

Garden Design with Native Plants

A Practical Guide

by Ann Elliott

Mount Lassen Chapter - California Native Plant Society



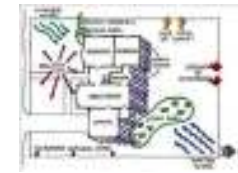
Why Design with Natives?



Example Native Plant Garden Designs



Garden Design Basics



Planting Your Design



California Floristic Province

Mediterranean Climate Zone

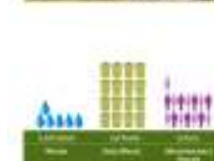
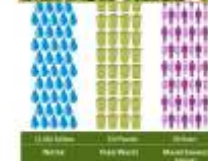
- Cool, wet winters
- Long, hot, dry summers



Native Plants are Adapted to Our Climate

They need less:

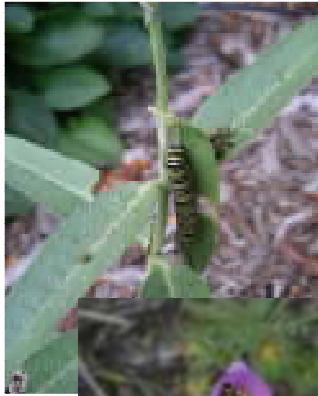
- water
- fertilizer
- soil amendments
- pesticides
- maintenance



So:



Native plants provide natural food and habitat for more:



- pollinators
- other insects
- birds
- wildlife



as development ↑

Our yards with native plants

natural habitats ↓



can provide a "bridge"



to nearby remaining wildlands.

Considerations in Designing Any Garden

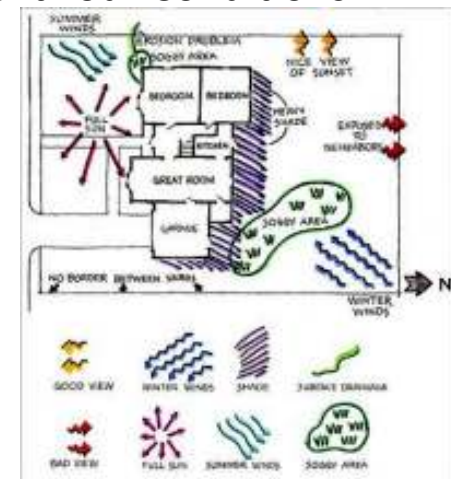
Goals for Your Space

- style
- flow
- maintenance level



Document Your Conditions

- existing features
 - buildings
 - hardscape
 - vegetation
- soil – loam, clay, granitic, volcanic
 - permeability
 - nutrients
- exposure
 - sun
 - shade
 - wind
 - view



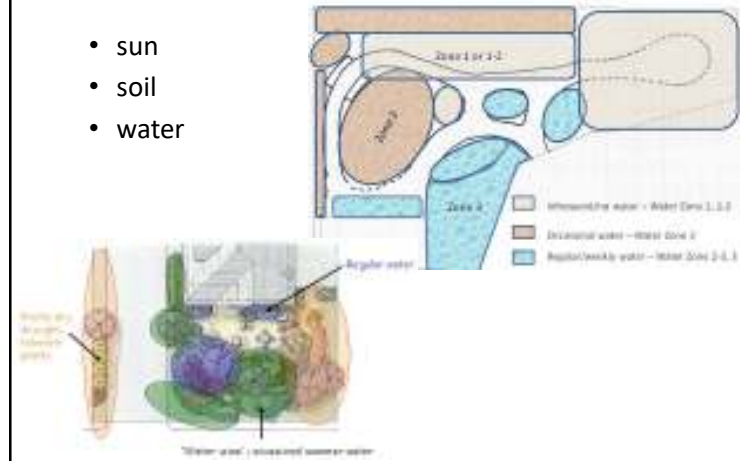
Pick Plants to Suit Your Space

- Use local plants if possible:
 - adapted to climate
 - most useful for wildlife



Group Plant by Needs:

- sun
- soil
- water



Keep Lakes, Creeks, and Rivers Clean



Design Aesthetics



- color (flowers and leaves)
- texture (vary and mimic)
- rhythm (swathes and repetition of plants)
- symmetry
- plant lightly (Be patient while they grow.)

