

LAS POSITAS PLANT IDENTIFICATION

Low to Moderate Water Requirements

By Tom Fuller

Arbutus 'Marina' – (small to medium evergreen tree, hybrid of uncertain parentage, Reddish bark, small pink flowers, similar to *Arbutus menziesii*, but better suited to most gardens)

Arbutus menziesii – Madrone – (medium evergreen tree, native to Northern California, smooth mahogany red bark, small white flowers and red berries, once established will tolerate no summer water)

Bouteloua gracilis 'Hachita' – Blue Grama Grass - (Native short prairie grass, Western U.S., including southern California, dormant in winter, no-mow or mow once or twice a year, water once weekly May-Oct.)

Buchloe dactyloides 'UC Verde' – Buffalograss – (Short prairie grass native to Western U.S., dormant in winter, 'UC Verde' cultivar bred by UC Riverside to be more suited to California than other types of Buffalograss, including shorter dormancy, no-mow or mow once or twice a year, water once weekly May-Oct.)

Ceanothus species – California lilac (California natives, ground covers, shrubs, to small trees)

C. 'Yankee Point' – (woody evergreen ground cover, medium leaves, blue flower clusters)

C. 'Dark Star' – (woody evergreen shrub, tiny leaves, dark cobalt blue flower clusters)

C. 'Julia Phelps' (woody evergreen shrub, tiny leaves, indigo blue flower clusters)

C. 'Ray Hartman' (large woody evergreen shrub or small tree, large leaves, medium blue flower clusters)

Chamaerops humilis – Mediterranean Fan Palm – (Hardy to zero degrees F, slow growing clumping growth, can be thinned out to form cute miniature multi-trunk palm tree, moderate water)

Festuca californica - California fescue – (loose clumps of blue-green or blue-gray leaves, tolerates summer drought in cooler areas)

Festuca glauca – Blue Fescue – (dense clump of fine leaves, blue-gray or blue silver, center of clump dies out after several years, low summer water requirement)

Festuca blends - No-Mow Fescue mixes - (can grow very tall and droop over to smother nearby clumps, unless mowed occasionally, requires less summer irrigation than traditional turf grasses – 75%)

Iris douglasiana – Douglas Iris (Pacific coast native, evergreen, flowers are purple to blue, with shades to white or cream, also closely related Pacific Coast Hybrids, in many colors, often with interesting veins and patterns, little to moderate water)

Juncus patens – California Gray Rush – (California native rush, thrives in moist settings, but will survive short periods of drought. Often used in drainage swales and bio-retention basins.)

Lyonothamnus floribundus 'Aspliniifolius' – Catalina Ironwood – (California native, Channel Islands, evergreen, small white blossoms in clusters, narrow tree, looks good in groves, little to moderate water)

Mimulus aurantiacus – Sticky Monkey Flower – (California native, woody perennial, orange flower, hybrids in many other colors, full sun or partial shade, little water)

Pelargonium species – Geraniums – (perennials, moderate water)

P. x domesticum – Lady Washington Geranium, P. x hortorum – Zonal Geranium, P. peltatum – Ivy Geranium

Phylla nodiflora – Lippia, or ‘Kurapia’ (trademark name) – (Native to many sub-tropical areas, including Southern California, Low growing, extremely drought tolerant ground cover / lawn substitute, water once a week May-Oct.)

Quercus agrifolia – