeckers (particularly white-headed woodpecker), towhees, mourning dove, red crossbill, black-headed and evening grosbeaks.

Pinus jeffreyi

Hardy high altitude tree not at best in low areas. Drought resistant. Moderate to 60 - 120 ft. Attractive in youth with silver gray bark and bluish foliage. One of best natural bonsai trees. Furrows of bark have vanilla odor. Symmetrical in youth; straight trunked with short, spreading, often pendulous branches. Upper branches ascending form open, pyramidal. Needles in 3s, 5 - 8 in., blue-green. Cones 6 - 12 in., reddish brown, oval. Cone doesn't feel prickly when you hold it in your hand.

Jeffrey pine

Pinus lambertiana

Hardy evergreen tree to 200 ft. high; open, pyramidal crown. Attractive in youth; whorled branches of smooth, pale gray bark and soft, blue-green, 3 - 4 in. needles. Beautiful, 10 - 20 in. long, cylindrical, light-brown cones. Fine-textured, blue-green foliage softens coarser textured plants. Full sun or light shade in well-drained soil.

sugar pine

Pinus sabiniana

Evergreen coniferous tree 30 ft. to 100 ft. high. Long, soft, blue-green to gray-green needles up to 10" long, semi-pendulous. Beautiful, very large decorative cones with pine nut sweeter and larger than pinyon pine nuts, a staple of the Maidu Indian diet. Open crown and long needles give a fine-textured appearance; foliage color contrasts well with dark gray bark. Bush when young, a fast-growing, blue-gray color screen tree tolerant of extreme heat, drought, and poor soil. An often overlooked pine that fills in very nicely, becoming more dense and compact under garden conditions. One of the best pines for low elevation gardens. **A garden must.**

gray pine / foothill pine

Platanus racemosa

Deciduous tree 30 - 80 ft. high; broad, open crown. Picturesque and colorful; gracefully twisting branches with chalky white bark that flakes, leaving jigsaw-puzzle patterns on trunk. Big light-green, maple-like leaves. Pendant chains of ball-like seed clusters are prized for winter arrangements. Handsome and very fast-growing shade tree. Tolerates heat, wind, needs regular water. Good for windbreaks. Seeds are a favorite food of goldfinches and other birds.

California sycamore

POPULUS (COTTONWOODS/ASPEN)

The trees in this genus offer important benefits in many forms to birds. A common riparian genus whose canopies provide the shaded, cool, moist habitat conditions along rivers and streams so important to nesting species and their young, especially in arid regions. Also essential to birds that use these waterways as migratory corridors, and as stopovers for food and drink. The tree trunks are utilized by sapsuckers who drill numerous wells through the outer bark for the sugary sap and nutritious cambium layers. These wells collect, store, and restock themselves and are used upon many return visits. They also attract many insects and other birds, who then feed on both the insects and the sap.

Attracts red-breasted, Williamson's, and woodpeckers, hummingbirds, nuthatches, kinglets, warblers, goldfinches, grosbeaks, waxwings, Oregon junco, white-crowned sparrow, and many butterflies. The leaf buds and catkins (which contain tiny nutlets) attract many other birds, such as purple finch, evening grosbeaks, siskins, and chickadees. Another benefit is the cottony seed coatings that are designed for wind dispersal of seeds from the parent plant. This cottony material tangles and clumps together forming masses of downy streamers in and about the trees. This material is collected by birds for use in the construction of their nests: to help bond nesting materials together, for insulation, and to create a soft inner lining.

Populus fremontii

Hardy deciduous tree 40 - 60 ft. or higher; pyramidal crown in youth, broad and spreading when mature. Lime-green, lustrous, triangular leaves, 2 - 4 in. wide, flutter with a breeze. Useful for blocking highway noise when planted in mass. Lemon-yellow fall color, buff-colored branches, chartreuse, pendant, winter catkins. Fast-growing wind break (or sound break), tall screen. Pretty planted against dark evergreens.

Fremont cottonwood

Populus tremuloides

quaking aspen

Deciduous tree known for rapid growth to 20 - 60 ft. Eminently suitable for country places where fast growth, toughness, and low maintenance are considerations. Native throughout western mountains. Trunk and limbs smooth, pale gray-green to whitish. Dainty, light green, round leaves that flutter and quake in slightest air movement. Brilliant golden-yellow fall color. Generally performs poorly or grows slowly at low elevations. Needs moist soil; best with regular, deep watering. Good background tree for native shrubs and wildflowers.

Populus trichocarpa

black cottonwood

Hardy deciduous tree 100 - 180 ft. high; broad, open crown. Shimmering, dark green, narrowly-triangular leaves, with silver undersides, turn golden in the fall. Large, balsam-scented buds and grayish-white branches are attractive in winters. Handsome, fast-growing windbreak tree. Needs regular moisture. Tolerates wind and cold.

PRUNUS (CHERRIES)

Probably one of the best groups of plants for attracting birds. All producing extremely large volumes of fruit and widespread throughout the Sierras. Attracts Bullock's oriole, ring-necked pheasant, Townsend's solitaire, mountain bluebird, band-tailed pigeon, cedar waxwing, hermit thrush, many woodpeckers (including hairy and downy), scrub and Steller's jays, Swainson's and varied thrushes.

Prunus emarginata

bitter cherry

Deciduous shrub 3 to 12 ft. Small racemes of fragrant, tiny white flowers in spring followed by a showy display of translucent red berries and yellow fall color. Thicket-forming, tolerates drought, rocky soils. Older specimens develop stunning silver and red, shining bark. Often available only through revegetation nurseries.

Prunus ilicifolia

hollyleaf cherry

Evergreen shrub to 15 ft. or small tree to 30 ft.; compact, mounding crown. Polished deep green, leathery, broadly-oval, toothed leaves emerge bright apple-green. Showy elongated cluster of fragrant, tiny, white flowers at branch tips in late spring, followed by reddish-purple cherries. Excellent formal hedge; responds well to shearing. Tall screen or dark evergreen for the shrub border. Easy to grow. Tolerates heat, drought, and many soil types. Prone to snow damage, best below 1500 ft. California coast range species. **A garden must.**

Prunus subcordata

Klamath plum

Deciduous shrub 4 ft. to 18 ft. high, usually under 8 ft. in the Sierras. One of the best fall color shrubs: 1" blue-green leaves turn crimson-red in fall. Fragrant clusters of small white to pale pink flowers in spring followed by 1/2" apple-red fruits that **birds love**. Thicket-forming, good for erosion control. Tolerates heat, drought, and poor soils. Good background shrub for full sun or light shade. **A garden must, when available.**

Prunus virginiana (var. demissa)

western chokecherry

Deciduous shrub or small tree 6 to 18 ft., usually smaller. Fragrant, large nodding conical clusters of tiny white flowers in spring followed by large showy clusters of red-purple berries. Exceptional fall color that ranges from orange-red to rose-red. Easy-to-grow fall color shrub for background or screening. Attracts at least 43 species of birds. **A garden must.**

QUERCUS (OAKS)

Oak woodlands are one of the most productive wildlife habitat communities in California, comparable to riparian and wetland habitats for the numbers of plant and animal species they support. Oak trees are a source of nesting cavities and nesting sites and many birds glean the heavily-textured bark and its crevices for insects. Acorns are a major food source for scores of birds, especially valuable for Lewis's and other woodpeckers, California quail, jays, chickadees, oak titmouse, band-tailed pigeon, wild turkey, towhees, great-tailed grackle, wood duck, green-winged teal, California thrasher. Berries of mistletoe, a parasitic plant commonly found in oaks, are eaten by the black-headed grosbeak, phainopepla, hermit thrush, and mountain bluebird.

Quercus chrysolepis

canyon live oak

Hardy evergreen shrub to 12 ft., or tree 20 - 60 ft. high; dense, rounded in sun; open, slender crown in shade. Thick, leathery leaves emerge bronze, mature to lustrous green above with yellowish wool beneath. Leaf shape varies from holly-like to bay-like, even on the same tree. Golden, fuzzy acorn cups decorative in fall. A fine hedge, screen, street, or shade tree. Tolerates heavier, rocky soil, garden water, wind, cold.

Quercus douglasii

blue oak

Hardy deciduous tree 30 - 50 ft. high; upright in youth, rounded to dome-shaped when mature. Pretty blue-green to powdery-blue, small, shallow-lobed leaves, attractive against darker greens. Fall colors pink, yellow and orange. Attractive open crown reveals scaled whitish-gray bark, horizontal branching. Slow-growing, but one of the most heat and drought tolerant. Good choice for restoration, parks, shallow, rocky soils. Handsome planted in groves. Good bonsai or container subject.