Example Native Plant Garden Designs

Don't reinvent the wheel!

- CNPS.org
 - Yerba Buena Nursery
 - Santa Clara Valley Chapter – CNPS
 - Acterra Stewardship Native Plant Nursery
- native-again-landscape.com

Plant Naming

scientific name: *Genus species* 'Cultivar'

common name

Eriogonum fasciculatum - California buckwheat

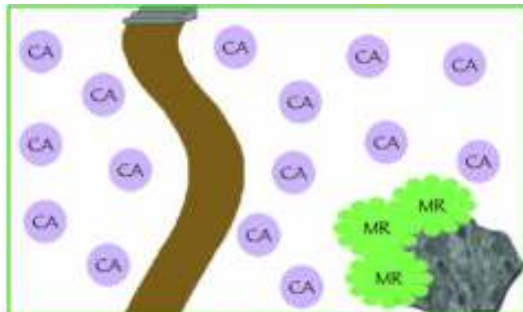
Arctostaphylos bakeri 'Louis Edmunds'

Simple Sunny Front Yard

Ground Covers and Grasses

CA – *Ceanothus* (any low cultivar)

MR – *Muhlenbergia rigens* (deer grass)



Ceanothus species (California wild lilac)



- Dazzling floral displays in spring
- No/little water
- full sun (mostly)
- many species and cultivars
- sizes: groundcovers to small trees

Ceanothus maritimus 'Valley Violet' (3 ft.)



Grasses

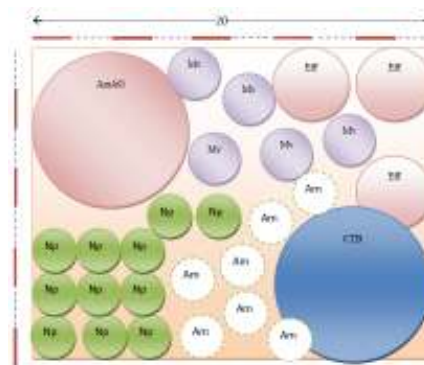
- Add textural interest to garden
- Provide habitat for birds
- Generally pest-free
- Little water



Muhlenbergia rigens- deer grass (3-5 ft.)



Very Drought Tolerant Sunny Location, Clay Soil



Am: *Achillea millefolium*
 AmAG: *Arctostaphylos*
 (manzanita) larger
 CTB: *Ceanothus*
 (choose larger)
 Eff: *Eriogonum fasciculatum*
 California buckwheat
 Mv: *Monardella villosa*
 coyote mint
 Np: *Nassella pulchra*
 purple needlegrass

Arctostaphylos species - manzanita

- urn-shaped flowers
- attractive bark
- no/little irrigation
- evergreen; woody
- many types
- groundcovers to small trees



