

Recommended Plants for Pollinators & Beneficial Insects

California Central Coast Region



Central Coast wildflower pollinator planting blooming in late summer¹; sweat bee on California poppy². (Photographs by the Xerces Society / Jessa Kay Cruz¹ & Matthew Shepherd².)

Plant Selection

The plants on this list are recommended for use in pollinator habitat restoration and enhancement projects in agricultural landscapes. These species have been selected because they are attractive to a diversity of different bee species, and provide pollen and nectar resources throughout the season, provided that a minimum of three different plant species from each blooming period (early, mid, and late season) are selected. A majority of plants recommended are native, drought tolerant, easy to establish, and don't serve as alternate hosts to crop pests or diseases.

Native Species for Pollinators and Beneficial Insects

Scientific Name		Common Name	Bloom	Life	Form	Sun	Water	Soil Texture	Additional Details				
Achillea millefolium		Common yarrow	Mid	P	F	☀	L	Any	🦋🐿️🌿🌱🌳🌴🌵🌾				
Agastache urticifolia		Nettleleaf giant hyssop	Mid	P	F	☀	M	Medium–Coarse	🦋🐿️🌱🌳🌴🌵				
Arctostaphylos densiflora 'McMinn'		McMinn manzanita	Early	P	W	☀	L	Medium	🦋🐿️🌿🌱🌳🌴				
Arctostaphylos glauca		Bigberry manzanita	Early	P	W	☀	L	Any	🦋🐿️🌿🌱🌳🌴				
Asclepias fascicularis ⚠️		Narrowleaf milkweed	Mid	P	F	☀	M	Any	🦋🐿️🌿🌱🌳🌴🌵				
Baccharis pilularis		Coyotebrush	Late	P	W	☀	L	Any	🦋🐿️🌿🌱🌳🌴🌵				
Baccharis pilularis 'Pigeon Point'		Dwarf coyotebrush	Late	P	W	☀	L	Any	🦋🐿️🌿🌱🌳🌴🌵				
Berberis aquifolium		Oregon grape	Early	P	W	☀	L	Any	🦋🐿️🌱🌳🌴🌵				
Ceanothus 'Julia Phelps'		California lilac 'Julia Phelps'	Early	P	W	☀	L	Medium–Coarse	🦋🌿🌱🌳🌴				
Clarkia amoena		Farewell-to-spring	Early–Mid	A	F	☀	M	Fine–Medium	🐿️🌱🌳🌴🌵				
Collinsia heterophylla		Chinese houses	Early	A	F	☀	M	Any	🐿️🌱🌳🌴				
Diplacus aurantiacus ssp. aurantiacus		Sticky monkey flower	Early–Mid	P	F	☀	M	Any	🐿️🌱🌳🌴				
Epilobium canum		California fuchsia	Mid–Late	P	F	☀	L	Any	🐿️🌱🌳🌴🌵				
Eriogonum fasciculatum		California buckwheat	Late	P	F	☀	L	Any	🐿️🌿🌱🌳🌴🌵				
Eriophyllum confertiflorum		Golden-yarrow	Mid–Late	P	F	☀	M	Any	🐿️🌿🌱🌳🌴🌵				
Eriophyllum staechadifolium		Seaside woolly sunflower	Mid–Late	P	F	☀	M	Any	🐿️🌿🌱🌳🌴🌵				
Eschscholzia californica		California poppy	Early–Mid	A, P	F	☀	L	Any	🐿️🌿🌱🌳🌴				
KEY	LIFE CYCLE—Annual; Biennial; Perennial		SUN	☀	Full sun		ADDITIONAL DETAILS	🦋	Monarch nectar plant	🌿	Attracts beneficial insects	🐿️	Nest site
	FORM—Forb; Woody; Grass			☀☀	Full sun—partial shade			🐝	Larval host (butterfly, moth, specialist bee)	🌱	Bumble bee plant	🌳	Fire resistant
	WATER NEEDS—Low; Medium; High			☀☀☀	Partial shade							🌴	Deer resistant

⚠️ **DO NOT** plant any milkweed species (*Asclepias* spp.) within one (1) mile of monarch overwintering sites. Search around your location at westernmonarchcount.org/map-of-overwintering-sites

