

El Dorado County Native Plant List for Gardening

Created by Ray Griffiths, former Horticulture Professor, FLC

Native Plant Vegetation Key

Zone

vz = valley zone below 1500'

fz = foothill zone below 3000'

mz = mountain zone above 3000'

Note: If characteristics are unknown, may be arbitrarily assigned a "5".

Fire: 1 = fire resistant 10 = very flammable

Drought: 1 = drought tolerant 10 = needs moisture

Deer: 1 = deer resistant 10 = browsed hard

Shade: 1 = shade tolerant 10 = full sun

Wildlife: 1 = high value 10 = low value

NATIVE TREES

Scientific Name	Common Name	Zone	Fire	Drought	Deer	Shade	Wildlife	Comments
<i>Abies concolor</i>	White Fir	mz	10	3	3	2	3	Shade tolerant, flammable "ladder fuel", common w/fire suppression. Seeds and hollow logs for wildlife
<i>Acer macrophyllum</i>	Big-leaf Maple	mz,fz	1	7	8	3	2	Needs moist soil. Browse, seeds, sap imp to wildlife. Fire top kills, roots resprout.
<i>Aesculus californica</i>	Calif. Buckeye	fz	4	3	4	7	4	Toxic but deer browsed, avoid drought by early leaf loss dry North slopes, fire killed top, root resprout.
<i>Alnus rhombifolia</i>	White Alder	vz, fz	1	10	7	9	4	Imp to birds, not deer, needs moisture, attractive tree, nitrogen fixing, deep green, leaves imp to streams.
<i>Arbutus menziesii</i>	Pacific Madrone	mz, fz	2	3	6	3	2	Fruit for birds, poor browse, preferred for cavity nests, attractive leaves and bark, fire topkills, root resprout.
<i>Calocedrus decurrens</i>	Incense Cedar	fz,mz	1,10	3	2	2	3	Shade tolerant young "ladder fuel", fire resistant mature seeds, insects & hollow logs for wildlife, timber tree
<i>Cornus nutallii</i>	Mountain Dogwood	mz	2	8	4	2	3	Shade tolerant, ornamental, deer browse shoots, birds like fruit, often riparian, fire topkills, root resprout.
<i>Pinus lambertiana</i>	Sugar Pine	mz	8	3	3	4	4	Huge, beautiful timber tree, birds like seeds, cavity nesting, tolerant of light shade, fire sensitive.
<i>Pinus ponderosa</i>	Ponderosa Pine	fz,mz	2	2	2	9	3	Timber, mature fire resistant, plantations burn, seed, cover, snags, down trees for wildlife, adaptable, full sun.
<i>Pinus sabiniana</i>	Grey Pine	fz	2	1	1	9	2	Drought tolerant, young fire killed, mature resistant, seeds, valuable wildlife, rapid growth, serpentine soils.
<i>Populus fremontii</i>	Fremont Cottonwood	vz, fz	1	9	10	9	2	Large riparian, easily rooted & grown w/irrigation, rapid growth, messy, burns poorly, topkilled, resprouts.
<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	Aspen	mz	1	9	10	9	2	Needs moist soil, browse, seed, sap imp to wildlife. Fire topkills, resprouts from roots.
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	Douglas Fir	mz	2,8	4	4	6	3	Young fire sensitive, mature tolerant. Timber, xmas tree, seeds & cover for wildlife, endangered sp in mature.
<i>Quercus sp.</i>								Calif oaks most common native tree below conifers, acorns valuable wildlife, cover & browse varies, all tolerate fire, most topkilled, resprout.
<i>Quercus chrysolepis</i>	Canyon Live Oak	fz,mz	3	2	3	3	3	Strong timber, fire sensitive, resprouts, wildlife cover & food, fair browse, young shade tolerant, firewood.
<i>Quercus douglasii</i>	Blue Oak	fz	4	2	8	7	2	Fire sensitive, resprouts decline w/age, poor seedling recruitment, valuable wildlife, fair browse, drought