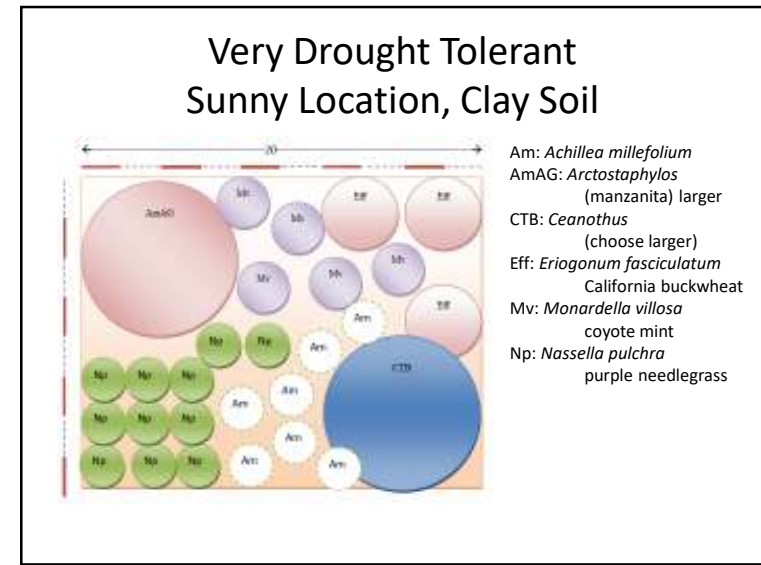
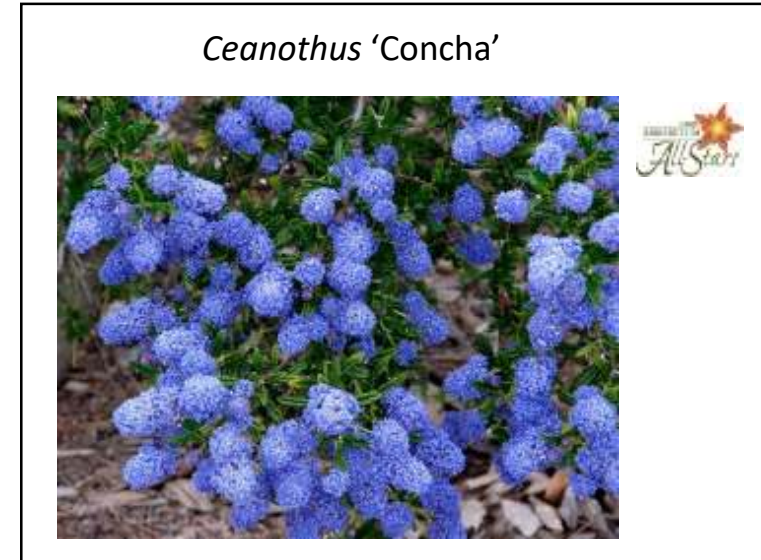
Arctostaphylos manzanita
'Dr. Hurd'

Arctostaphylos bakeri 'Louis Edmunds'



Arctostaphylos densiflora 'Howard McMinn'
Vine Hill manzanita





Eriogonum species - buckwheat

- Small flowers in clusters, fading to rust in late summer
- Evergreen
- Full sun
- Little/no water
- Food for pollinators and beneficial insects; habitat for birds



Eriogonum fasciculatum -
California buckwheat

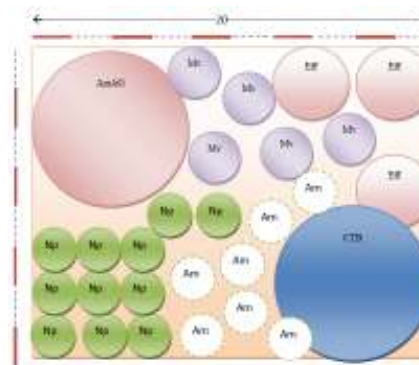
Eriogonum giganteum – Saint Catherine's lace



Eriogonum umbellatum – sulfur-flowered buckwheat



Very Drought Tolerant Sunny Location, Clay Soil



Am: *Achillea millefolium*
AmAG: *Arctostaphylos*
(manzanita) larger
CTB: *Ceanothus*
(choose larger)
Eff: *Eriogonum fasciculatum*
California buckwheat
Mv: *Monardella villosa*
coyote mint
Np: *Nassella pulchra*
purple needlegrass

Monardella villosa - coyote mint



*Achillea
millefolium* -
yarrow



Stipa pulchra (*Nasella pulchra*) –
purple needle grass



Bouteloua gracilis - blue grama grass
(eyebrow grass)



Perennial Meadow



A: *Achillea millefolium*
E: *Epilobium canum* (California
fuschia)
(grass): ie. *Festuca* 'Siskiyou
Blue'

I: *Iris douglasiana*
P: *Penstemon heterophyllus*
'Margarita BOP'
SC: *Solidago* sp. (golden rod)



