



*Yarrow,
Achillea millefolium*

Gardening with Native Plants



Friends of Sausal Creek
PROMOTING WATERSHED AWARENESS

Available online at sausalcreek.org/watershed-residents

Knowing that you love the earth changes you, activates you to defend and protect and celebrate. But when you feel that the earth loves you in return, that feeling transforms the relationship from a one-way street to a sacred bond.

-- Robin Wall Kimmerer, Braiding Sweetgrass

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Thriving ecosystems are made up of interconnected communities of plants, animals, insects and humans. Modern land use has fragmented ecosystems across rural and urban landscapes. We can move toward restoration by choosing ecologically beneficial plants to put in our gardens. By planting native plants across working lands, parks, neighborhoods and cities, we can create resilient ecosystems both on a large scale and in our own backyards.

What are native plants? *A native plant is one that has evolved over hundreds or thousands of years in a particular region or ecosystem and has become a part of a natural community. Microbes, fungi, plants, animals, and people coevolved with the local geography and climate, creating great biological diversity and dynamic balance.*

In California, indigenous peoples have lived in and stewarded bountiful natural ecosystems for millennia. Ohlone is a contemporary name for dozens of indigenous groups in the Monterey and San Francisco bay regions (1,2) whose descendants continue today to revitalize cultural practices and traditional ecological methods, such as controlled burns and wild gardening (3). Since the beginning of colonization and the systematic removal of native peoples from stewarding the landscape, there has been a rapid decline of both native plant and animal species. Some introduced plants have become invasive, taking over where wild plants once thrived, creating fragmented habitats and increasing fuel loads that spread wildfires (4).

What role do native plants play in ecosystem restoration and watershed stewardship?

Native plants in natural settings sustain biological diversity and provide food and shelter for a wide variety of animals, including insects, birds, and mammals. These animals reciprocate by dispersing seed and pollen. Native plants are a crucial component of an ecosystem's food web. They maintain a healthy and diverse population of insects that pollinate crops or provide food for birds. They also enhance absorption of rain water and control its release from the soil, which prevents erosion and protects creeks and rivers.

Monocropping, pesticide use, and invasive plants have contributed to pollinator collapse, breaking down relationships between native pollinators and plants. Reduced and disconnected habitats cause hardships for migrating species and native wildlife, especially those species that have coevolved with their plant counterparts. Reintroducing native plants into the landscape helps restore the natural balance in these complex and beneficial ecosystems.

While some plants and the animals they support have developed the ability to thrive in a range of environments, others have become specialized. “Keystone” plants can provide habitat and food for hundreds of insect species. A niche species might supply a specialized butterfly’s one and only food source at certain stages in its lifecycle.

Whether we plant in containers, gardens, or larger landscaping and restoration projects, working together as a community will create connectivity in native plant habitat across the watershed and beyond.



What benefits can native plants bring to urban landscapes?

In urban spaces, native plants can enhance container gardens, backyards, schoolyards, industrial parks, and streetscapes due to their resilience and adaptation to local conditions.

Native plantings require less water and fertilizer than nonnatives and resist disease, lessening the need for pesticides or herbicides. Gardening and landscaping with native plants provides insight into natural processes and seasonal changes, and brings natural beauty into urban environments.

Friends of Sausal Creek's (FOSC's) mission is to restore, maintain, and protect the Sausal Creek Watershed. Nurturing native plant species is an essential strategy in establishing a healthy riparian greenway from the hills to the bay where people, plant, and animal inhabitants can thrive. Within the Sausal Creek watershed, volunteers steward over 20 restoration sites. While this is an impressive feat, overall it represents a small area within Oakland.

Imagine urban gardeners planting local native plants across the city and the entire East Bay. This would provide food and habitat for pollinators and create a plentiful "pollinator corridor." By connecting our own small spaces, we can create valuable habitat for native insects and animals on a larger scale.

Read on to learn more about how you can bring native plants into your neighborhood. FOSC welcomes volunteers of all ages and experience levels who wish to learn practical restoration and propagation skills, contribute to the community, and engage with others who have similar interests.

Read on to learn more about
how you can bring native
plants into your
neighborhood!



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How can I grow native plants in an urban environment?