<i>Quercus garryana</i>	Oregon Oak	fz, mz	3	3	6	3	8	Large or small tree, fire topkilled, resprout, useful timber acorns important for wildlife.
<i>Quercus kelloggii</i>	Black Oak	fz, mz	3	3	9	4	2	Timber, firewood, fire sensitive & tolerant, resprouts attractive and useful tree, valuable wildlife, browse.
<i>Quercus lobata</i>	Valley Oak	vz, fz	3	3	8	7	2	Mature fire tolerant, young resprout, drought tolerant, deep alluvial soils, beautiful large tree, valuable wildlife.
<i>Quercus wislizenii</i>	Interior Live Oak	vz, fz	4	2	4	4	3	Fire sensitive, resprouts decline w/age, drought tolerant, shrub or tree, wildlife cover, browse resistant.
<i>Salix</i> sp.	Willows	all	1	10	10	8	1	Many species, all prefer moisture & sun, shrubs to trees rarely burn, resprout, excellent for wildlife.
<i>Sequoiadendron giganteum</i>	Sequoia	mz	1	5	4	8	4	Attractive tree, young topkilled, resprout, mature fire immune, mature drought tolerant, wildlife cover, moisture when young
<i>Taxus brevifolia</i>	Pacific Yew	mz	6	7	9	10	2	Shady moist coniferous forest, fire sensitive, rarely burns, shade tolerant, good hedge, browse, wildlife cover.
<i>Umbellularia californica</i>	Calif. bay	mz	6	7	9	10	2	Attractive tree, rarely burns, fire topkills, resprouts, mature drought tolerant, shoots browsed, fair wildlife.
NATIVE SHRUBS								
Scientific Name	Common Name	Zone	Fire	Drought	Deer	Shade	Wildlife	Comments
<i>Adenostema fasciculatum</i>	Chamise	fz	10	1	2	10	9	Fine branched, resinous "fire bomb", needs fire, clear far away, encourage other less flammable species.
<i>Arctostaphylos</i> sp.	Manzanita							Many species, most fire adapted, reproduce from seed or resprout, drought tolerant, thin for safety, few tree-like, attractive bark, flowers, fruit.
<i>Arctostaphylos manzanita</i>	Common Manzanita	fz	8	1	1	9	3	Fire killed, seed stimulated, tree-like, common S Sierra, poor browse, wildlife cover, fruit flowers important
<i>Arctostaphylos patula</i>	Green Leaf Manzanita	mz	8	2	2	8	3	Fire topkills, resprouts, poor browse, common higher elevation cover, flowers, fruit for wildlife.
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Bearberry	fz	2	3	2	8	7	Fire resistant, topkilled, resprouts, native to Sierras, many varieties not local not local, ground cover, insects & cover
<i>Arctostaphylos viscida</i>	White-leaf manzanita	fz	9	1	2	10	3	Fire killed, seed stimulated, most common low elevation tree-like, poor browse, wildlife cover, fruit flowers
<i>Baccaris pilularis</i>	Coyote Bush	fz	2	2	1	10	4	Fire resistant, topkilled, resprouts, pioneer plant, tough, dwarf form ground cover, poor browse, + insects.
<i>Berberis</i> sp.	Oregon Grape	fz, mz	6	4	2	9	4	Fire topkills, resprouts, attractive flowers, fruit for wildlife, poor browse, likes some moisture.
<i>Calycanthus occidentalis</i>	Spice Bush	fz	2	10	2	2	6	Foothill riparian shrub, beautiful flowers, needs water, deer resistant, shade tolerant but slow.
<i>Ceanothus</i> sp.								Many species in Calif., valuable browse, fixes nitrogen, good cover, may be attractive, flower colors vary, many horticultural varieties.
<i>Ceanothus cuneatus</i>	Buckbrush	fz	7	1	10	10	2	Tough, spiny chaparral shrub, fire topkills, seed regrowth, valuable
<i>Ceanothus integerrimus</i>	Deerbrush	mz	5	5	10	9	1	Fire killed, seed stimulated, valuable browse, pioneer plant clear under conifers for fire ladder break
<i>Ceanothus lemmonii</i>	Lemmon's ceanothus	fz, mz	6	4	8	8	4	Attractive low shrub, w/blue flowers, not large enough to be a fire problem, wildlife uses flowers, leaves.
<i>Cercis occidentalis</i>	Redbud	fz	6	3	3	8	4	Beautiful in bloom, widespread, fire topkills, resprouts, fruit and flowers edible, some summer water.
<i>Chamaebatia foliosa</i>	Mountain Misery	mz	10	2	2	2	8	Resinous ground cover under conifers, burns easily, resprouts carries ground fires, nitrogen fixer, fair browse.
<i>Corylus cornuta</i>	Calif. Hazel	mz	3	6	5	2	3	Attractive shrub/small tree, fire topkills, resprouts, fire topkills fair browse, moist soil, shade, wildlife uses nuts, buds, flowers

