



California Native Plant Society

*Selected Native Trees from
Southern California*

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Introduction

- Including trees in your landscape provides many benefits
 - Shade
 - Structure
 - Texture
 - Habitat
- There are over 60 species of trees and tree-like shrubs that are native to southern California

Overview

- Values and benefits of using native trees over ornamental species
- Discussion of a dozen species for consideration
- Resources to find out more about trees, native and otherwise

Values and Benefits

- Adapted to southern California climate
 - There are native species that can grow and thrive in any and every condition in the urban landscape
 - Don't require irrigation (in most instances)
- Need minimal care
 - Don't need fertilizers (in most instances)
 - Don't require irrigation (in most instances)
- Wildlife prefer native species
- Large variety to choose from

Selected Native Trees

- *Acer macrophyllum*
- *Adenostoma sparsifolium*
- *Arbutus menziesii*
- *Arctostaphylos glauca*
- *Ceanothus spinosus*
- *Heteromeles arbutifolia*
- *Juglans californica*
- *Platanus racemosa*
- *Prunus ilicifolia*
- *Pseudotsuga macrocarpa*
- *Quercus agrifolia*
- *Salix laevigata*

Acer macrophyllum

● Description:

- Winter-deciduous broadleaf tree 5-30 m high
- Leaves palmately lobed, leaf blade 10-25 cm wide, with 3-5 deep, irregularly few-toothed lobes
- Inflorescence is a long, pendent, >30-flowered raceme, with staminate & bisexual flowers
- Blooms from April to May
- Fruit is a variable double-winged samara

Acer macrophyllum

● **Habitat:**

- streambanks, canyons
- Riparian Woodland
- <1,500 m

● **Distribution:**

- Southwest British Columbia south to northern San Diego County, California
- Not in desert areas

Acer macrophyllum

● Landscape Position:

- Best in somewhat protected locations
- North and east sides of house in hot valleys and mountains, anywhere along immediate coast
- Hardy to USDA Zones 5 & 6

● Landscape Attributes:

- Provides nice fall colors in yellows and gold
- Large leaves for course texture
- Deciduous
- Ascending habit, becoming rounded with age
- Nice specimen tree
- Can tolerate irrigated lawn conditions.



Adenostoma sparsifolium

● Description:

- Erect shrub or small tree 2-6 m high
- Bark reddish-brown, shredding
- Leaves linear, 3.6-26.3 mm long, glandular, flexible, not clustered like *Adenostoma fasciculatum*
- Inflorescence an open panicle, 0.8-7.7 cm long
- Flowers are small, cream-colored, petals elliptic to ovate
- Blooming July through August

Adenostoma sparsifolium

● Habitat:

- dry slopes, flats
- Chaparral
- 275-2,000 m

● Distribution:

- Southeastern San Luis Obispo County south to northern San Diego County, California in chaparral
- Not in desert areas

Adenostoma sparsifolium

● Landscape Position:

- Best in dry, open, well-drained locations
- South and west sides of house in hot valleys and mountains

● Landscape Attributes:

- Provides soft green texture
- Attractive peeling bark
- Evergreen requiring NO irrigation
- Ascending habit, becoming rounded with age, and sometimes developed a lion-tail effect
- Multiple to single trunks



Arbutus menziesii

● Description:

- Erect shrub to tree to 40 m high
- Bark smooth at first, then shredding or fissured, red
- Leaves alternate, evergreen, leathery, blade <12 cm long, ovate to oblong
- Leaves bright green
- Inflorescence a drooping panicle
- Flowers <8 mm, corolla yellow-white or ± pink, sepals 5, fused at base, corolla urn-shaped
- Fruit a berry, <12 mm, spheric, orange-red
- Flowers in spring, March-May.