- Start by assessing your planting area: Take inventory of your available space. Where can you plant? Look for locations for containers on a porch or find a nearby parking strip, yard, or community garden that can be transformed into native plant habitat.
- Get inspired by visiting local gardens in various seasons. See the Resources section to find nearby East Bay demonstration gardens.
- Know your goals. What environment do you want your plantings to create? Spend time thinking about what you want your garden to look like throughout the seasons and what kinds of habitat you want to create. Do you want to create a more naturalistic or formal landscaping? Do you want to prioritize space for flowers, food for wildlife, native pollinators, or birds?
- Sketch out a plan and don't be afraid to add one plant at a time, with room for the garden to grow and change.

Q: How do I choose the right plants?

- Get to know your garden site. What type of soil are you working with? How much water and light does each planting area receive? Observe your garden site throughout the day and seasons.
- Use this guide to explore suggested plant lists and online search tools.
- Verify that the mature size of perennial plants will fit the space.
- Help is available! You can consult a local native plant nursery staff or landscaper. There are many in this area; see the Resources section for more information.

Q: How can I create habitat for birds or pollinators in my garden?

- Consult our Gardening for Wildlife checklist and Resources section to find ways to learn about which birds, butterflies, and bees live or migrate in your area. Pollinators have preferences for habitat with the foods they need most in each season. You can plant specific plants to support them.
- Find lists of recommended plants for specific pollinators in books, online posts, and in database searches.
- For pollinators it is important to have flowers through the seasons. Different pollinators are active in different seasons, so it's best to extend the availability of flowers for as long as possible. Early bloomers (for example manzanita, ceanothus, pink-flowering currants) are important for bumble bees. The queens that wake up from hibernation in early spring need floral resources to help them establish new colonies. Late bloomers, such as the asters and buckwheats, are important for late season bees.
- Nesting habitat for pollinators does not get enough press. Seventy percent (70%) of our native bees are ground nesters, and they need bare ground for nesting. A garden with floral resources for your bees requires a place for them to excavate their nests to provide year-round habitat.
- Make room for your garden to go wild. A little bit of untidiness at the edges of the garden creates abundant habitat for pollinators throughout the seasons. When pruning back dormant plants, especially those with hollow stems, leave at least six inches in place. Many of the small bees are cavity nesters that seek out this real estate. Leave leaf litter in place because many insects pupate and overwinter in it.



Sweat bees collecting pollen from a native California poppy. Photo by May Chen.

- Not much attention has been given to the issue of using native cultivars. Many native plants have been bred for human aesthetics, overlooking the needs of the insects. The manipulations of the flowers can inadvertently affect the quantity and quality of the nectar and pollen. One common example is the double-petal California poppies. The native poppies have four petals arranged in an open bowl corolla and provide copious amounts of pollen. In the cultivars with double petals, the extra petals are actually modified stamens. That means there is less pollen produced, and the crowding of the petals impedes access for pollinators. The change in colors and markings also interfere with signaling between the flowers and the pollinators. Bees generally do not see red well and are not attracted to red flowers. When selecting natives, it is always best to get the species with which the pollinators are familiar instead of a cultivar. These plants better meet the needs of their pollinators.

Quick Start Guide

Native plant gardening can start small. A little preparation before buying plants will save time and money. Use this guide to assess your garden space and prepare for planting. Use your sketches and notes as a reference when shopping or seeking expert advice.

1. Assess the area

Jot down your answers to these questions:

What soil type are you working with? Sand, loam, clay, rock, or a mix? How fast does the soil drain? Observe the area after a rain and notice how water moves. What water availability is there at your site? Observe your site over the course of a day, and through the seasons. What do you notice? Take note of the sunnier and shadier areas. What plants are already in the garden space?

2. Know your goals

Make a list of how you want the garden space to be used. The garden can provide habitat and food for humans and wildlife, catch rainwater, and much more. Consider how your priorities for the garden will inform your design. Once you have articulated your goals, you can begin to choose plants that meet them.