Quercus durata

leather oak

Evergreen shrub 3 ft. to 9 ft. high, compact, mounding. Leathery, convex, small leaves are densely set along the stems. Yellowish acorns in fall in the tips of branches, decorative. Full sun, tolerates heat, drought, poor soils, good for erosion control. Host plant to a unique serpentine butterfly, Leather Oak Skipper. An interesting evergreen background shrub, never rangy. Ideal for small gardens. Produces acorns at a much younger age than most other oaks. **A garden must.**

Quercus kelloggii

California black oak

Hardy deciduous tree 30 - 80 ft. high; broad, rounded crown to upright and arching, high branching. Big maple-like leaves emerge rosy-pink, mature to a shining bright green, yellow-orange fall color. Moderate growth rate, spring and fall color, a fine street or shade tree for dry gardens. Handsome in groves. Tolerates drought, heat, cold, shade in youth, rocky soil.

Quercus lobata

valley oak

Hardy deciduous tree 60 - 100 ft.; broad rounded crown, arching branches. Magnificent picturesque native oak, water tolerant and adaptable. Pendulous branchlets, deeply lobed, 2 - 3 in. leaves shining dark green above, pale blue-green beneath. Fine choice for parks, golf courses, large gardens, highway plantings. Tolerates heat, alkaline soil, garden water, and shade in youth.

Quercus vaccinifolia

huckleberry oak

Hardy evergreen shrub 2 - 5 ft. high; compact, semi-prostrate. A curious oak ground cover with handsome dark green to gray-green leathery, small leaves, densely-set; new growth bronzy. Decorative pendant spring catkins and golden fall acorns. Slow-growing, refined evergreen shrub or ground cover for cold climates; interesting bonsai or container subject.

Quercus wislizenii

interior live oak

Evergreen tree 30 - 60 ft. high; dense, broad, rounded crown. Thick, leathery, oblong, 2 - 4 in. leaves, shining dark green above, pale beneath, often spiny. Casts dense shade; very shade tolerant. Moderate growth rate. A handsome background tree or tall screen for parks, big gardens. Tolerates heat, drought, sun, or shade.

RHAMNUS (COFFEEBERRIES)

This superior genus occurs throughout the Sierra. It is fast and easy to grow and provides ample amounts of fruit. It is a very good butterfly and beneficial insect attractant and a favorite food source for the band-tailed pigeon, evening grosbeak, purple finch, pileated and other woodpeckers, bluebird, western tanager, Steller's jay, robin, varied and hermit thrushes, mockingbird, California thrasher, and phainopepla.

Rhamnus purshiana

Deciduous shrub or small tree 9 to 30 ft. high, much smaller in the Sierras. Magnolia-sized, shining dark green leaves with prominent veining are tufted at the ends of branches. In fall, leaves remain glossy and turn a shimmering butter-yellow. Small clusters of tiny white flowers in spring attract butterflies and beneficial insects, followed by large black berries displayed against the fall color. Fast-growing fall color background shrub or screen. Sun or part shade, best with some irrigation. **A garden must, when available.**

cascara sagrada

Rhamnus rubra

Deciduous shrub 3 to 8 feet high. Small umbels of tiny white flowers in spring attract butterflies and beneficial insects, followed by decorative ½"-wide black berries in fall. Yellow fall color. Drought-tolerant, easy-to-grow hedge or fall color shrub. Similar to *R. purshiana* but smaller in form and leaf.

Sierra coffeeberry

Rhamnus tomentella

Semi-evergreen shrub 3 ft. to 12 ft. high, usually under 8 ft. Inconspicuous flowers attract butterflies and beneficial insects, followed by ½" shining black berries that **birds love**. Felted, blue-green elliptic leaves on reddish twigs. Although semi-evergreen, this plant still puts on an interesting display as the dying leaves lose their chlorophyll to reveal a multitude of colors. Fast and easy-to-grow hedge or screen, tolerates heat, drought, poor soil. Good selection for lower elevation oak and chaparral plant communities. **A garden must.**

coffeeberry

Rhododendron occidentale

Hardy deciduous shrub 2 - 12 ft. high, usually 3 - 6 ft.; upright, open-branching. 1 - 3 in. dark-green, elliptic leaves turn yellow, red, purple, or orange in fall, sometimes all on a single specimen. This colorful display is more common at higher elevations. Best in moist, filtered shade. Spectacular in bloom, 2 in. long, funnel-shaped, glowing white flowers, flushed yellow and pink; has an exotic, sweet, spicy fragrance that permeates the air from May - August. Fragrant flowers attract many insects and insectivorous birds, hummingbirds.

