

EASY to GROW California Native Plants for San Diego County



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Manzanita (<i>Arctostaphylos</i> species)	3
Dwarf Coyote Brush (<i>Baccharis pilularis</i> varieties)	3
California Wild Lilac (<i>Ceanothus</i> species)	4
Sea-dahlia (<i>Coreopsis maritima</i>)	5
Western Redbud (<i>Cercis occidentalis</i>)	5
Matilija Poppy (<i>Romneya coulteri</i>)	6
Cleveland Sage (<i>Salvia clevelandii</i>)	6
Fern-leaved Catalina Ironwood (<i>Lyonothamnus floribundus</i> ssp. <i>asplenifolius</i>)	7
Monkey Flower (<i>Mimulus</i> species)	7
California Buckwheat (<i>Eriogonum</i> species)	8
Fremontia (<i>Fremontodendron</i> species)	9
Douglas Iris (<i>Iris douglasiana</i>)	10
California Coffeeberry (<i>Rhamnus californica</i>)	10
Lemonade Berry/ Laurel Sumac/Sugar Bush (<i>Rhus</i> and related species)	11
Island Bush Snapdragon (<i>Galvezia speciosa</i>)	12
Toyon (<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>)	12
Torrey pine (<i>Pinus torreyana</i>)	13
Holly-leaved Cherry (<i>Prunus ilicifolia</i> ssp. <i>ilicifolia</i>)	13
Nuttal's Scrub Oak (<i>Quercus dumosa</i>)	14
Coast Live Oak (<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>)	15
References	16

Acknowledgements: This booklet was published by the San Diego Chapter of the California Native Plant Society. Many members have contributed to this document including

Brad Burkhart
Dale Clark
Jeanine DeHart
Rita Delapa
Joan Stewart
Kay Stewart
Catherine MacGregor
Carolyn Martus
Don Miller
Bertha McKinley
Carrie Schneider

This document should be reprinted to help educate the general public about our beautiful and unique California native plant heritage.

Please feel free to reproduce this booklet, always be sure to credit the San Diego Chapter of the California Native Plant Society,

www.cnpssd.org.

Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* species)

Description: Manzanita is a woody evergreen shrub that is commonly seen in chaparral throughout the state. Easily identified by its twisted reddish branches and silver to green foliage, manzanita's numerous species make it an ideal plant for any yard condition or location.

Prostrate ground covers, low, compact shrubs, and large bushes are some of its varied forms; these fit a wide variety of formal and informal landscape uses, including hillside covers, background plantings, screens, and single specimen plants. Clusters of white or pink flowers bloom in winter to spring, followed by berry-like fruits that appeal to birds and small mammals. Manzanita's distinctive limbs, with bark that flakes off in summer, are one of its finest features.

Selected Examples: *A. bakeri* 'Louis Edmunds' is an upright shrub that grows to 6' tall and equally wide; it has pink flowers. *A. glauca* spreads to 15' tall and 20' wide; it has bluish-green leaves. *A. uva-ursi* is a low ground cover for higher elevations in San Diego County. Its branches root themselves as it spreads to 15' wide. *A.* 'Emerald Carpet' does the same for coastal areas.

Planting and Care: Most manzanitas grow best with full sun to light shade. They favor slightly acidic, fast-draining soils or any sandy or slightly rocky soil. A few (*A. densiflora*, *A. hookeri*, *A. edmundsii*) tolerate heavy soils well. The first summer after planting, water manzanita about once a week; thereafter, water only once a month if needed.

Dwarf Coyote Brush (*Baccharis pilularis*, prostrate variety)

Description: A prostrate variety of the common coyote bush, dwarf coyote brush is an evergreen groundcover that grows from 8-24" tall and spreads as much as 6' wide. Because of its growth habit and easy adaptability to almost any climate and soil conditions, especially poor soil, this plant is an ideal and cost-effective evergreen "carpet." Use it on slopes or banks, or any flat areas without foot traffic. Dwarf coyote brush can be pruned into formal or informal shapes. Although its flowers are inconspicuous, dwarf coyote brush attracts small butterflies and beetles.

Selected Examples: 'Twin Peaks' has small dark green leaves and will grow from 1' high to 10'

wide. ‘Pigeon Point’ has lighter green, larger leaves and can be trained into a small hedge.