3. Select plants that meet your goals

*Use a free database like [CalScape](#) to discover and list plants that meet your criteria. Options include groundcovers, shrubs, vines, and trees as well as perennials and annuals. Keep in mind the plants' value for seasonal wildlife food and flower displays, and other seasonal changes. You will refer to your lists and take into consideration the mature plant size and its requirement for light, water and soil type when planning your layout. You can seek advice from nursery staff and browse published lists of suggested plants. See *Resources sections on Garden Design and Gardening for Wildlife* for sample garden plans.*

4. Sketch your space

Measure your garden space and draw its shape to approximate scale to help visualize your plan. Include the size and arrangement of any planting containers. Now, fill in your sketch with outlines indicating ideas for type, height and width of plants. Then, fill in some planting possibilities. Use pencil or make copies for multiple drafts.

5. Prepare for planting and maintenance

Position each plant to provide enough space when it reaches maturity. Amend soil for drainage if needed. Plant in the fall for strong root growth during the rainy season. Water during dry spells while plants are becoming established. Flag and label plants that go dormant.

More Advice on Getting Started

The California Native Plant Society publishes articles by expert gardeners. Some of our favorites are listed below to help you prepare your garden.

[Advice for a New Native Gardener](#)

Basics of planning, and how to get your new plants in the ground

[Prepping and Planting](#)

Learn how to prepare your garden space with in depth guides on removing lawns, determine soil types and drainage, mulching, and watering new and established plants

[Gardening and Horticulture](#)

Browse the website or search by keyword to find plentiful articles on popular topics, such as [Patio and Container Gardens](#)

Gardening for Wildlife

A Checklist:

Begin with these ideas on how to incorporate habitat for birds, pollinators, and other wildlife (5, 6) in your landscaping. Inspired by Dr. Doug Tallamy's guide to native plant gardening.

- Remove **invasive species** such as ivy, blackberry, French broom, and arundo.

- Shrink your lawn to create more space for **native plants**, saving water while creating habitat.

- Plant **more than 50%** of the garden with California natives.

- Focus on planting ecologically productive **keystone plants**. Keystone plants are species upon which an ecosystem depends and often support many kinds of insects. Learn about the keystone plants native to your area.

- Design your garden with plants that support **specialist pollinators**. Specialist pollinators are birds and insects that rely on just a few related plant species for food.

- Be generous with **group plantings** to attract pollinators.

- Provide **seasonal food** for wildlife with a variety of plants that flower and set fruit at different times of year.

- Provide **water** with a bird bath, bubbler, water dish, or small pond.

- Diversify your **garden structure** with layers of ground covers, herbaceous (non-woody) vegetation, and/or grasses, shrubs of various heights, and trees.
- Create **year-round protective cover** with a planting of evergreen trees or shrubs, logs, rocks, or brush piles.
- Disperse bundles of hollow stems as **shelter and habitat** for cavity nesting bees; refresh the stems in “bee hotels” annually.
- Provide caterpillar **pupation sites** under trees using a fallen log or leaf litter.
- Leave **some areas somewhat untidy**: Let flowers go to seed to provide food for birds, and leave dead leaves and stalks to shelter over-wintering insects.
- Leave **some areas free of mulch** for ground-nesting insects.
- Do not over-fertilize. Focus on developing **rich organic matter** over focusing exclusively on nitrogen.
- Avoid **pesticides**, including indiscriminate spraying of *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) or pyrethrin. Bt is toxic to caterpillars feeding on leaves, and pyrethrin is toxic to bees.
- Educate and network with neighbors and local officials for **greater impact**.



*See more on Gardening for Wildlife
in the Resources Section*

Resources

Learn more about the many subjects related to native plants by browsing the resources linked below. Each section contains resources on a single topic, beginning with essential information for getting started, followed by More Resources. For active links, refer to the Web version of this guide at sausalcreek.org/watershed-residents

Plant Identification: free online tools

Learning the name of an interesting plant or animal opens the door to learning about its needs. When you see an interesting plant in a park, find out what it is. Would it also grow well at your home? Is the bush already growing in your yard a native or an introduced species--friendly or invasive? Here are some favorite apps, which are available for free and with no advertising.



PlantID.net

Can plant identification be easy? That is the goal of this site devoted to native and introduced California plants in the wild. Bruce Homer-Smith's tutorial describes three ways to search in order to identify plants:

- California Plant Finder - Select criteria for filtering by location, plant type, flowers, leaves
- Local Plant Lists - Experts have contributed lists for popular trails and parks, organized by county
- Custom ID guides - Experts have contributed topical guides, such as "Common California Berries"

The website also has an illustrated glossary of plant anatomy and a clipboard feature for compiling a custom gallery of photos. It is hosted by the California Native Plant Society, Marin Chapter.



