



Native Plants for Oak Gardens

Mature oaks will not tolerate summer watering. Thick ground coverings of lawns, ferns, ivy or any other vegetation are inappropriate under native oaks since their water requirements may cause fungal problems in the oaks. In addition, thick root mats of such groundcovers may inhibit the exchange of air and moisture that a mature tree requires. In all cases of planting under oaks, the zone within six feet of the trunk should be disturbed as little as possible.

Many attractive native plants are well suited to the natural oak environment. These are just a few California native plants that can be used in landscaping oak gardens. Once established - usually after a year - they require little care, once a month watering, and offer beautiful foliage, showy blossoms, and, sometimes, pleasant fragrances.

Shrubs Partial Shade

Carpenteria californica, Carpenteria or Tree Anemone

Ceanothus species: Wild lilacs

C. griseus, *C. thyrsiflorus*, *C. maritimus*, plus cultivars: *C. Joyce Coulter*, *C Ray Hartman*

Cercis occidentalis, Western redbud

Cercocarpus betuloides var. *blancheae*, Mountain-mahogany

Eriogonum arborescens, Santa Cruz Island wild buckwheat

Garrya elliptica, Silk-tassel bush

Heteromeles arbutifolia, Toyon

Mahonia species, Barberries and Mahonias:

M.amplectens, *M. dictyota*, *M. fremontii*, *M. Haematocarpa*, *M. higginsiae*, *M.pinnata*

Prunus ilicifolia, Holly-leaf cherry

Rhamnus Californica, Coffeeberry

Ribes species, Gooseberries:

R. aureum var. *gracillimum*, *R. malvaceum*, *R. speciosum*, *R. sanguinum*,

R. viburnifolium

Rosa californica, California wild rose

Rosa californica, "Plena" double California rose

Salvia clevelandii, San Diego wild sage

Salvia leucophylla, Coastal white sage

Shrubs Full Sun

Fremontodendron californicum mexicanum and cultivars, Fremontia, Flannel bush,
“California glory”, “Pacific sunset”
Galvesia speciosa, Island snapdragon
Lupinus albifrons, Silver bush lupine
Lupinus chamissonis, Chamisso bush lupine
Mimulus aurantiacus, Bush monkeyflower
Mimulus puniceus, Red monkeyflower
Penstemon clevelandii, Cleveland’s penstemon and other species
Romneya coulteri, Matilija poppy

Ground Covers

Baccharis pilularis subsp. *pilularis*, Dwarf coyote bush
Ceanothus griseus var. *horizontalis*, Carmel creeper
Ceanothus maritimus, Hoover ceanothus
Ribes viburnifolium, Catalina currant

Evergreen Herbaceous Plants

Dryopteris arguta, Wood fern
Eriogonum umbellatum var. *polyanthum*, Buckwheat
Heuchera maxima, Giant alum root
Iris douglasiana and hybrids
Viguiera deltoidea var. *parishii*

Deciduous or Annual Herbaceous Plants

Clarkia species, Clarkias
Collinsia species, Chinese houses
Dodecatheon clevelandii, Shooting stars
Eschscholzia species, Poppies
Montia perfoliata, miner’s lettuce
Nemophila Menziesii, Baby blue eyes
Oenothera species, Evening Primroses
Sisyrinchium bellum, Blue-eyed-grass
Viola pedunculata, Yellow Pansy
Zauschneria californica, California wild fuchsia

Bulbs

Brodiaea species and related genera:

Dichelostemma pulchellum

Tritileia laxa

Calochortus species, Mariposa lilies

Chlorogalum pomeridianum, Soap plant

Lilium paradalinum, Leopard lily

Trillium chloropetalum, Common trillium

For more information about these and other California native plants compatible with oak gardens, contact local arboretums, botanical gardens, and the California Native Plant Society.

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