Planting and Care: Plant dwarf coyote brush in full sun, about 6-10’ apart to allow it room to spread. Once established, give it monthly water inland but no water at the coast. Cut it back once a year before new growth starts (usually in early spring); remove any old branches to keep plant growing. Overhead watering in summer may encourage spider-mite infestation. Most varieties should only have male flowers, so they should not produce seed or offspring.

California Wild Lilac (*Ceanothus* species)

Description: California lilacs are among California’s most beautiful and drought-resistant evergreen shrubs. Typically found in the foothills or mountains, when seen from a distance their white or blue flowers brighten entire hillsides. Particularly useful in the landscape because of their varied habits, the more than 40 species range from low and spreading groundcovers to small bushy shrubs to large shrubs that can be trained as trees. Leaves vary in texture and color and range in size from less than 1” to 3”. Shrubs with very small leaves are usually deer resistant. Although California lilacs are commonly carried in neighborhood nurseries, you’ll find the largest selection in a native plant nursery.

Selected Examples: *Ceanothus* ‘Joyce Coulter’ grows in a mound 2’ tall and 8’ wide; it has medium blue flowers that bloom from March to May. *Ceanothus arboreus* grows quickly to 20’ tall and 10’ wide; it has dark green leaves and 6” spikes of flowers. *Ceanothus* ‘Frosty Blue’ grows to 8’ tall and equally wide; it has dense foliage and white-frosted, deep blue flowers that bloom from March to May. The profusely blooming *Ceanothus* ‘Julia Phelps’ has small, dark green leaves and dark blue flower clusters.

Planting and Care: Most California lilacs thrive in sunny dry conditions with little or no water; they prefer light, well-drained soil. Overwatering may produce root rot; for this reason, they are ideal near oak trees, which have similar water requirements. To shape or control growth, pinch back tips during the growing season. Prune branches only if they are less than 1” in diameter, and only after the spring bloom when flowers have faded. Large leaves from the previous wet season, drop when June and hot weather arrives; do not worry, this is normal and an adaptation to reduce transpiration. The new small leaves remain to sustain life.

Sea-dahlia (*Coreopsis maritima*)

Description: Native to coastal southern California, the sea-dahlia is a short-lived perennial with a large lemon-yellow flower, a tuberous taproot, and yellowish-green, fernlike leaves. Formerly abundant on bluffs and sandy cliffs between Oceanside and northern Baja California, it is now scarce in the wild. Because it tolerates wind and salt air; sea-dahlia is tough enough for coastal gardens. Its bright flowers, which bloom from early spring to summer, are ideal for cut flower arrangements.

Planting and Care: Plant sea-dahlia in a sunny spot with sandy, well-drained soil; it needs little or no water once established. Sea-dahlia self-sows readily, and can easily be grown from seed; it can be treated as an annual, pulling it up once it goes dormant after the summer flowering season, or it can be left own and admired for its unusual form it takes in its dormant stage. Plant seeds in autumn for a spring bloom. To prolong blooming, remove spent blossoms or hedge the entire plant.

Western Redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*)

Description: Found in the foothills of California below 4000 feet, the western redbud is a large deciduous shrub whose seasonal changes provide year-round garden interest. In early spring, clusters of magenta flowers are followed by heart-shaped blue-green leaves. By mid-summer, reddish-brown seed pods fill out between the leaves. In fall, leaves turn light yellow (red at highest elevations) then drop, leaving mature pods between the branches. In winter, the red-barked branches provide a pleasant architectural frame and a perch for birds. The redbud grows from 10-18' tall and equally wide; it may be trained as a small tree. 'Alba' is a white-flowered shrub that grows 3-6' tall. Trouble-free and attractive, the redbud is also an excellent plant for gardens or parks.

Planting and Care: Plant your redbud in sun or light shade; it isn't fussy about soil. It will flower best in areas with some winter chill. Although it will grow faster with some summer water the western redbud needs little or no water once established and performs well on

infrequently watered banks. Prune it only in the dormant season or after it has bloomed. *This plant is not as easy to grow as others listed in this brochure. Please be sure to carefully follow the planting instructions and review other references before experimenting with this plant.*

Matilija Poppy (*Romneya coulteri*)

Description: A real car-stopper, the Matilija poppy has huge, tissue-paper-like white flowers with golden centers. These flowers sit atop 6-8' gray-green stalks with lobed leaves. Found in the coast-to-valley regions of southern California and Baja California, this shrubby perennial grows from rhizomes. The name reportedly comes from a Native American name for a canyon where dense colonies of this lovely native were originally found. Although in natural areas it blooms from late spring into summer, the Matilija poppy will bloom into fall with additional watering. Because it spreads by rhizomes, it's ideal for stabilizing slopes or sprucing up any neglected area that has poor soil. However, its rhizomatous growth allows it to spread quickly and it may require some control if planted in a small area. The flowers are mildly fragrant and make attractive arrangements.