[iNaturalist.org](https://www.inaturalist.org)

iNaturalist is a catalyst to bring citizen science into action at the click of a button.

Anyone with a computer or smartphone and Internet access can register for free and use iNaturalist to keep track of personal observations, compare observations with other sightings, and have verified naturalists confirm species identification. Uploading a picture of any wild plant or animal will activate image recognition software and suggest species identification, plus the iNaturalist community will confirm or help identify it. As a bonus, every observation in iNaturalist contributes to a growing database on biodiversity science, from the rarest butterfly to the most common backyard weed.

Learn to use iNaturalist here: [Brochure](#) for an overview and [Help: Getting started](#).



[Seek](#)

This easy-to-use application, developed by iNaturalist, functions as a camera that activates image recognition and real-time identification even before taking a picture.

The well-illustrated [User Guide](#) compares the purpose of Seek with iNaturalist. Children under 13 can use the app because location is not logged; however, there is an option to sign in with iNaturalist in order to share an observation.



More Resources on Plant Identification

[Wildland Vegetation](#) by East Bay Regional Park District.

Webpage leads to [Wild Plant Photo Guides](#) and [Wildflower Photo Guides](#). Most guides are specific to a regional park.

The labelled photos depict native and naturalized plants and indicate which are invasive.

Garden Design

Designing your native plant garden is an endless learning opportunity. These resources provide inspiration and starting points.

[Advice for a New Native Gardener](#)

The California Native Plant Society

What to do first? Assess the space and environment, note your goals and make a plan! Then select plants that will thrive and meet your goals.

[Native Planting Guides: Planting for Your Location](#)

The California Native Plant Society

Download the colorful guide for your region. It includes easy project ideas, sample garden plans, and concise tables listing carefully selected plants by height (trees, shrubs, groundcovers, grasses and vines). There is also information on sun, water requirements, size, flower color, and an indication of each plant's importance to birds, bees, and butterflies.

[The Gardener's Guide to the Sausal Creek Watershed: A Home Companion to Growing Native Plants](#)

Martha E. Lowe

The Growing Tips section emphasizes the relationship between selecting appropriate native plants and ongoing ease of care. Structuring a garden might begin with choosing perennials that will thrive in the available space and growing conditions. The Plant Descriptions section profiles 23 long-lived perennials that require little maintenance. Information includes value to wildlife, growth habits, and cultural requirements.

More Resources on Garden Design:

- [Lawn to Garden Design Center](#) by East Bay Municipal Utility District
- [Native Plants: Backyard Conservation Tip Sheet](#) by Natural Resources Conservation Service. An inspirational approach to design, with natural beauty and support for wildlife in mind.
- [How to Design a Garden Using Native Plants](#) by Las Pilitas Nursery. Detailed consideration of options based on long experience in design and installation.

Plant Selection

Free online tools to assist your selection of native plants for your garden

[Calscape: Restore Nature One Garden at a Time](#)

An easy-to-use search engine with exceptionally well-designed display of results. The California Native Plant Society has organized 8,000 plants into 20 categories, including "Very Easy." Options include sorting results, creating My Plant Lists, exporting lists to a spreadsheet, and printing labels. Advanced search allows selecting for plant type, light and soil requirements, common uses, water needs, fragrance, flower color, flower season, and more. Details for each plant include a list of companion plants.

[Choosing Your Plants: Using Calscape to Find Plants for Your Landscape](#)

Step by step guide: Create your account; Add plants to your list; Find a nursery.

[CalFlora: Planting Guide](#)

This application will suggest which California native plants will likely grow well at a particular location under selected conditions. The criterion "Plant grows with [enter species]" is useful to find companions for existing plants or your initial selections. Search results show photos, bloom time, and more, all of which can be emailed or downloaded to a spreadsheet. See the tutorial and video (2:42 min.) under Tools > Help.