western azalea

Rhus trilobata

Hardy deciduous shrub 2-1/2 - 5 ft. high; diffusely branched, thicket-forming. 1 - 3 in. three-parted leaves turn yellow, red, and purple in fall, even in the Central Valley. Small clusters of tiny yellow flowers, April - May. Striking, scarlet-red, waxy berries in summer. Brilliant fall color shrub, large-scale ground cover, dry soil; sun or light shade. Tolerates drought, heat, cold, wind, poor soil. Attracts at least 25 bird species.

skunk bush or basket bush or squaw bush

RIBES (CURRANTS/GOOSEBERRIES)

Prolific fruiting shrubs represented by 15 species in the Sierras alone. Various species inhabit a host of different habitats, elevations, and growing conditions, both on east and west slopes of the Sierras, from dry, rocky, exposed slopes to moist, wooded streambanks. An excellent group of bird attracting, small to medium-sized shrubs. *Ribes cereum* alone attracts at least 33 bird species. Attracts rufous and other hummingbirds, northern flicker, Townsend's solitaire, hermit, Swainson's, and varied thrushes, robins, western bluebird, mountain and California quail, and grouse.

Ribes aureum

Hardy deciduous shrub 3 - 8 ft. high; erect, arching. Pretty 1 - 2-1/2 in. long clusters of small, bright-yellow, tubular flowers in spring have a spicy fragrance. Showy, bright-red, translucent berries in fall. Rounded, lobed, light-green leaves turn rich red in fall. Easy-to-grow flowering or fall color shrub, hedge; good erosion control. Sun or light shade. Tolerates heat, cold, wind, alkaline soil. **A garden must.**

mountain golden currant

Ribes cereum

Hardy deciduous shrub 3 - 6 ft. high; rounded, compact, well-branched. Fragrant, small, round, lobed, clustered leaves turn yellow-orange in fall. Hanging, tubular, pale-pink flowers in spring, followed by bright red, translucent berries. Sun or part shade. Tolerates drought, wind, heat, cold. Pretty, all-season interest low hedge or bank cover. **A garden must.**

wax currant

Ribes malvaceum**chaparral flowering currant**

Semi-evergreen shrub 3 - 8 ft. high, many erect stems from base. Pale-pink, small, tubular flowers, in pendant clusters 2 - 4 in. long, bloom winter to early spring. Rounded, lobed leaves 1 - 3 in. wide have a fuzzy, crinkled, dark-green surface. Clusters of small blue berries. Pretty winter-flowering shrub for dry soils, good erosion control. Sun to part shade. Tolerates drought, heat, poor soil.

Ribes nevadense**Sierra currant**

Hardy deciduous shrubs 3 - 6 ft. high; upright, open branching. Showy, pendulous, 1 - 3 in. clusters of pink to reddish tubular flowers in late spring, similar to *R. sanguineum*. Blue-black summer berries. Maple-like, light green leaves, 1 - 3 in. wide, turn yellow in fall. Easy and vigorous, a pretty flowering specimen, hedge, or bank cover. Part shade or full sun with some water. **A garden must.**

Ribes roezlii**Sierra gooseberry**

Deciduous shrub 18" to 4' high, 3 - 4 ft. wide, prostrate form when grown in full sun and dry conditions; taller and more fountain-shaped in shady, moist, less-exposed conditions. Small, 1- 1-1/2" across, round, crinkly leaves with scalloped edges, light to dark green. Masses of large 1" spiny fruits of many different colors (depending on degree of maturity on different plants) hang all along thorny branches. In fall, foliage offers a stunning array of intense colors: yellow, red, orange, reddish-purples, salmon, pink, often many different shades on an individual plant. Very drought tolerant.