Planting and Care: Plant the Matilija poppy in full sun; it tolerates poor soil but does best in well-drained soil. Avoid disturbing the root ball or the plant may suffer. To limit its growth, withhold summer water. Don't plant it in a small plot or where it will take over more delicate flowers. In November, cut the plant back to 12"; new shoots will begin to grow after the first winter rain. Can be propagated by digging up small new growths from the underground stems in winter and laying them horizontally in a shallow container filled with light planting mix. Keep the cuttings moist and in a shady spot until they root. Or purchase your Matilija poppy at a fall native plant society sale.

Cleveland Sage (*Salvia clevelandii*)

Description: Cleveland sage (*Salvia clevelandii*) is an intensely fragrant evergreen shrub native to southern California and Baja California. Growing from 3-5' tall and 5-8' wide in a rounded form, its haze of gray-green leaves and clear purplish blossoms paint hillsides from spring to

fall. Use the fragrant leaves to make tea or potpourri; place a flower stalk in any small space to capture the scent. Extremely drought tolerant, its hardiness makes it useful as a background plant on dry slopes, as part of a border with other dry-summer plants, or in a dry rock garden as a single-specimen plant.

Selected Examples: *Salvia clevelandii* ‘Winifred Gilman’ is 3’ tall and 3’ wide with reddish purple flowers; *Salvia clevelandii* ‘Alpine’ survives to 10°F. A hybrid called ‘Aromas’ has large, dark blue flowers. Other native sages with similar needs and landscape value that are particularly well-suited to San Diego County include white sage, *Salvia apiana*, and black sage, *Salvia mellifera*.

Planting and Care: Plant Cleveland sage in full sun and poor soil; give it little or no summer water. Remove spent flower spikes to encourage re-bloom, and prune to shape after the final bloom.

Fern-leaved Catalina Ironwood (*Lyonothamnus floribundus ssp. aspleniifolius*)

Description: Native to the Channel Islands, fern-leaved Catalina ironwood is a handsome tree that was used extensively by Native Americans. With red-brown bark, evergreen leaves, and showy white flower clusters that appear in spring (sometimes into summer), it is now grown for its beauty and shade. *Lyonothamnus floribundus ssp. aspleniifolius*, the fern-leaved Catalina ironwood is available in small containers or as specimen plants. A fine ornamental, its leaves are dark green above, grayish green below, and divided into notched or lobed leaflets. The shape is tall and narrow, rather than wide-spreading, allowing it to fit easily into smaller gardens.

Planting and Care: Fern-leaved Catalina ironwood grows best at the coast; plant it in a sunny spot with well-drained soil. In inland areas, shelter the tree from drying winds. The tree’s leaves make a fine natural mulch. Moderate year-round water speeds growth. Prune the tree only in winter. Fern-leaved Catalina ironwood is especially attractive when planted in a group of three or more.

Monkey Flower (*Mimulus* species)

Description: Named for their flowers, which some say look like a monkey’s face, monkey

flowers live in a multitude of California habitats. In San Diego, different species are found in the desert, mountains, and along coastal hills. Some are perennial shrubs, while others are annual herbaceous plants. The monkey flower's brilliant blooms and many forms, foliage, and exposure needs make them handy for almost any garden spot. They form a colorful layer between groundcover and taller shrubs or trees, and are also useful in borders or foundation plantings.

Selected Examples: *Mimulus aurantiacus* is a drought-tolerant, woody perennial with many subspecies and a number of hybrid varieties that grow 1-4' tall. *M. cardinalis* is a perennial that grows in damp soils in much of the west; it attracts hummingbirds and reseeds freely. Give it full shade in the hottest inland areas; otherwise plant it in sun or shade. *M. hybridus*, a perennial grown as an annual, has orange, yellow, creamy white, rose or brown flowers with showy spots; it prefers rich, organic soil.