[Las Pilitas Nursery Native Plants](#)

This page has two major features: 1) the alphabetical lists (by scientific, common or cultivar name) that link to detailed plant profiles, and 2) links to popular categories of plants used in landscaping. Examples: Flat Groundcovers, One-Two-Foot Groundcovers, Native Flowers that bloom in February, May, August, November. Sages, Buckwheats, Native Herbs, and more.

Gardening for wildlife

Resources to plan for habitat needs for wildlife in your native plant garden.

Habitat Design

"Build it and they will come" works best when a garden provides food and shelter throughout the seasons. Many birds require nutritious insects and caterpillars for raising their young, even if they also feed on seeds or berries later. Think about both when choosing your plant species. While specialist pollinators feed or reproduce on specific native plants, some nonnative plants also provide excellent food for generalist pollinators and other animals. Learn more about the preferences of the creatures you would like to support using the resources below.

Plant Selection

[Bringing Back the Natives 2020 Garden Tour](#): *Doug Tallamy Resources*

The webpage includes these useful lists:

- San Francisco Bay Area Native Plants and the Number of Species of Butterflies and Moths That Will Lay Eggs on Them
- Best Plants for Bay Area Gardens compiled by Kelly Marshall, lists trees, shrubs, perennials/grasses, and vines that support bees and butterflies.
- Easy-to-grow Bay Area California Native Plants. Suggested plants are readily available at nurseries and listed by the number of species of butterflies and moths that can lay eggs on them.

[Calscape: Advanced Search](#)

Select from various criteria to generate a list of plants that suit your environment and available space. Be sure to select one or more additional criteria in the Common Uses category when planning a garden that supports wildlife. This category includes the ability to limit the list to bee gardens, bird gardens, bogs and ponds, butterfly gardens, butterfly host plants, deer resistant, hummingbird gardens and more.

More Resources on Gardening for Wildlife:

Pollinators

- [Lake Merritt Trials Garden](#) by U.C. Master Gardener Program of Alameda County
Scroll to Pollinator Habitats for suggested plants, photos, and light requirements.
- [Pollinator Conservation Program](#) by Xerces Society
- [Pollinator Plants: California](#) by Xerces Society
- [Flower Power: Cultivars vs Straight Species?](#) by Nancy Lawson

Bees

- [Best Bee Plants](#) for California by U.C. Berkeley Native Bee Lab
- [Seasonal Bee Gardening](#) by U.C. Berkeley Native Bee Lab

Butterflies

- [Butterflies by CalScape](#)
Search for native butterflies by location or species name. View lists of host plants and see how many butterflies each plant supports.
- [Create a Monarch Butterfly Habitat in Your Own Garden!](#) by University of California Master Gardener Program, Alameda County.
Lists nectar plants and milkweed species for egg-laying.
- [Milkweed, only food source for monarch caterpillars, ubiquitously contaminated](#) by University of Nevada, Reno
Host plants in urban areas are much less contaminated with pesticide than in rural areas.
- [Narrow-Leaf Milkweed and Una, Dos, Tres—the Monarch Trio](#) by Jane and Tom Kelly; CNPS, East Bay
A family recounts the experience of growing a milkweed patch and protecting the monarchs that came to feed and reproduce. Includes photographs.

Birds

- [Hummingbird Gardening](#) by Arvind Kumar
Lists hummingbird-friendly plants in order of bloom time and discusses essentials for suitable habitat.
- [Restoring the Little Things That Run the World: Why It Matters and What We Can Do](#) by Dr. Douglas Tallamy
Keynote address, Sundays in the Gardens, April 26, 2020. Slide presentation (90 minutes + Q&A).

Wildlife Overall

- [Garden for Wildlife](#) from National Wildlife Federation
Generalized educational information to help gardeners support local wildlife and restore and reconnect America's natural spaces. NWF sponsors the Certified Wildlife Habitat® program. Note: Californians can use Calscape in preference to the Native Plant Finder database promoted at this site.
- [Garden Q&A – Insect-Friendly Gardens](#) by Bob Allen
“We must change the all-too-common human perception that having insects on our plants is a bad thing — it's not. Enjoy the insects!”
- [Pathways for Pollinators](#) by Oakland Zoo; Conservation Society of California
Easy to read introduction to the benefits of native plants and links to resources with plant lists, such as [Butterfly Gardening in the Bay Area](#) and [Hummingbird DIY Feeder](#).
- [California Wildlife You Can Bring Into Your Native Garden](#) by Las Pilitas Nursery
Detailed articles on birds, bees, butterflies, and critter problems are illustrated with photographs.
- [Wildscaping with California Native Plants](#) by Tim Vendlinski
Extensive list of resources on providing appropriate habitat for attracting birds and pollinators. Bonus resources on pocket prairies, oaks, and bulbs. Available at <https://www.sausalcreek.org/> > Resources > Information for Watershed Residents.