ROSA (ROSE)

The berries (rosehips) of genus *Rosa* are very attractive to birds. Some species found in shaded woodlands, open and airy with small amounts of fruit and thorns (as in *R. gymnocarpa*) to large, dense, extremely thorny, thicket-producing species that grow along exposed waterways and produce masses of fruit (as in *R. woodsii*). Offers birds a variety of opportunities in the form of food, good thorny cover from predators, and nesting sites. Attracts blue grouse, Swainson's, hermit, and varied thrushes, Townsend's solitaire, quail, vireos, bluebirds, mockingbird, and cedar waxwing.

Rosa californica**California wild rose**

Hardy, deciduous shrub 3 - 9 ft. high; erect and arching, thorny stems, forming broad thickets. Cluster of fragrant, pale to rose-pink, 1-1/2 in., single roses bloom May - September with a peak bloom in early summer. Vivid scarlet-orange rosehips on wine-red branches decorate the winter landscape. 5- to 7-parted blue-green leaves turn yellow in fall; apple-green new growth. Many-season interest background shrub, barrier plant or screen; easy to grow and vigorous. Sun or light shade; tolerates heavy, wet soil, dry shade. **A garden must.**

Rosa gymnocarpa**wood rose / baldhip rose**

Deciduous shrub 1 ft. to 5 ft. high, usually under 4 ft. Lacy, blue-green compound leaves prettier than cultivated roses, yellow-orange, egg-shaped rosehips without sepals. Good for dry shade, barrier plant.

Rosa woodsii var. ultramontana**interior wild rose**

Hardy deciduous shrub 2 - 6 ft. high; erect, branching, slender prickles, thicket-forming. Pretty pale pink to mid-pink 1-1/2 in. single roses with delicate, papery petals bloom early summer. Bright red rosehips decorate wine-red fall-winter stems, attract birds and wildlife. Blue-green, 5- to 7-parted leaves with vivid red-orange fall color. Easy, vigorous native for moist or dry shrub borders; excellent fall color shrub, erosion control, barrier plant. Tolerates light shade, poor and alkaline soil, heat, wind. **A garden must.**

Rubus parviflorus**thimbleberry**

Hardy deciduous shrub, mostly under 3 ft. high; thornless, upright stems, spreading to form small thickets. Showy, single white roses 1-1/2 in. wide bloom May - July followed by small, edible raspberries. Attractive, maple-like leaves 3 - 12 in. wide turn yellow in fall. Beautiful bold-textured ground cover for dry or moist shade. Part of full shade; tolerates drought. Attracts most woodland bird species that eat fruit. **A garden must.**

Rudbeckia californica**California coneflower**

Hardy perennial; easy to grow. Resembles most black-eyed Susans. Attracts butterflies.

SALIX (WILLOWS)

From medium-sized trees to small shrubs, willows permeate California landscapes, from the Valley floor to alpine meadows and all throughout the Sierra foothills. Willows are an important habitat component wherever water can be found. Growing along rivers and streams, lakes and ponds, these plants provide an excellent food source, dense cover from predators, nest sites, and nesting materials for birds. At least 23 bird species eat the tender buds and twigs of willows, among them are the grosbeaks, wood duck, house, purple, and Cassin's finches, and quail. Nuttall's and downy woodpeckers forage among the foliage and coarse bark for insects. Seeds, with their cottony pappas coatings, offer food and nest lining material. Their catkins are a vital food source winter into early spring. Provides some of the densest cover for birds requiring well concealed nest sites. *Salix*, along with the *Populus* genus, are common host species for the of the Mourning Cloak and Western Tiger Swallowtail butterflies. Willows also attract many beneficial predatory insects.

***Salix goodingii* (S. nigra)**

Deciduous tree 20 - 30 ft. high; open, upward-branching crown. Ornamental native willow with pretty, pale light-green, bamboo-like leaves ½ in. wide and 6 in. long. Blackish-brown bark contrasts well with pale, fine-textured foliage. Fast-growing hedge, screen, or background tree. Tolerates heavy, wet soil.

Gooding's black willow

***Salix hindsiana* (S. exigua)**

Hardy deciduous shrub or small tree 6 - 15 ft. high; erect stems, thicket-forming. Leaves silvery-silky, more linear than other willows, give this fine-textured, gray-leaved shrub the effect of being shrouded in mist. Pinkish-red stems and twigs; yellow fall color. Good hedge or screen plant.

sandbar willow

Salix scouleriana

Deciduous, small tree to 20' high, usually smaller. Neat, clean, blue-green spatulate or spoon-shaped leaves turn yellow-orange in fall, multi-trunked, upright, and compact. Easy to grow from cuttings. Range from sea level to 10,000 feet. Hardy, easy, fast growing. One of the few willows that grow in uplands away from permanent water sources.