Arbutus menziesii

● Habitat:

- North-facing, shaded slopes
- Well-drained to heavy soils
- 100-1,500 m

● Distribution:

- Northern, central, and northern portion of southern California, in mountainous areas from the British Columbia south to Baja California, Mexico
- Not in desert areas

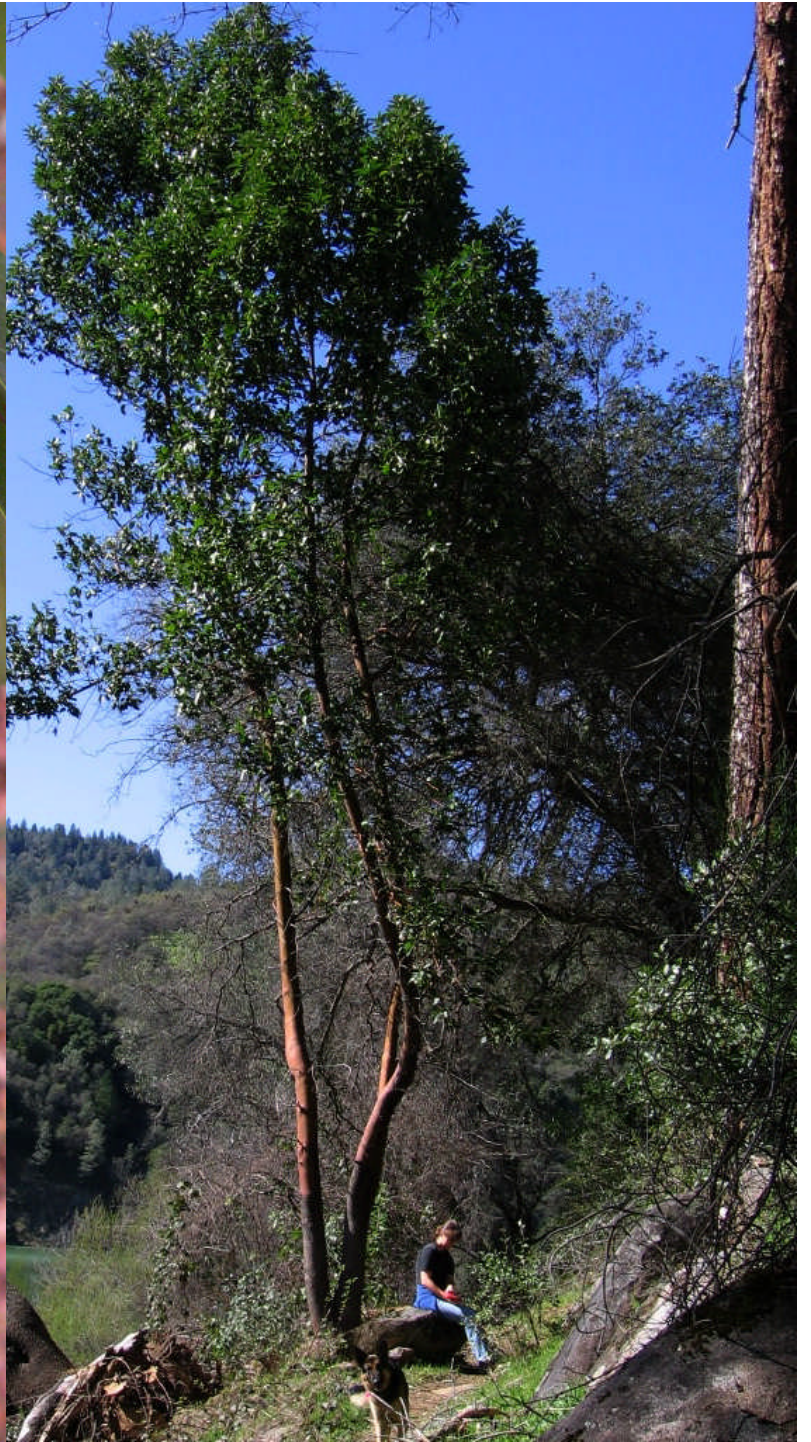
Arbutus menziesii

● Landscape Position:

- Best in mesic, open or shaded, well-drained locations
- All aspects of house, especially north
- Give plenty of room
- Hardy to USDA Zone 7-8

● Landscape Attributes:

- Dark green coarse texture
- Evergreen requiring a little irrigation in arid areas
- Tolerates full sun and shade
- Single or few trunks with smooth brick-red bark
- Good specimen tree
- Fruit is edible





Arctostaphylos glauca

● Description:

- Erect evergreen, often single-trunked shrub/small tree 2-8 m high
- Bark smooth brick red
- Leaves gray-green
- Flowers white to pinkish, look like tiny Chinese lanterns.
- Flowers in winter and early spring, December-March