Planting and Care: Monkey flowers prefer well-drained soil; the amount of sun they need depends on the species. Although they generally bloom spring to summer, some will bloom into fall and others year-round. Most should not be watered in the summer. Prune back old growth.

California Buckwheat (*Eriogonum* species)

Description: Buckwheats are annuals to shrubby perennials found all over the west; in California, about 70 species grow on coastal cliffs, rocky ridges, in chaparral, on sunny slopes and in the desert. All are drought resistant. Buckwheat flowers sit in umbrella-like or round clusters that attract birds, bees, and butterflies with their nectar; their long-lasting flowers make excellent dried arrangements. Depending on the species, flowers are white, pink, rose, red, or yellow. Buckwheats change gradually yet dramatically throughout the year, bringing to our attention California's subtle seasons.

Selected Examples: *E. fasciculatum* grows in a round clump 1-3' tall and to 4' wide. Blooming from late spring to fall, it is an excellent plant for erosion control. Its flowers and leaves turn darker shades of red in the fall. The low-growing variety 'Theodore Payne' has pink flowers and makes a good ground cover, especially on coastal bluffs. Several species of buckwheat are commonly grown in San Diego gardens. *E. arborescens* (Santa Cruz Island buckwheat) grows 3-4', but sometimes as much as 8' tall and it spreads to 5' wide with an open branch pattern and

pink or rosy flowers that are useful in arrangements. *E. giganteum* (St. Catherine's Lace) grows 3-4' tall in an upright, loosely branched habit. It has broad, gray-white leaves and giant flower clusters. *E. umbellatum* (sulfur flower) has wide mats of green-leaved stems bearing yellow flowers that turn rust-colored with age. It grows to 3' tall and equally wide.

Planting and Care: Plant your buckwheat in full sun. Buckwehats grow best in loose or gravelly well-drained soil, and are particularly useful for dry banks, amidst rock gardens of any size, and on very dry or windy sites. Once established they need little or no water and will bloom from spring to fall, depending on the species. Plants may self-seed; transplant these seedlings when they are young. To keep shapely, prune after bloom.

Fremontia, Flannelbush (*Fremontodendron* species)

Description: An evergreen shrub with rich yellow flowers, fremontia or flannelbush is one of our most beautiful native shrubs, *but it is also a sensitive prima donna*. Short-lived in general, it dies in damp summer soil, falling immediate prey to root-rot. It requires staking and some pruning or pinching while young, and its hairy leaves may irritate the skin. In spite of these qualities, gardeners continue to plant it. The abundance of glorious flowers that cover healthy plants are worth the effort. Fremontia grows quickly, up to 15' tall and 12' wide depending on the variety. Its lobed leaves have a felt-like underside.

Selected Examples: *F. californicum*, the common flannel bush, has 1-1 1/2" lemon yellow flowers that usually bloom simultaneously. *F. mexicanum*, the southern flannel bush, blooms over a longer period, but its 2" brilliant orange-yellow flowers appear in fewer numbers. At least three hybrid fremontias are also available; all bloom from spring through summer.

Planting and Care: Fremontias need full sun and excellent drainage. Do not water in the summer. Their roots are shallow, so don't cultivate around the plants. Stake them while young, and pinch back branches to shape the plant. A blend of fremontias and other summer-blooming natives such as salvias and monkey flowers brings home a lovely yet wild California landscape.

Douglas Iris (*Iris douglasiana*)

Description: One of 11 iris species native to Pacific coast states, the Douglas iris grows from Santa Barbara to Oregon. It has 1-2' long stems, evergreen leaves almost the same size, and flowers that range from blue to purple and white to cream. A perennial that grows from creeping rhizomes, it is often used to form solid mats over large areas, among shrubs, or under trees. The flowers produce seed capsules, which in turn produce new plants that are often found among older clumps. In fall or spring you can dig up these new plants and repot them in a container.

Selected Examples: *Iris longipetala*, the coast iris, is slightly smaller than the Douglas iris. It takes full sun and almost any kind of soil. Since it doesn't spread, the coast iris is a better choice than the Douglas iris for borders and edges. Flowers are spectacularly large, blue and white with violet-blue veins, and ideal for cut flowers. Many hybrid varieties of Pacific Coast irises are available, including some with flowers in pink, copper, brown and maroon.