Scouler's willow

***Sambucus mexicana* (S. caerulea var. mexicana)**

Deciduous multi-trunked shrub or small tree 6 - 24 ft. high, fountain-shaped. Much like *S. caerulea* (above) but with light-green 5- to 9-parted leaves that are summer dormant in very dry soils. Smaller flower clusters, usually 2 - 8 in. wide, followed by blue-black berries that attract birds. Important revegetation plant, or fast, easy-to-grow screen or background shrub for sun or shade, moist or dry soil. One of the more highly-prized fruits by birds. **A garden must.**

Mexican elderberry

Sorbus californica

Deciduous shrub 4 to 6 feet high. Looks great all season. Shiny, dark-green compound leaves turn yellow-orange in fall with large clusters of orange-red berries. Large, dome-shaped panicles of small white flowers in spring. Enormous plate-sized clusters of glossy red fruits balanced high atop the branch tips of this small tree are hard for birds to miss...and they seldom do. **A garden must.**

California mountain ash

Spiraea densiflora

Hardy deciduous shrub to 3 ft. high; compact, twiggy. Attractive all season. Big display of showy, round-topped, dense clusters of tiny, fragrant, fuchsia-pink flowers in summer. Small, soft, oval leaves are blue-green turning yellow-orange in fall. Sun or light shade with some moisture. Choice shrub for small gardens. **A garden must.**

mountain spiraea

Spiraea douglasii

Hardy deciduous shrub 3 - 6 ft. high; erect, clump-forming. Dense, elongated, 4 - 6 in. long clusters of fragrant, tiny magenta-pink flowers bloom summer to fall. Long stamens give a fuzzy effect to clusters. 1 - 3 in. long leaves are felted white beneath and turn yellow to orange in fall. Sun or light shade with some moisture.

western spiraea

***Styrax officinalis* var. *californicus* (S. o. var. *redivivus*)**

Deciduous shrub 4-12 ' high (taller in shade); upright, bushy. Powerfully fragrant, snowy-white, bell-shaped flowers in pendant clusters bloom early summer. Oval, light-green, 4" leaves turn yellow in fall. Fine specimen for raised beds, above paths, where flowers can be appreciated. One of the loveliest native shrubs. **A garden must.**

snowdrop bush

***Symphoricarpos albus* (*S. racemosus*)**

common snowberry

Upright or spreading shrub 2 - 6 ft. tall. Leaves roundish, dull green, 3/4 - 2 in. long (to 4 in. and often lobed on sucker shoots). Pink flowers in May - June, white fruit 1/2 in. wide from late summer to winter. Drought tolerant. Fruits best in sun.

***Symphoricarpos mollis* (syn. *S. acutus*)**

creeping snowberry

Hardy deciduous shrub to 1 ft. high; trailing, rooting branches to 3 ft. long. Dainty, bright-pink, bell-shaped flowers in small clusters in summer, followed by clusters of pure-white berries that persist through fall. Soft, small, rounded gray-green leaves turn golden in fall. Excellent large-scale ground cover or erosion control for dry, shaded, or damp places.

***Symphoricarpos vaccinioides* (syn. *S. rotundifolius*)**

mountain snowberry

Hardy deciduous shrub 3 - 4-1/2 ft. high; erect, branched, clump-forming. Pale-pink, 1/2 in. bell-shaped flowers in small clusters hang daintily from the ends of branches in summer. Clusters of egg-shaped, white berries are tinged pink. Small, oval, soft leaves are apple-green when they emerge, golden-yellow in fall. Sun or part shade; tolerates drought, cold, wind.

Umbellularia californica

California bay laurel

Hardy evergreen tree 30 - 80 ft. high; open, irregular crown in shade, or dense bush, growth to 12 ft. in sun and dry soil. 3 - 5 in. long lance-shaped leaves, lustrous dark or olive-green, can be used in cooking, have pungent fragrance. Umbels of tiny creamy-yellow flowers in spring followed by lime-green, olive-like fruit in fall. Moderate to slow growth, faster with water and deep soil. A rugged and adaptable screen or hedge, patio, or street tree. Provides food for Steller's jay, Townsend's solitaire, grosbeaks, and Clark's nutcracker.