Epilobium canum (*Zauschneria* sp.) -
California fuchsia



Festuca idahoensis 'Siskiyou Blue'



Iris douglasiana
(purple and yellow varieties)



Penstemon heterophyllus
foothill penstemon 'Margarita BOP'



Solidago velutina – golden rod



Habitat Meadow Garden



AH: *Arctostaphylos densiflora*
'Howard McMinn'
CA: *Ceanothus* (low growing)
CD: *Ceanothus* 'Dark Star' or 'Ray
Hartman' (bush)
CO: *Cercis occidentalis* (Western Redbud)
FK: *Fremontodendron* 'Ken Taylor'
MA: *Mimulus aurantiacus*

MR: *Muhlenbergia rigens*
(grass): *Festuca* 'Siskiyou Blue'
SA: *Salvia apiana*
SB: *Salvia Sonomensis* 'Bee's Bliss'
SC: *Salvia clevelandii*



Cercis occidentalis - western redbud



Fremontodendron californicum - flannel bush

- 6-15 feet
- Requires excellent drainage
- No summer water once established



Habitat Meadow Garden



AH: *Arctostaphylos densiflora*
'Howard McMinn'
CA: *Ceanothus* (low growing)
CD: *Ceanothus* 'Dark Star' or 'Ray
Hartman' (bush)
CO: *Cercis occidentalis* (Western Redbud)
FK: *Fremontodendron* 'Ken Taylor'
MA: *Mimulus aurantiacus*

MR: *Muhlenbergia rigens*
(grass): *Festuca* 'Siskiyou Blue'
SA: *Salvia apiana*
SB: *Salvia Sonomensis* 'Bee's Bliss'
SC: *Salvia clevelandii*



Mimulus aurantiacus –
bush monkey flower



Salvia species – sages



Salvia apiana - white sage



Salvia mellifera -
black sage

Salvia clevelandii - Cleveland sage



Salvia sonomensis - 'Dara's Choice'
creeping sage



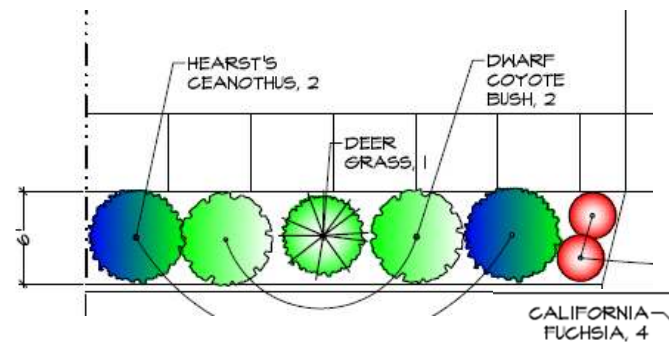
Salvia leucophylla 'Bee's Bliss'



Sidewalk Mow Strip Designs by Santa Clara Valley Chapter - CNPS

- Low Water & Low Maintenance
- Hummingbird and Butterfly Magnet
- Shade Garden Under Street Trees