Dendromecon rigida	Bush Poppy	fz	4	2	6	10	5	Beautiful perennial flowering shrub, needs excellent drainage fire topkills, resprouts, tough shrub.
Diplacus aurantiacus	Bush Monkeyflower	fz	5	3	2	3	3	Good bloom, fire frost topkill, resprout, tolerates drought, likes some shade, water, hummingbirds & insects like flowers
Eriodictyon californica	Yerba Santa	fz	8	1	3	10	5	Perennial, attractive flowers, lvs have aromatic compounds, useful for sore throats, lvs flammable, fire topkills, resprouts
Frangula californica	Ca Coffeeberry	fz, mz	3	3	8	3	3	Tough grey shrub, fruit important to wildlife, deer browse in winter, tolerates shade, flowers for insects
Fremontodendron californica	Flannelbush	fz	7	3	7	9	4	Pretty yellow flowers, fire topkills, rapid resprout, deer browse young leaves, fire adapted.
Garrya sp.	Silktassel bush	fz, mz	3	4	7	3	3	Attractive tasseled flowers, several species, fire topkills, resprouts, deer browse, fruit for birds and mammals.
Heteromeles arbutifolia	Toyon	fz	3	2	3	8	3	Hard dark green leaves, red berries in winter for birds & mammals, fire topkill, resprout, somewhat fire adapted
Lupinus sp.	Bush Lupine	fz	2	4	2	9	7	Flowers purple, white or yellow, nitrogen fixer, poor browse, insects like flowers, grows in poor soil.
Prunus virginiana	Chokecherry	mz	2	5	3	6	2	Prunus sp. Have attractive flowers, leaves & fruit important to wildlife, needs some moisture, fire topkills, resprouts
Rhamnus crocea	Redberry	fz	5	1	2	6	3	Small, tough chaparral shrub, looks like tiny oak with red berries, fire topkills, resprouts, berries important to birds
Rhus trilobata	Lemonadeberry	fz	5	3	4	5	3	Attractive mid-elevation shrub, tart berries used for drink can be pruned, tolerates dry or semi-moist.
Ribes sp.	Gooseberry	mz	5	4	3	3	2	Several species, spiny, attractive small shrubs, pretty flowers, browsed some, fruit for birds, found below conifers.
Rosa californica, sp.	Ca Rose +	fz	2	8	9	3	3	Large moist meadow shrub, thorns, large pink flowers, red fruits browsed hard, smaller species below conifers.
Rubus parviflora	Thimbleberry	mz	2	7	3	2	3	Low, dense, shrubby, attractive, shade tolerant, excludes other shrubs, fruit for birds, fire topkills, resprouts.
Salvia sp.	Sages	fz	5	5	2	7	5	Many species, few native to Sierras, poor browse, seeds for wildlife, resprouts after light fires, flowers for insects
Sambucus mexicana	Elderberry	fz	4	6	3	8	2	Edible berry, fair browse, fire cracks seeds, resprouts readily, fruit, flowers valuable for wildlife.
Styrax officinalis	Styrax	fz	4	3	5	8	5	Medium size shrub, attractive fragrant white flowers, canyon slopes, tolerates drought, water with drainage
Symphocarpus sp.	Snowberry	fz, mz	4	3	3	3	7	Several species, creeping or low shrub, white berries, below conifers or riparian, fire topkills, resprouts, fair wildlife
Toxicodendron diversilobum	Poison Oak	fz	9	4	6	2	3	Shrub or vine, fire topkills, resprouts, smoke toxic, dangerous ladder fuel, deer browse, fruit for birds

NATIVE VINES HERBS & GRASSES

Scientific Name	Common Name	Zone	Fire	Drought	Deer	Shade	Wildlife	Comments
Achillea millefolium	Yarrow	fz, mz	1	3	1	9	7	Variable species, attractive flowers, poor browse, ignition resistant, pioneer species, low growing
Allium sp.		all	2	3	4	8	5	Many species, most uncommon, attractive flowers, onion smell onion smell, early spring wildflower, usually pink
Apocynum sp.	Indian hemp	fz	2	6	1	2	6	2 species, Hemp green in moist areas, Dogbane low, pink flowers below conifers, both toxic to deer, fiber plant.
Aquilegia formosa	Columbine	fz,mz	2	8	1	4	3	Beautiful red flowers, likes moisture, not browsed, hummingbird plant.
Aristolochia californica	ca Dutchman's Pipe	fz	2	6	2	2	3	Beautiful vine, unique flowers, likes moist soil below oaks, riparian, host of Pipevine Swallowtail, rare butterfly