VACCINIUM (HUCKLEBERRIES)

Many native blueberries and huckleberries are very important wildlife food with at least 87 bird species eating their fruit. Although no locally-native species of this genus have been made commercially available, *V. ovatum*, native to north coast ranges, and *V. parvifolium*, which is not native, but has naturalized itself in many areas, are commercially available and are non-invasive (does not aggressively reproduce).

Vaccinium ovatum

California huckleberry

Evergreen, erect shrub 2 - 3 ft. in sun, to 8 - 10 ft. in shade. Young plants spreading, older plants taller than wide, compact. Leathery, lustrous dark-green leaves, 1/2 - 1-1/4 in. long; new growth bronzy. Flowers (March-May) are white or pinkish. Berries black with whitish bloom, good in pies, jams, jellies, syrups. Best in partial shade; will take full sun in cool-summer areas. Can be trimmed into hedge or grown in container. Cut branches popular for arrangements. Many species will establish their pecking order and line up for the juicy black fruit. These include the mockingbird, hermit, varied, and Swainson's thrushes, and many woodpeckers. **A garden must.**

Vaccinium parvifolium

red huckleberry

Deciduous shrub. Slow growth to 4 - 12 feet, rarely 18 ft. Branches are green, thin, on spreading or cascading plant with intricate, filmy winter silhouette. Leaves thin, oval 1/2 - 3/4 in. long, light green. Flowers greenish or whitish, April - May. Clear, bright-red berries. Needs highly-acid humus soil, moisture, partial shade.

Vitis californica

California wild grape

Deciduous vine to 30 ft. high. In full sun, large maple-like leaves turn brilliant red in fall; in shade, clear yellow. Summer - fall clusters of purple grapes make excellent jelly or wine. Vigorous, easy to grow; can be pruned hard to keep smaller. Left to trail along the ground, it will mound, becoming shrublike. Excellent bank cover, erosion control, or trellis cover for sun or shade, any soil. Give ample water for good fruit production. Although the fruits of this species are not often seen in the wild, it's just because the birds got to them before you did and probably stood around waiting for them to ripen. Birds standing in line might have included mountain and western bluebirds, mockingbird, wood duck, green-winged teal, sparrows, towhees, some flycatchers, California and mountain quail, Hutton's, Cassin's, and warbling vireos, yellow-breasted chat, Lewis's and other woodpeckers, thrushes, waxwings, and orioles, to name a few. **A garden must.**

ZAUSCHNERIA/EPILOBIUM* (CALIFORNIA FUCHSIA)

* =current botanical genus name

The *Zauschneria/Epilobium* genus consists of excellent choices for the hummingbird garden, flowering much later than other hummingbird attractants. Maintaining a variety of plants with a wide range of flowering times, will help assure a continual and dedicated colonization of these tiny guests. Manzanitas and bleeding heart (*Dicentra formosa*) are a couple of the earliest blooming and highly attractant species.

Zauschneria californica (Epilobium canum)**California fuchsia**

Perennial to 18 in. high, 2 - 4 ft. wide. Terminal clusters of glowing scarlet-red tubular flowers attract hummingbird's summer to fall. Small, lance-shaped, gray-green leaves combine well with flowers; evergreen in mild climates. A striking late-blooming border plant or small scale ground cover for well-drained soil. Tolerates heat, drought, and poor soil. **A garden must.**

Zauschneria californica ssp. latifolia 'Everett's Choice' (Epilobium canum ssp. latifolium 'Everett's Choice')**prostrate California fuchsia**

Hardy prostrate perennial to 6 in. high, mat-forming to 2 - 4 ft. wide. Eye-catching, brilliant red, tubular flowers color the landscape in late summer to fall when little else is in bloom. Silky, silvery-gray, small leaves crowded along the stems are a nice backdrop to the flowers. Tolerates heat, cold, wind, and drought. **A garden must.**

Zauschneria 'Select Mattole' (Epilobium canum)**'Select Mattole' California fuchsia**

Very attractive selection with a very low, spreading habit to 2 ft. Beautiful orange/red tubular flowers are set off against silver foliage. **A garden must.**

NATIVE GRASSES

California was once a state dominated by vast and beautiful native grasslands and meadows. These grasses, however, have all but been destroyed by grazing from non-native animals, choked out by exotic invasive plants, and by the lack of a natural fire regime to help keep down the competition from native trees and shrubs. It is estimated that over 99% of these plant communities and habitats have been lost. The effects of this change and the benefits these grasses may have had to birds are not well documented; however, the change must have been pervasive. Grasses add to your garden textures and color not found in other plants, as well as uncommon beauty and drama, especially in late summer/early fall when other garden plants are waning.