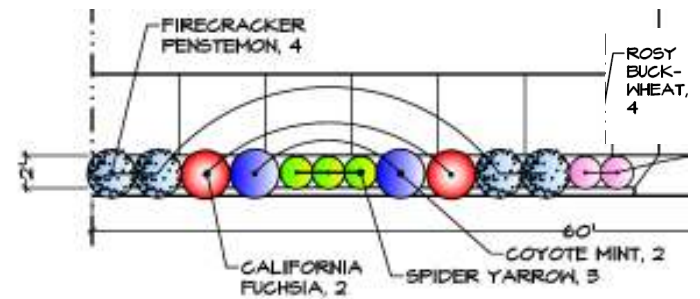
Low Water & Low Maintenance



Baccharis pilularis 'Twin Peaks II' –
Dwarf Coyote Brush



Hummingbird and Butterfly Magnet



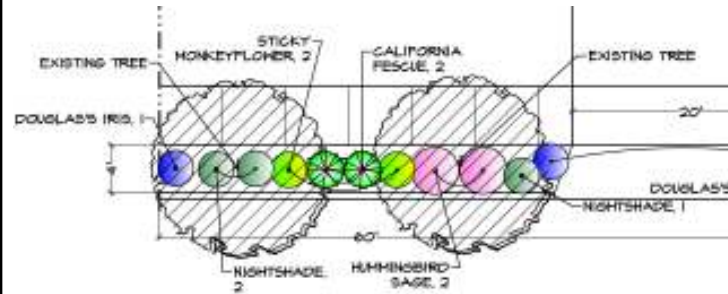
Penstemon eatonii – firecracker penstemon



Eriogonum grande var. *rubescens* –
red (rosy)-flowered buckwheat



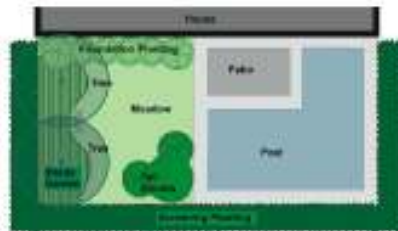
Shade Garden Parking Strip



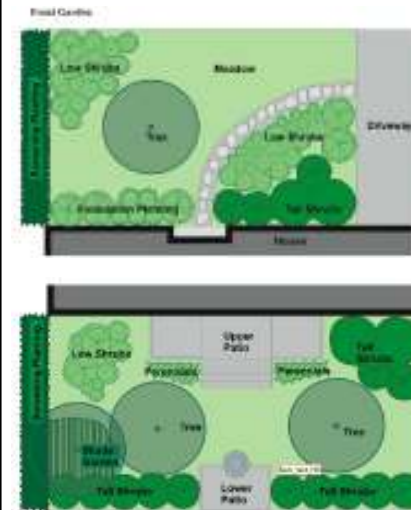
Salvia spathacea - hummingbird sage



Flat Garden – Acterra Stewardship Native Plant Nursery (now Grassroots Ecology)



Hillside Garden Acterra Stewardship Native Plant Nursery (now Grassroots Ecology)



Lawn Conversion to Natives

- rebates?
- kill lawn
 - Bermuda grass? – solarize one summer
 - sheet mulch
- decide on basic design
- convert irrigation to drip
- plant



Irrigation Conversion

- sprinkler removal
- pressure regulator
- drip line
- emitters (allow for later removal)

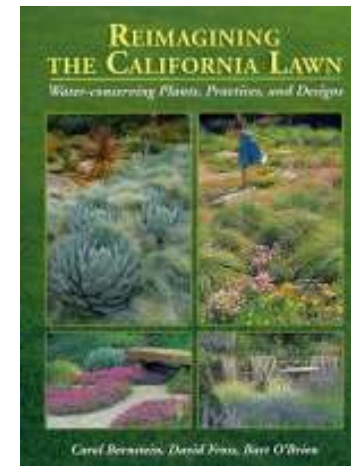


Irrigation tips

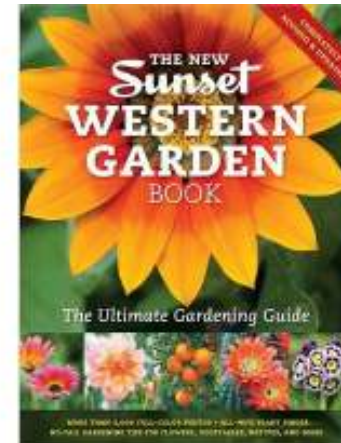
- Plant in hydrozones.
- Irrigate for about 2 years after planting
- Some plants thrive with supplemental irrigation.
- Irrigate during dry winters.
- Irrigate long and slowly.