Planting and Care: Give the Douglas iris full sun at the coast and part shade inland, but be flexible; many will tolerate full shade. Add organic amendments when you plant; in clay soil, plant in raised beds or amend heavily. If leaves turn brown in summer, you can remove them. Propagate one of three ways: 1) Dig up new plants in spring or fall and plant them in containers. 2) Collect seeds and plant them in autumn directly in the soil; don't disturb this spot. 3) Dig up the plant in winter or spring and divide it; replant a section of fleshy root.

California Coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californica*)

Description: Native to California and southwest Oregon, California coffeeberry is a fast-growing evergreen shrub that is valued for its form, which varies based on its location. In woodland areas it grows upright to 15' tall; in coastal regions it generally has a low, spreading habit. Leaves may be shiny or dull, and vary from dark green to yellowish green. Greenish or cream flowers are inconspicuous, although large fruits ripen slowly from green to reddish to nearly black.

Selected varieties: Some varieties of California coffeeberry include 'San Bruno', an attractive

evergreen shrubby groundcover that grows 3-6' tall and equally wide with narrow leaves. Afternoon shade in the interior and near regular water at most locations. An excellent substitute for *Rhaphiolepis*. 'Eve Case' is a groundcover that grows to 2' high and spreads to 8'. This variety came from Big Sur so it is well suited for coastal gardens. Other species of *Rhamnus* with different features are available. *R. crocea*, spiny redberry, grows to 3' high and 6' wide; it has small, roundish leaves on many stiff branches. Male and female flowers are produced on separate shrubs, so plant both types to insure berries. *R. ilicifolia*, the holly-leaf redberry, is a shrubby tree that can grow to 15' high. Native to the coast and mountains of California and to Arizona and Baja California, it tolerates heat and drought.

Planting and Care: Plant California coffeeberry in full sun or part shade; it tolerates almost any kind of soil. Once established, no water is needed, although it will look best with moderate water or infrequent deep soakings. Trim or prune as necessary depending on your landscape use: background plant, divider, or hedge.

Lemonadeberry/ Laurel Sumac/ Sugar Bush (*Rhus* and *Malosma* species)

Description: All *Rhus* and *Malosma* species listed here are evergreen shrubs. Bearing dense clusters of small white or pinkish flowers followed by red or white berry-like fruit, they provide food and shelter for small birds and animals. New leaves and twigs develop with a reddish tint, giving a colorful glow to springtime foliage. *Rhus integrifolia*, lemonadeberry, is native to the southern California coast, the Channel Islands, and Baja California. It does best near the coast, where it is one of the most dependable native plants in cultivation. Growing 3-10' high and equally wide, it has rough dark leaves and sticky, tart berries. Strong coastal winds will shape it into a sprawling form; in less windy spots use it as a screening fence or pruned into a formal hedge. It's particularly good for erosion control. *Malosma laurina* (formerly *Rhus laurina*), laurel sumac, shares some of the coastal distribution range of *Rhus integrifolia* but is also found in the coastal foothills. More tree-like than lemonadeberry, and with striking red-green foliage, laurel sumac is a fast grower that reaches 6-15' tall and equally wide. Flowering from late spring to early summer (and sometimes into fall), this shrub looks best when pruned to shape its natural

legginess. Some leaves may die in frost, but will grow back. *Rhus ovata*, sugar bush, grows in dry slope areas as far east as Arizona. Growing 4-10' tall and equally wide with large white flower clusters, it has an upright or spreading habit. This plant is very drought tolerant; once established, needs no supplemental water, and it will tolerate frost.

Planting and Care: Plant *Rhus/Malosma* species in sun and in well-drained soil; damp soils can kill them.

Showy Island Snapdragon (*Galvezia speciosa*)

Description: Native to the canyons of the Channel Islands, this evergreen shrub with light green leaves grows to 3' tall and 5' wide. Since its tubular scarlet flowers attract hummingbirds, plant it within viewing distance of a window or patio seat. Showy island snapdragon assumes a happy round shape, but can also spread on a slope or be trained on a trellis – it's one of the lowest maintenance plants you can have in your garden. A smaller version, *G. speciosa* 'Firecracker', grows about 3' tall and 3' wide.