Arctostaphylos glauca

● Habitat:

- Rocky slopes, alluvial fans, shallow or rocky soils
- Mixed Chaparral, Chamise Chaparral, Coast Live Oak Woodland
- <2,200 m

● Distribution:

- Central and southern California, mountainous areas from the Bay Area south to Baja California, Mexico
- Only on western edges of desert areas

Arctostaphylos glauca

● Landscape Position:

- Best in xeric, open, well-drained locations
- All aspects of house except north
- Give plenty of room
- Hardy to USDA Zone 7-8

● Landscape Attributes:

- Provides light/gray green texture
- Evergreen requiring NO irrigation
- Tolerates full sun
- Single or few trunks with smooth brick-red bark
- Good specimen plant



Ceanothus spinosus

● Description:

- Evergreen, erect-spreading shrub/small tree <6 m high
- Leaves are glossy green, simple, and entire, alternate, <5 cm long, leaf blade elliptic to oblong
- The bark is greenish and fairly smooth
- Flowers sky blue
- Stems thorny, twigs round, ridged
- Inflorescence panicle-like, <15 cm long
- Fruit consist of capsules 4-5 mm round
- Flowers in February-May

Ceanothus spinosus

● **Habitat:**

- dry but often shaded slopes, North-facing slopes and canyon bottoms
- Ceanothus Chaparral, Coast Live Oak Woodland
- <900 m

● **Distribution:**

- coastal central and southern California, including Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, southwestern San Bernardino, western Riverside, and San Diego Counties, and northern Baja California, Mexico
- Not in desert areas

Ceanothus spinosus

● Landscape Position:

- Best in mesic, open or shaded, well-drained locations,
- all aspects of house, especially north
- Give plenty of room

● Landscape Attributes:

- Provides a nice green medium texture
- Rounded shape with erect spreading branch tips, easily pruned to standard shape.
- Evergreen requiring no irrigation.
- Tolerates full sun and shade in coastal areas.
- Single or few trunks with fairly smooth greenish bark
- Bountiful sky blue flowers when blooming



Heteromeles arbutifolia

● Description:

- Evergreen shrub/small tree <5 m high
- trunk bark grayish, twigs puberulent
- Leaves simple, short-petioled, leaf blade 4-11 cm long, elliptic to oblong, leathery, sharply toothed, shiny dark green above, dull & paler below
- Inflorescence a terminal panicle, ± open, flat-topped
- Flowers many, petals 2-4 mm, white
- Fruit a pome, 5-10 mm diameter, bright red, pulp mealy
- Flowers in spring, fruits mature in November-December

Heteromeles arbutifolia

● Habitat:

- slopes & flats in poor sandy soils
- chaparral, Coast Live Oak Woodland, Yellow Pine Forest
- <1,300 m

● Distribution:

- throughout cismontane California (Humboldt & Butte Counties) south to Baja California, Mexico)
- to Baja California, Mexico
- Not in desert areas

Heteromeles arbutifolia

● **Landscape Position:**

- Best in dry, open, well-drained locations
- All aspects of house in hot valleys and mountains
- Give plenty of room
- Hardy to USDA Zone 8

● **Landscape Attributes:**

- Provides dark green texture
- Colorful fruit
- Evergreen requiring **NO** irrigation
- Tolerates shade and full sun
- Single or multiple trunks, easily trained as a standard



Juglans californica var. *californica*

● Description:

- Broad-leaved, winter-deciduous tree to <25 m
- Trunks 1-5, sometimes more
- Bark smooth to furrowed in age gray to brown
- Leaves odd-1-pinnately compound
- 11-19 leaflets per leaf, each 2-8 cm long
- Fruit [walnut] 2-3 cm diameter, including husk
- Blooms in April-May

Juglans californica var. *californica*

● Habitat:

- Slopes, ridgetops, and riparian areas
- 50-900 m

● Distribution:

- Native to southern California (Santa Barbara to San Diego County)

Juglans californica var. *californica*

● Landscape Position:

- All aspects
- Full sun or partial shade
- Hardy to USDA Zone 8

● Landscape Attributes:

- Provides a pale green medium texture
- Small, multi-trunked tree
- Requires no irrigation
- Tolerates full sun or partial shade
- Fall foliage color (yellow)
- Excellent specimen tree for smaller area





Platanus racemosa var. *racemosa*

● Description:

- Broad-leaved, deciduous tree to 10-35 m high
- Bark is irregularly-colored scale-like peeling
- Leaves large and simple, palmately-lobed
- Inflorescence spheric and many-flowered
- Blooms in February-April

Platanus racemosa var. *racemosa*

● **Habitat:**

- Riverbanks, seeps, lake shores, canyons, ditches
- <2,000 m

● **Distribution:**

- California and Baja California, Mexico.
- Riparian tree

Platanus racemosa var. *racemosa*

● Landscape Position:

- All aspects
- Full sun or partial shade
- Hardy to USDA Zone 7

● Landscape Attributes:

- Provides a light green course texture
- Requires irrigation, good tree for that wet lawn area
- Tolerates full sun and shade
- Generally with a single trunk
- Bark is mottled, resembling a jigsaw puzzle
- Fall foliage color
- Tolerant of heat and wind





Prunus ilicifolia var. *ilicifolia*

● Description:

- Erect evergreen shrub/small tree to 9 m high
- Leaves 16-120 mm long, widely ovate to round, margin spiny-serrate, \pm wavy
- Inflorescence a raceme with 15-many flowers
- Flowers on 2-5-mm pedicel, sepals glabrous, entire, petals 1-3 mm, white to yellowish
- Fruit a 12-18 mm-diameter drupe, red, pulp fleshy
- Flowers in April-May

Prunus ilicifolia var. *ilicifolia*

● Habitat:

- Canyons, slopes
- Well-drained soils
- Shrublands, woodlands
- <1,600 m

● Distribution:

- Native to coastal California south to Baja California, Mexico, including Channel Islands
- Not in desert areas

Prunus ilicifolia var. *ilicifolia*

● Landscape Position:

- All aspects
- Full sun or partial shade

● Landscape Attributes:

- Dark green medium-course texture
- Attractive rounded shape
- Generally with a single trunk, easily pruned to standard shape
- Evergreen requiring no irrigation
- Tolerates full sun
- Bountiful white to cream-colored flowers
- Large red cherries that can cover the tree



Pseudotsuga macrocarpa

● Description:

- Evergreen coniferous small tree <44 m high,
- Trunk <44 m x <2.1(-2.3) m wide, tapered, crown broadly conic, mature crown rounded to flat, often w/many large, lower branches.
- Leaves (needles) 2-4.5 cm long.
- Seed cones 9-20 cm, sometimes persistent several years
- Flowers in spring, cones mature in November-December.

Pseudotsuga macrocarpa

● Habitat:

- steep rocky N-facing fire-resistant slopes
- Bigcone Spruce-Canyon Live Oak Forest
- 200-2,400 m.

● Distribution:

- Native to southern California, in mountainous areas from Kern County to just north of the border with Mexico in San Diego County
- Not in desert areas

Pseudotsuga macrocarpa

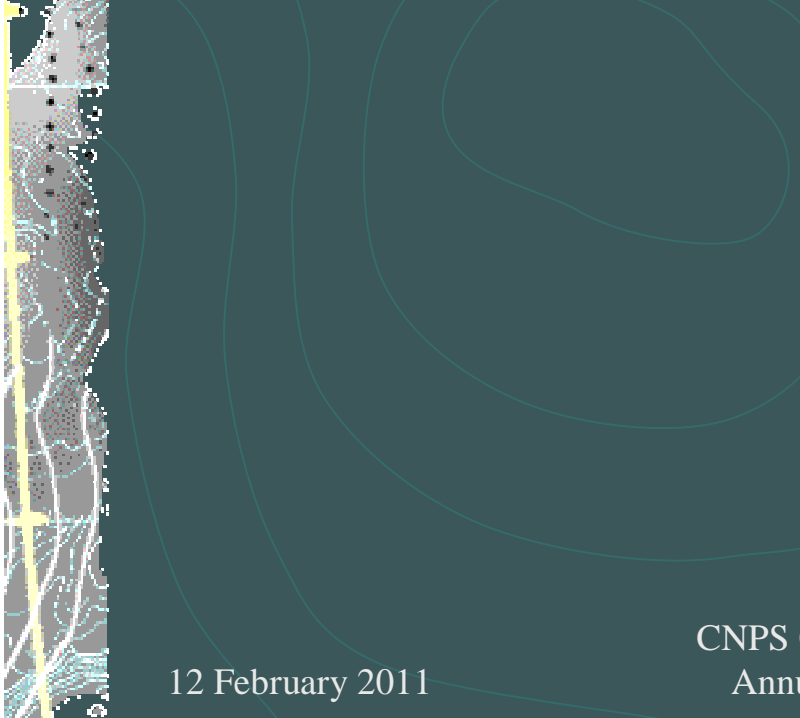
● Landscape Position:

- Best in mesic, open, well-drained locations
- Okay for all aspects of house
- Give plenty of room
- Hardy to USDA Zone 7-8
- The largest known tree is 91 inches (231 cm) DBH, 173 feet (53 m) tall, and is 600 to 700 years of age

Pseudotsuga macrocarpa

● Landscape Attributes:

- Provides dark green texture
- Attractive shape with drooping branch tips
- Evergreen requiring NO irrigation
- Tolerates shade and full sun
- Single tall trunk.
- Good substitute for Deodar Cedar



12 February 2011

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Quercus agrifolia var. *agrifolia*

● Description:

- Wide-topped evergreen tree (6)10-25 m high with a crown to 30 m wide
- Trunk bark furrowed, checkered dark gray w/age
- Leaves oblong-elliptic, weakly spine-toothed, convex, dark green
- Fruit (acorn) maturing in 1 year
- Flowers in March, acorns mature in October

Quercus agrifolia var. *agrifolia*

● Habitat:

- valleys, dry slopes to mesic canyons
- Mixed Evergreen Woodland, Oak Woodland, Coast Live Oak Riparian Woodland
- <1,400 m

● Distribution:

- throughout cismontane California (Mendocino County) to Baja California, Mexico
- Not in desert areas

Quercus agrifolia var. *agrifolia*

● **Landscape Position:**

- Best in dry, open, well-drained locations, all aspects
- Give plenty of room
- Hardy to USDA Zone 8

● **Landscape Attributes:**

- Dark green foliage
- Attractive furrowed bark
- Stately/grand specimen with age
- Evergreen, requiring NO irrigation
- Broad canopy with one or multiple trunks
- Provides good shade year round



12 February 2011

CNPS Channel Islands Chapter 2nd
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Salix laevigata

● Description:

- Broad-leaved, winter-deciduous tree to 15 m high
- Twigs are red to yellow-brown
- The young leaves are glabrous or white- or white-and-rusty-hairy; mature leaf blade 67-150 mm long, lanceolate to widely elliptic, glabrous, shiny to highly glossy above, glaucous below
- Inflorescence 35-110 mm long on leafy shoots 3-35 mm (shoot leaves are entire)
- Flowers in March-May

Salix laevigata

● Habitat:

- riverbanks, seepage areas, lake shores, canyons, ditches
- <1,700 m

● Distribution:

- Southern Oregon & northern Nevada, south through California, Arizona to northern Central America
- Not in desert areas

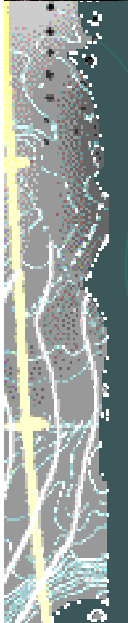
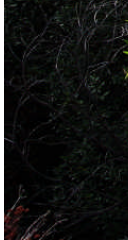
Salix laevigata

● Landscape Position:

- All aspects
- Full sun or partial shade

● Landscape Attributes:

- Provides a light green medium-course texture
- Wetland tree, requiring irrigation
- Tolerates full sun and shade
- Generally with a single trunk
- Yellowish and white “pussy willow” flowers when blooming in spring
- Excellent for wet lawn area



Resources About Trees

- International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)
 - www.isa-arbor.com
- Ojai Trees (Tom Bostrom)
 - www.ojaitrees.org
- CNPS Channel Islands Chapter
 - www.cnpsci.org
- Landscape Resource (Robert Maday)
 - www.landscaperesource.com