Reading by Design



specialized
gardening
books



Websites to Explore

- California Native Plant Society CNPS.org Calscape
- Arboretum All-Stars arboretum.ucdavis.edu
- Butte County Master Gardeners
<http://ucanr.edu/sites/bcmg/> Real Dirt Blog
- Water Use Classification of Landscape Species
<http://ucanr.edu/sites/WUCOLS/>
- Las Pilitas Nursery laspilitas.com
- Yerba Buena Nursery www.yerbabuenanursery.com





- Butte County Master Gardener demonstration gardens at Patrick Ranch (on the Midway)
- Gateway Science Museum
- Floral Native Nursery
- Chico Creek Nature Center
- Lake Oroville Visitor Center

- Sacramento River Discovery Center, Red Bluff
- Turtle Bay McConnell Arboretum & Botanical Garden, Redding
- UC Davis Arboretum

Where to Buy Native Plants

Local:

- Floral Native Nursery, Chico
- Native Springs Nursery, Durham
- Nurseries with some Natives
 - Little Red Hen
 - Magnolia Gift & Garden,
 - The Plant Barn
 - Prestige Nursery
- Mt. Lassen Chapter CNPS chapter plant sales, Chico

Where to Buy Native Plants

Regional:

- Sacramento River Discovery Center, Red Bluff
- Turtle Bay McConnell Arboretum nursery, Redding
- UC Davis Arboretum plant sales (spring & fall)
- Peaceful Valley Nursery, Grass Valley
- Annie's Annuals, Richmond, retail & mail order
- CNPS Shasta chapter plant sales, Redding (spring)

Planting Tips

- plant in fall
- good drainage
- few soil amendments
- don't disturb roots
- crown slightly above ground level
- mulch 2-4 inches



Match the plant to the site.



More recommended plants



Photo by Eve Werner

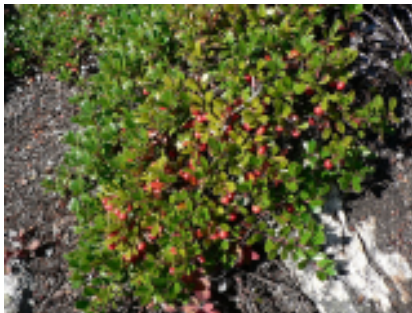
Aristolochia californica – California Pipevine

Host to Pipevine Swallowtail Butterfly larvae



Arctostaphylos uva-ursi – Bearberry (kinnikinnick), low-growing manzanita

- Low spreading
- Many cultivars
- spring flowers
- Needs afternoon shade inland
- Needs supplemental irrigation



Blue Dicks
Dichelostemma capitatum
Photo by Telos Rare Bulbs

Firecracker flower
Dichelostemma ida-maia



Blue eyed grass
Sisyrinchium bellum

- 4-12 inches
- Sun to partial shade
- Blooms in spring
- Reseeds readily
- Tolerates some clay
- Occasional-moderate water



Asclepias speciosa - Showy milkweed

- 2-4 ft. stems
- Very sweet fragrance
- Large, soft gray-green leaves
- Tolerates heavy soil
- Full sun
- No-occasional water



Asclepias fascicularis - Narrow-leaved milkweed

- Flowers smaller than showy milkweed
- Full sun
- No-occasional water
- Can spread aggressively



Narrow-leaved soap-plant
Chlorogalum pomeridianum var. *pomeridianum*



Oregon grape
Berberis aquifolium

- 3-6 feet & Low growing varieties
- Sun to shade



Carpenteria californica - California bush anemone

- spring blossoms
- large, evergreen
- afternoon shade
- Little to regular water



Cercocarpus betuloides - Mountain mahogany



- 5-20 ft, evergreen
- spring blossoms; feathery summer fruit
- no/little water



Aesculus californica - California buckeye

- 15-40 ft.
- little-moderate water
- full sun
- attractive fruit
- mid-late summer leaf drop



Umbellularia californica - California bay

- 25-50 ft. Sun or shade
- evergreen, aromatic leaves
- good hedge



Garden Design with Native Plants

A Practical Guide

by Ann Elliott

Mount Lassen Chapter - California Native Plant Society



Pick a design, and
make it your own.