Artemisia douglasiana	ana Mugwort	fz	2	7	2	3	8	Dense stand in moist soil, aromatic, smells like sagebrush, not browsed, binds soil in riparian areas
Asarum sp.	Wild Ginger	mz	2	7	2	1	8	2 species, attractive deep green ground cover in moist areas below conifers, fire sensitive, aromatic root.
Asclepias sp.	Milkweed	fz, mz	2	5	1	7	3	Several species, some flowers quite ornamental, bitter toxic sap, host for Monarch butterfly.
Aster sp.	Aster	fz,mz	3	5	4	3	3	Several species, pale to deep purple with yellow center open forests, light shade, good nectar source for insects
Brodiaea sp.	Brodiaea	all	2	3	6	4	4	Many species, different names, blue, purple, white, yellow flowers, edible bulbs, spring flowers, grass-like leaves.
Calochorus sp.	Mariposa Lillies	vz,fz	2	3	9	8	4	Many species, perennial bulbs, beautiful flowers, cream, yellow with magenta, everything eats them.
Carex, Cyperus sp.	Sedges	all	1	9	4	3	6	Sedges, grass-like except usually triangular stems, many species, mostly wet soil, incredible erosion control, tough
Chlorogalum sp.	Soaproot	fz	1	4	7	4	3	Bulb used for soap, tolerates fire, deer eat flower spike bees use summer flowers, attractive white flowers
Chrysothamnus sp.	Rabbitbrush	fz,mz	6	3	2	8	2	Not attractive, shrubby plant with yellow flowers, very important nectar source for insects, pioneer plant
Cirsium sp.	Thistle	vz,fz	3	3	1	8	2	Several species of native thistles, some with attractive red flowers, very attractive to butterflies, hummingbirds
Clarkia sp.		fz,mz	2	3	3	4	5	Many species, beautiful late spring pink/purple flowers some like dry, sun, others moist/shade
Clematis lasiantha	Foothill Clematis	fz	4	3	2	3	3	Drought tolerant vine, climb on other shrubs or trees attractive flowers, interesting fruit
Collinsia heterophylla	la Chinese Houses	fz	3	6	3	4	4	Beautiful spring wildflower on shady banks, north slopes, purple/white flowers, bee forage
Danthonia californica	a Ca Oatgrass	fz	3	8	7	8	2	Low growing meadow grass, very palatable to livestock birds like seed heads
Dicentra formosa	Bleeding Heart	fz,mz	2	8	1	1	7	Beautiful pink flowers, shady moist woods, likes deep shade in warm areas (N side of house)
Dodecatheon sp.	Shooting Star	fz,mz	3	3	5	2	5	Several species, low elevation under oaks, high elevation in meadows
Epilobium	Ca Fuschia	fz,mz	2	5	2	4	2	Tough perennial, bright red hummingbird plant, tolerates mowing, light green leaves, wiry plant
Epilobium angustifolium	Fireweed	mz	3	8	4	4	5	Bright purple flowers, invades high elevation meadows especially after fire, likes moist, open areas
Epilobium sp. Willow Herb		all	3	3	5	8	3	Late spring wildflowers, pink/purple, small plants, many species, likes steep slopes, poor soil.
Equisetum sp.	Scouring Rush	fz,mz	1	9	1	3	9	Primitive, coarse stemmed, horsetail, grows in water inedible, high silica stems used to scour pots
Eschscholtzia californica	Ca Poppy	all	2	2	2	9	5	Yellow or orange flowers, tolerates awful soil, needs good drainage, pollen for bees.
Festuca californica	Ca Fescue	fz	4	3	7	3	5	One of several native fescues, tolerates serpentine soils, in shade under shrubs and trees
Fragaria sp.	Strawberry	Fz, mz	3	8	5	1	5	Native strawberry lives under conifers in moist areas, tolerates dense shade.
Grindelia sp.	Gum Plant	vz,fz	3	2	2	10	3	Late summer bright yellow flowers provide nectar, seem to slow grass fires, gummy leaves
Heucheria sp.	Alum Root	fz,mz	3	7	3	2	2	Many species, often grow in shade, steep, rocky, moist areas, usually white or pink flowers.