Planting and Care: Plant in full sun; in hottest areas, give it part shade. *Galvezia* thrives in any well-drained soil, and needs little water once established. Easy to propagate from cuttings. Although the best bloom time is April to May, it frequently blooms in cycles throughout the year. After it flowers, brown seeds remain on the shrub; prune these for a tidier appearance or leave them for birds to discover.

Toyon (California Holly, Christmas Berry) (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*)

Description: Native to canyons and hillsides ranging from San Diego and Baja California to the Sierra Nevada foothills and the California coastal mountains, toyon is a dense evergreen shrub that grows from 6-15' tall and almost as wide. Its dark green leaves have toothed margins. In summer it sports clusters of white flowers; in winter, bright red berries attract birds. Toyon's two other common names reflect its former abundance (legend has it that the city of Hollywood got its name from many toyon in the area) and seasonal berry display. One of our

sturdiest, most lovely and most reliable landscape plants, toyon can be used alone, as a hedge, screen, or specimen plant, or to cover slopes. It's ideal for large-scale landscapes, especially when mixed with other native plants.

Planting and Care: In nature, toyon is often found on north-facing slopes; however, you can plant it in full sun or part shade. It does best in well-drained soil, and is one of the few plants that survives highly alkaline soil and even calcareous soil. Once established, little water is necessary; however, flower and fruit production is more abundant with some water, and the overall plant looks better. Toyon can be pruned into a small tree; pruning may enhance berry production the following year.

Torrey Pine (*Pinus torreyana*)

Description: One of the rarest pine species in America, the Torrey pine is native only to the northeast side of Santa Rosa Island and a small section of sandstone bluffs along the coast of San Diego County. Only about 9,000-10,000 individuals of this species, discovered by Charles Parry in 1850, still exist. Growing 40-60' tall and 30-50' wide, the tree's shape depends on its environment: with ocean winds it becomes flatter, broader, open, and irregular; with no wind it grows upright and symmetrical. Grayish-green needles 8-13" long appear in bundles of 5; round, rich brown cones are 4-6" long and attract birds. Cones may stay on the tree for as long as 10 years.

Planting and Care: Torrey pines are fast growers, and make a lovely background tree, especially for pink-flowering trees and shrubs. Plant your Torrey pine in sun or part shade, in any well-drained soil. Once established, it needs little or no supplemental water. When selecting a location for the tree, be sure to consider the size of the mature tree and allow enough space for side branches to spread. If necessary, prune slightly in spring when new growth begins; if you prune a large branch it will not grow back.

Holly-leaved Cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia* ssp. *ilicifolia*)

Description: Native to California's coastal valleys, foothills, and ranges, the holly-leaved cherry is an evergreen shrub with shiny, dark green leaves that have serrated margins. Creamy white

flowers appear in March to May, followed by dark red fruit. Although the fruit is edible, its pit is disproportionately large compared to its flesh, and the flavor is somewhat bitter. Holly-leaved cherry is a slow grower that reaches grows 10-25' tall and slightly less wide. It makes an ideal hedge, screen, or divider, and birds are attracted to the fruit. Use the leaves in flower arrangements.

Selected examples: *Prunus ilicifolia ssp. lyonii*, the Catalina cherry, is native to the Channel Islands and plays a similar role in the landscape, although it tolerates more water than *P. ilicifolia ssp. ilicifolia* (holly-leaved cherry). Catalina cherry has leaf margins that are smoother than those of holly-leaved cherry, and the fruit is darker red. Both species form many seedlings, which are easily dug up. **Because these two species hybridize, they should never be grown near each other.** In addition, because *P. ilicifolia lyonii* (Catalina Cherry) can naturalize and invade our open spaces and compete with native vegetation, **do not plant *P. ilicifolia ssp. lyonii* (Catalina Cherry) adjacent to or near open spaces or natural areas.** If you find *P. ilicifolia ssp. lyonii* (Catalina cherry) naturalizing or invading natural lands or open spaces, report it to the land manager or property owner, it should be removed immediately.

Planting and Care: Plant either subspecies in sun to part shade in well-drained soil. Although little water is needed once established, these shrubs appreciate a monthly deep soaking in dry months. Because dropped fruit can stain pavement, plant these shrubs away from your walkway, patio, or driveway.