Native Plants in Schoolyards

Schoolyards are large public spaces suitable for landscaping with native plants, trees, and shrubs. Native plants, incorporated into redesign plans from pavement to park, can be used to educate students about our region's ecology and Ohlone people's revitalization of cultural practices. Living schoolyards provide fertile ground for growing environmental stewardship and improve the quality of life for everyone in the neighborhood. Advocacy organizations are ready to guide residents, school districts, and city officials in collaboratively developing these plans.

School Gardens & Activities

- [Kids' Corner](#) by California Native Plant Society
- [School Gardens: Inspiring new Generations](#) by California Native Plant Society
- [Information for Teachers](#) by Friends of Sausal Creek
A growing list of recommended lessons and activities. Contact the FOSC education and outreach coordinator, education@sausalcreek.org.
- [Schoolyard Activities](#) by Green Schoolyards
The free guides for schools are compilations of contributed activities, aligned with standards for ages 3-18. See the chapters on Wildlife Habitat and Watershed Stewardship in the Living Schoolyard Guide, United States Edition. Other editions are available in Chinese and Spanish.
- [Schoolyard Habitats™](#) by National Wildlife Federation
Help with developing outdoor classrooms and curriculum.
- [How to Make a School Garden with California Native Plants](#) by Las Pilitas Nursery
- [School Gardens](#) by UC Master Gardener Program of Alameda County
- [Teachers & Educators](#) by Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation
Educational resources about pollinator conservation.

Advocacy for Green Schoolyards

- [Green Schoolyards America](#)
Through research, political advocacy, and support for local initiatives, GSA seeks to transform asphalt-covered school grounds into park-like green spaces to improve children's well-being, learning, and play while contributing to the ecological health and resilience of our cities.
- [Oakland Green Schoolyards](#) by Trust for Public Land

Native Trees

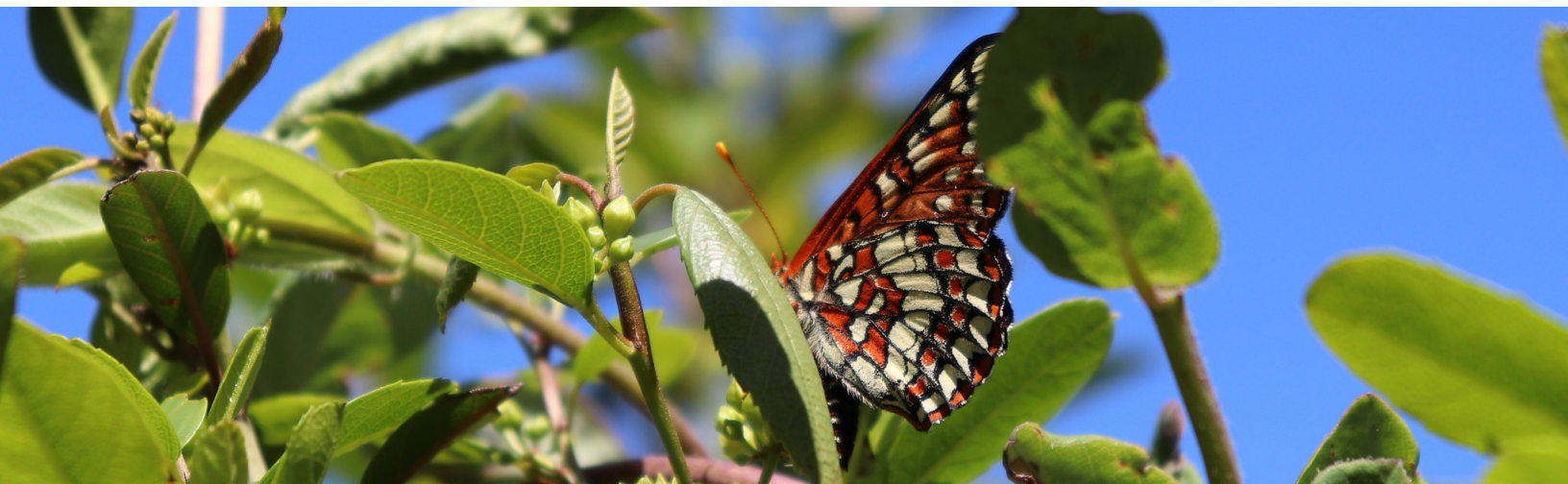
Trees provide critical habitat for wildlife and are important components of most native California plant communities and ecosystems. Bringing native trees, such as Oakland's name sake, the coast live oak, into urban landscapes can provide numerous benefits to a variety of native plant gardens and landscapes. Trees such as oaks can be keystone species that support the life of many insects, birds, and mammals. While not everyone can plant a tree in their yard, there are opportunities to encourage planting native and pollinator-friendly trees in urban areas. Collaborations among residents, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), professional arborists, and city planners can have an impact.