Note: The vast majority of bird nests contain some grasses as part of their construction, often containing a mix of coarse and fine blades for desired conditions. Many beneficial insects are unique to grasses and nutritious grains (grass seeds) are an essential food source for quails, sparrows, towhees doves, juncos and other granivorous ground-feeding species.

Deschampsia cespitosa**tufted hairgrass**

Warm season clumping grass to 10 in. tall with summer flowers to 2 ft. Tolerates partial shade and heavy clay soils. Good in waterside plantings and meadows.

Elymus glaucus**blue wild rye**

Cool season upright perennial bunchgrass, 2 - 3 ft. tall with bluish blades and summer flowers. Tolerates drought, clay soils, and establishes rapidly. **A garden must.**

Festuca californica**California fescue**

Cool season bunchgrass with blue-green blades to 2 ft. and flower stalks to 5 ft. high, creating fountain-like clumps. Drought tolerant for sun or shade.

Festuca idahoensis**Idaho fescue**

Cool season, densely-tufted perennial grass usually blue in color but can be green. Flowering stalks to 1 - 2 ft. tall. **A garden must.**

Melica californica**California melic**

Cool season grass growing 1 - 2 ft. with flower spikes tinged purple. Tolerates full sun or partial shade, and is summer dormant.

Muhlenbergia rigens

Warm season perennial forming dense clumps from the base. Spike-like flower stalks 2 - 3 ft. tall. Striking fountain form. **A garden must.**

deer grass***Stipa pulchra (Nassella pulchra)***

Cool season bunch grass growing 1 - 2 ft. high with graceful, shiny flower stalks to 30" in spring. Fire retardant, tolerates drought, good in mass plantings and restoration uses. California's State Grass.

purple needlegrass**AQUATIC PLANTS/HERBACEOUS WETLAND SPECIES*****Carex barbarae***

Perennial clumping sedge growing 10 - 40 in. tall. Commonly found from sea level to 3000' elevation in open or brushy slopes of valley flats that are typically wet in spring. Found in many plant communities including Valley Grassland, Foothill Woodland, and Coastal Prairie, as well as Mixed Evergreen and Yellow Pine forests.

Santa Barbara sedge***Juncus effusus var. brunneus***

Stiff, erect perennial with round, bright green stems growing 1-1/2 to 4 ft. tall in tufts. Commonly grows in marshes and boggy moist spots near the coast from central California north to Oregon.

common rush***Juncus xiphioides***

Well-distributed rush growing in wet places from sea level to 7000' elevation in all wetland plant communities from the coast to the desert. Stems are flat and grow 1 - 2 ft. tall.

flat-bladed rush***Lemna minor***

Very small, glossy green floating aquatic plant growing in dense populations in stagnant freshwater pools below 3500' elevation statewide.

duckweed***Polygonum sp.***

Common in marshes, ponds, and ditches throughout California. Leaves tapered, longer than broad, and dotted. Flowers borne on a narrow spike, blooms July - October. Waterfowl feed on seeds.

knotweed***Scirpus acutus var. occidentale***

Perennial sedge with round, stout stems to 15 ft., thick brown rhizomes, and a dense, reddish-brown spikelet inflorescence from spring - summer. Common in brackish and freshwater marshes throughout the coast and below 5000' elevations.

common tule**SOURCE NURSERIES FOR NATIVE PLANTS:**

Villager Nursery, Truckee, CA

Tahoe Tree Company, Tahoe City, CA

California Department of Forestry Nursery, Davis, CA

Cornflower Farms (wholesale revegetation nursery) is an excellent source of hard-to-find native plants. Although Cornflower specializes in revegetation, their plants can be ordered through your local retail nurseries, although a minimum purchase is required for free delivery. A catalogue for a nominal fee may be obtained by contacting the nursery by phone or mail at Cornflower Farms, P.O. Box 896, Elk Grove, CA 95759. Have scheduled open house retail days for general public, as well as many useful guides/resources on their website:

<http://www.cornflowerfarms.com>