Nuttall's Scrub Oak (*Quercus dumosa*)

Description: Nuttall's scrub oak has rarely been used in gardens and few people have had much experience with it, but it has some very attractive qualities to recommend its use. The leaves are small and somewhat like holly leaves. It tends to produce multiple slender trunks, and it sprouts from the roots clone to these trunks, thus forming an irregular clump, a feature that could provide a variety of forms in a garden. By removing unwanted sprouts, and by pruning, a gardener could fit this species into situations where coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) would be too large and dominating. Scrub oak was formerly considered one species that stretched from the coast to the desert; the evergreen shrub that we call Nuttall's scrub oak has recently been

determined to be one of three separate species of scrub oak (the chaparral species is *Q. berberidifolia*; the desert-border species is likely to be *Q. cornelius-mulleri*). *Quercus dumosa* grows on bluffs and hillsides near the ocean in southern California and northern Baja California, a rapidly decreasing habitat. Growing 6-10' tall and equally wide, the Nuttall's scrub oak has half-inch leaves with spiny margins; they are dark green on top and paler below. Inconspicuous strings of flowers are followed by pointed acorns. The Nuttall's scrub oak is excellent on a slope as a screen or hedge, and makes a fine home for birds.

Planting and Care: Plant your Nuttall's scrub oak in full sun and in sandy or otherwise well-drained soil. Oaks are adapted to wet winters and dry summers. Water adequately in winter and mildly to moderately the first two summers; after that, eliminate watering. See more about oak planting and care under the entry for coast live oak.

Coast Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia*)

Description: Sturdy and majestic, the round-canopied coast live oak is one of California's best known native trees. Found in southern and central coastal California on protected bluffs, inland valleys and hillsides, the coast live oak has twisted gray limbs and multiple trunks that frequently grow horizontally. This evergreen tree's limbs and acorns are valuable to wildlife. Although a slow grower, many coast live oaks live more than 200 years and will reach 20-70' tall. Dark green leaves are 1-3" with prickly edges; they will drop in extreme drought.

Planting and Care: Stately old oaks need special care. Avoid any kind of compaction in the root zone, such as foot traffic, heavy debris, pavement, or construction vehicles. Don't dig or otherwise change the grade from the trunk to the drip zone of the tree, and don't remove any dirt from under it. It is also best to allow any fallen oak leaves to remain as mulch around the base of the oak tree, this leaf litter is part of the oak's "immune system" and will help it to live a long and healthy life. Any summer water may stimulate an oak root fungus, which will harm the tree. Don't plant anything that requires water under an old oak, and keep all other plants at least 6' away from the trunk. Native plants that will thrive in partial shade and no summer water include the evergreen current (*Ribes viburnifolium*); the Oregon grape (*Berberis aquifolium*); Nevin's barberry (*Mahonia nevinii*); and the Pacific coast irises, such as *I. douglasiana*. Also consider low-growing California lilacs such as *Ceanothus griseus horizontalis* and *Ceanothus rigidus* and the smaller

Arctostaphylos varieties. New oaks purchased from the nursery will tolerate more summer water, but they will survive just as well with low water for the first two years, and occasional summer watering only if very dry. The California Oak Foundation provides more information and resources about caring for and protecting California's native oak species, ww.californiaoaks.org

References

California Native Plant Society, San Diego Chapter

General meeting, 7:00 PM on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at Balboa Park, Casa del Prado, Room 104. Books for sale and free advice, www.cnpssd.org

California Native Plant Society

www.cnps.org

Tree of Life Nursery

San Juan Capistrano, www.treeoflifenuresery.com, 949-728-0685

Las Pilitas Nursery

Escondido, www.laspilitas.com, 760-749-5930

Sunset Western Garden Book, 7th edition

Editor: Kathleen Norris Brenzel

Sunset Publishing Corporation, 2001.

Growing California Native Plants

Marjorie G. Schmidt

University of California Press, 1980.

Oaks of California

Bruce Pavlik, Pamela Muick, Sharon Johnson, & Marjoire Popper

Cachuma Press and the California Oak Foundation, 1992.

Conifers of California

Ronald M. Lanner, Cachuma Press, 1999.

Propagation Secrets for California Native Plants

Jeanine DeHart 1994

Rancho Santa Anna Botanical Garden

Claremont, Ca, www.rsabg.org, (909) 625-8767 ext. 251

The Jepson Manual, Higher Plants of California

Editor: Hickman

University of California Press, 1993