- [Arbor Day Foundation](#)
Information about the Tree City USA® campaign for greener cities and advice on how to [Strengthen Your Tree City USA® Community](#).
- [Trees for Oakland](#)
Excellent example of a successful grant-funded [collaboration](#) in Oakland (2016-2019). Its web pages remain helpful: favorite [tree selections](#) for medium, large and extra-large wells; and illustrated guides on [how to plant](#) a tree and [tree care](#).
- [Sierra Club Tree Team](#)
Bay Area group of volunteers assists with planting trees.
- [Indigenous Forests Protect Life, Heart and Genes](#) [abstract] by Akira Miyawaki. Journal of the Japanese Association of Rural Medicine. May 1, 2008;57(6):827-32.

Gardens and Nurseries

East Bay Demonstration Gardens

- [Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour](#) (residential East Bay gardens)
- [University of California Botanical Garden](#)-California (Berkeley)
- [Regional Parks Botanic Garden](#) (Tilden Park, Berkeley)
- [Bridgeview Pollinator Garden](#) (Oakland; a FOSC restoration site)
- [Dimond Park](#) (Oakland; a FOSC restoration site)
- [Lake Merritt Trials Garden](#) (Oakland)
- Nectar Garden at [Coyote Hills Regional Park](#) (Fremont)



A butterfly lands on a California coffeeberry, Frangula californica. Photo by Jeff Stephens.

Local Nurseries

For the conservation-minded individual, obtaining plants from nurseries or ordering seed from a company such as [Larner Seeds](#) in Bolinas is preferable to collecting native species in the wild. While “big box” garden centers carry few natives, many local nurseries offer native plants and pollinator-friendly plants selected for the East Bay. Expert advice is often available as well. Find a nursery near you:

- [Native Plant Nurseries](#) Bringing Back the Natives
- [CalScape Nursery List](#)
- Friends of Sausal Creek’s [Annual Native Plant Sale](#) and Open House

Gateway Websites

[California Native Plant Society](#) - CNPS's well-designed website has comprehensive content with practical and inspiring articles from expert contributors.

[California Native Plant Society, East Bay Chapter](#) - The chapter publishes the monthly [Bay Leaf](#) magazine and [news](#); promotes restoration projects and sponsors educational programs. Its Native Here Nursery offers [online shopping](#) (with filters and photos).

[Las Pilitas Nursery](#) - This retail nursery, located in southern California, posts an extensive collection of articles on nature in all regions of California, DIY tips, and expert advice written in a friendly, often humorous style.

[Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour](#) - This website is one of the ways that tour coordinator, Kathy Kramer fosters connection among East Bay gardeners, designers, nurseries, and organizations. See also articles posted to [Facebook](#) and interviews with local gardeners on the [YouTube](#) channel.



Sausal Creek at Dimond Park. Photo by Mark Rauzon.

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6. Doug Tallamy: How Gardening with Native Plants Helps Wildlife, CA Focus [video] (101 minutes; 2020) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKe0UzqazuU&t=29s>