

Armstrong Paint Garden

This garden marks a spot where Temescal Creek once flowed through on its way to the ocean. This creek has wound its way down from the East Bay Hills to the San Francisco Bay for generations. From the Ohlone people to those of us living here today, humans have lived along its banks. As times have changed so has the creek. It has been moved into concrete channels in some areas and left open to see and use in others. Many trees still stand along its banks as they always have, while others are long since gone.

Touch, see, and smell the plants in our garden that have evolved over millions of years with Temescal Creek. They still live along many parts of its course today from the headwaters high in the Redwood Forest, down through the shaded Oak woodlands, into the brushy Chaparral, and onto the open Coastal Prairies. It continues from there to meander on by Willow Groves and marshes, passing us by, to finally feed itself directly into the mouth of the bay.

Enjoy a tour of the ancient habitats that once stood here. Use this guide to learn about these plants and how to grow and maintain some of California's natural history in your own backyard. California native plants are easy to grow here in California as they know just what to do. Find out what each one likes and dislikes and what they need to grow up healthy and strong.

It is surprising how quickly you will be rewarded with a beautiful garden that does not ask for that much of your time in return for a place to live. You will also help to keep our air and water clean, conserve precious natural resources, as well as feed and house our local birds, butterflies and other wildlife species.

Joshua Carmichael
This garden's father