Hoita	Scurf Pea	fz,mz	3	8	1	4	4	Herbaceous perennials (3 species) attractive, creeping or upright, some like giant clover, dies to ground.
Horkelia sp.	Horkelia	vz,fz	2	3	5	7	5	Small, leafy ground cover, small white flowers in spring, under Manzanita or oaks.
Iris sp.	Iris	vz,fz	3	3	1	3	5	Many species, often purple, some yellow or cream flowers, most drought tolerant, some like wet areas, easy to grow
Juncus sp.	Rushes	all	1	9	3	4	6	Many species, most grass like, round leaves in wetlands, meadows, erosion control, some bunches others creeping
Linum sp.	Flax	vz,fz	3	3	5	4	3	Small, bright blue spring flowers, survive among grasses
Lonicera hispidula	Honeysuckle	fz	3	2	2	2	4	Shade tolerant vine, few attractive pink flowers, chaparral species with yellow flowers, nectar for insects, fruit for birds
Lupinus sp.	Lupine	vz,fz	3	3	1	8	4	Purple wildflower, many species, prefers gravelly dry soils with little nutrient value, nitrogen fixer
Melica californica	Ca Oniongrass	fz,mz	3	3	4	2	4	Several species, bright green perennial bunch grass, often grazed out, tolerates shade.
Mimulus sp.	Monkeyflower	all	2	8	5	5	4	Many species, often yellow or purple, some tiny, annual or perennial, some in spring and seeps, others in dry
Monardella sp.	Coyote Mint	fz,mz	3	3	1	6	3	Low growing mint, white/pink/purple flowers, some shade, butterfly plant, rock gardens
Muhlenbergia rigens	Deergrass	vz,fz	10	6	2	4	5	Striking bunch grass, likes wet but tolerates dry, burn easily but grows back readily, easily grown, very useful, fast growth with water
Nemophilla sp.	Baby blue eyes	vz,fz	3	4	3	7	5	Sky blue annual wildflower, related Five Spot likes moisture, has white with purple spots on flower, both easily grown.
Oenothera sp.	Evening Primrose	fz,mz	4	3	3	3	3	Many species, usually early summer, pink/purple flowers spindly plants, large flowers, dry shady to sunny banks
Penstemon sp.	Penstemon	fz,mz	3	3	2	4	3	Many species, low perennials, usually purple or pink flowers dry banks, attractive to bees and/or hummingbirds
Poa secunda	Pine Bluegrass	vz,fz	4	3	5	2	5	Small bunchgrass, hills or banks, with trees or not, may be grazed out, dark green, dormant by early summer
Potentilla sp.	Cinquefoil	fz,mz	3	5	6	6	6	Perennial, yellow flower, leaves like strawberry, tolerates dry often in open forested areas
Ranunculus sp.	Buttercup	fz	3	3	4	3	4	Bright yellow flowers in meadow areas that dry in summer, part shade, open woodlands
Sedum sp.	Stonecrop	fz,mz	2	1	3	10	5	Fleshy perennial in rocky cliffs, often reddish leaves, yellow flowers
Sidalcea sp.	Checker Mallow	fz,mz	3	4	7	3	3	Many species, stalk of pink/purple "hollyhock" flowers from small clump of rounded leaves, open forests, light shade.
Sisyrinchium bellum	Blue-eyed Grass	fz	3	6	7	5	4	Grass-like leaves, pretty blue flowers w/yellow centers, may be in water or dry, other species has yellow flowers, Iris relative
Solanum xantii	Blue Witch	fz	3	3	1	4	4	Herbaceous perennial, electric blue/purple flowers with yellow center, in oak woodlands or chaparral, deer tolerant
Solidago californica	Goldenrod	fz	3	4	2	3	2	Low perennial, bright yellow flower in late summer, insect flower, inhibits weeds.
Stipa sp.	Needlegrass	vz,fz	8	2	2	8	4	Several drought tolerant bunch grasses, formerly common, attractive seed stalks
Vitis californica	Ca Grape	vz,fz	2	8	3	3	2	Grape vine found in riparian areas, yellow fall leaves, fruit very important to mammals, birds
Wyethia sp.	Mules Ears	fz,mz	3	3	3	7	3	Low perennial, several species, long fuzzy leaves, yellow sunflower-like flowers, seeds important to wildlife