Native Species for Pollinators and Beneficial Insects *continued*

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SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	BLOOM	LIFE	FORM	SUN	WATER	SOIL TEXTURE	ADDITIONAL DETAILS
<i>Gilia capitata</i>	Globe gilia	EARLY–MID	A	F	☀	M	ANY	☀
<i>Grindelia hirsutula</i>	Gumplant	MID–LATE	P	F	☀	L	FINE–MEDIUM	☀ L ☀
<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	Common sunflower	MID–LATE	A	F	☀	M	ANY	☀ L ☀ ☀ ☀ ☀
<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>	Toyon	MID	P	W	☀	L	ANY	☀ ☀ ☀
<i>Layia platyglossa</i>	Common tidytips	EARLY	A	F	☀	L	ANY	L
<i>Lotus scoparius</i>	Common deerweed	MID	P	F	☀	L	ANY	L
<i>Lupinus arboreus</i>	Golden bush lupine	EARLY–MID	P	F	☀	L	ANY	L ☀ ☀ ☀
<i>Lupinus bicolor</i>	Bicolor lupine	EARLY	A	F	☀	M	ANY	L ☀ ☀ ☀
<i>Lupinus densiflorus</i> var. <i>aureus</i>	Golden lupine	EARLY	A	F	☀	L	ANY	L ☀ ☀ ☀
<i>Lupinus formosus</i>	Summer lupine	MID	P	F	☀	L	ANY	L ☀ ☀ ☀
<i>Monardella villosa</i>	Coyote mint	MID	P	F	☀	L	ANY	☀ L ☀ ☀ ☀
<i>Muhlenbergia rigens</i>	Deergrass	—	P	G	☀	L–M	ANY	☀ ☀ ☀
<i>Nemophila maculata</i>	Fivespot	EARLY	A	F	☀	M	COARSE	L
<i>Nemophila menziesii</i>	Baby blue byes	EARLY	A	F	☀	L	ANY	L ☀
<i>Penstemon heterophyllus</i>	Foothill penstemon	EARLY–MID	P	F	☀	L	ANY	L ☀ ☀ ☀
<i>Phacelia californica</i>	California phacelia	MID	P	F	☀	L	FINE–MEDIUM	L ☀ ☀
<i>Prunus ilicifolia</i>	Hollyleaf cherry	EARLY–MID	P	W	☀	M	ANY	☀ L ☀ ☀
<i>Rhamnus californica</i>	California buckthorn	MID	P	W	☀	L	ANY	L ☀ ☀ ☀
<i>Rhamnus ilicifolia</i>	Hollyleaf redberry	EARLY–MID	P	W	☀	L	ANY	L ☀ ☀
<i>Rosa californica</i>	California wildrose	MID	P	W	☀	M	MEDIUM	L ☀ ☀ ☀ ☀ ☀
<i>Salvia leucophylla</i>	Purple sage	MID	P	F	☀	L	ANY	☀ L ☀
<i>Salvia mellifera</i>	Black sage	MID	P	F	☀	L	ANY	☀ L ☀
<i>Sambucus nigra</i> ssp. <i>cerulea</i>	Blue elderberry	MID	P	W	☀	M	ANY	L ☀ ☀ ☀
<i>Scrophularia californica</i>	California bee plant	EARLY–MID	P	F	☀	M	ANY	L ☀ ☀
<i>Solidago canadensis</i>	Canada goldenrod	LATE	P	F	☀	M	MEDIUM–COARSE	☀ L ☀ ☀ ☀ ☀
<i>Symphyotrichum chilense</i>	California aster	LATE	P	F	☀	L	ANY	☀ L ☀ ☀

KEY
LIFE CYCLE—Annual; Biennial; Perennial
FORM—Forb; Woody; Grass
WATER NEEDS—Low; Medium; High

SUN
☀ Full sun
☀ Full sun–partial shade
☀ Partial shade

ADDITIONAL DETAILS
☀ Monarch nectar plant
☀ Larval host (butterfly, moth, specialist bee)
☀ Attracts beneficial insects
☀ Bumble bee plant
☀ Nest site
☀ Fire resistant
☀ Deer resistant

NRCS Conservation Planners, PLEASE NOTE: Before purchasing or installing any plants for a project, check each species' suitability for different NRCS Conservation Practices by using the NRCS California eVegGuide (<https://www.calflora.org/nrcs/>).

California wildflower pollinator planting in spring (left), and a bumble bee on golden lupine (right). (Photographs by the Xerces Society / Jessa Kay Cruz.)



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