

**El Cerrito Preschool Cooperative  
Native Plant List**

7200 Moeser Lane  
El Cerrito

**Front Garden**

Achillea millifolium  
Arctostaphylos  
Carex spissa  
Ceanothus griseus  
Ceanothus horizontalis  
Douglas iris  
Erigonum (latifolium) rubescens  
Heteromeles arbutifolia  
Heuchara maxima  
Penstemon heterophyllus  
Polystichum munitum  
Rhamnus californica  
Rhamnus californica san Bruno  
Rhomneya coulleri  
Ribes malvaceum  
Salvia leucophylla  
Salvia spathacea  
Rhomneya coulleri  
Vaccinum ovatum

**Back Garden**

**Trees**

California buckeye, *Aesculus californica* – The buckeye is a harbinger of spring, as it gets its leaves early; look for the beautiful large green leaves that have recently emerged on the small tree in the round bed. Their early blooms provide a nectar supply for wildlife for several months. Buckeyes attract hummingbirds, orioles, black-headed grosbeaks, and migrating warblers. Spring azure butterflies and native bees also find food and shelter in this tree.

Dogwood, *Cornus* spp – Dogwoods provide nest sites, fruit and insects for as many as 20 bird species, including orioles, thrashers, grosbeaks, tanagers, towhees and thrush. It has arching branches, reddish twigs, and small, creamy white flowers.

Oak, *Quercus* spp – Oaks are the best plant for all-around bird use. Oaks provide acorns for woodpeckers, and jays, and insects are available as a food source for birds all year. Oaks provide nest sites for owls, hawks, and small cavity nesters, such as wrens, woodpeckers, titmice, and nuthatches. Leaf litter on the ground provides excellent foraging sites for towhees and thrushes. Among the butterflies attracted to oaks are spring azure, California sister, and mournful duskywing.

## **Shrubs**

Bee plant, *Scrophularia californica* – The tiny dark red flowers of the bee plant look like miniature orchids. The bee plant provides nectar over long periods for pollinators. It is a caterpillar food plant for the Chalcedon checkerspot butterfly.

Coffee berry, *Rhamnus californica* – Several birds forage for insects near coffeeberry. The pale swallowtail and gray hairstreak butterflies sip nectar from its flowers. Small greenish flowers provide nectar in the spring. The leaves can be used as a treatment for poison oak.

Creambush, *Holodiscus discolor* – Creambush is a deciduous shrub with fragrant and showy creamy white sprays of flowers. It is a caterpillar food plant for the spring azure, pale swallowtail and Lorquin's admiral butterflies.

Manzanita, *Arctostaphylos* spp - Manzanitas—the plants with the beautiful and distinctive wine-red trunks—are early bloomers. Look for the delicate pinkish white bell-shaped flowers from March - April. (Some of our manzanitas are blooming now.) Manzanitas provide nesting place for wrentits; the flowers attract hummingbirds, native bees, and brown elfin butterflies; and the berries provide food for cedar waxwings, thrushes, towhees, robins and finches. Annas hummingbirds will stay year-round for the nectar and insects this plant provides. Cider and jelly can be made from its berries.

Pink Flowering Currant, *Ribes sanguineum* – This excellent nectar plant produces large clusters of beautiful, sweet-scented crimson-pink flowers from February through April. The flowers attract hummingbirds, and the berries attract thrushes, towhees, robins and finches. It is a larval plant for the tailed copper butterfly.

Sticky Monkeyflower, *Diplacus aurantiacus* – Flowers the color of orange sherbet are larval food for the checkerspot and buckeye butterflies; they also attract hummingbirds.

## **Herbaceous Perennials**

Blue-eyed grass, *Sisyrinchium elmeri* – Blue-eyed grass has tufts of slender, grasslike dark green leaves that range from 4" to 2' tall. It blooms in late spring or early summer, and produces abundant blue flowers. Spanish Californians made a tea from the leaves to reduce fevers, and one from the root to treat stomachaches.

California fuchsia, *Epilobium canum* – Also known as the hummingbird plant, the scarlet flowers, up to 2" long, and in bloom from summer through early fall, provide an excellent nectar source for hummingbirds.

Cow parsnip, *Heracleum lanatum* – This member of the parsley family bears large, flat, umbrella-shaped flower heads from April through July. Cow parsnip is a caterpillar food plant for the anise swallowtail butterfly. Native Americans used young shoots as food, made a toothache remedy from the raw roots, and used the roots to treat colds, diarrhea, tuberculosis, and rheumatism.

Soap Plant, *Chlorogalum pomeridianum* – Soap plant is a member of the lily family. Petite white flowers bloom from May to August in the early evening. Soap plant is pollinated by moths, and the larva of the western brown elfin butterfly uses the attractive, wavy leaves. Native Americans roasted and ate the bulbs. The raw bulbs produced lather for shampoo, clothes and hands, and the root was used to make a brush. Old leaves were used to wrap around acorn bread as it was being baked. Early European settlers used the root fibers to fill mattresses.

Yarrow, *Achillea millefolium* – Yarrow has low-growing, fernlike leaves, and white flowers that bloom during the summer. The flower stalks reach 2 feet high. Yarrow provides food and shelter for many beneficial insects and butterflies. The Greek warrior Achilles is said to have stopped the bleeding of his soldier's wounds with yarrow leaves. Yarrow can be taken for stomachaches and toothaches.

Douglas iris

Erigeron glaucus

### **Vines**

Black twinberry, *Lonicera involucrata* – has shiny black berries that are attractive to hummingbirds and finches.

Honeysuckle

Dutchman's pipevine

### **Grasses**

Purple needlegrass, *Nasella pulchra* – a beautiful bunchgrass with purple-tinged seeds. Birds eat the seeds, and buckeye, common wood nymph, California ringlet, and skipper butterflies are attracted to it.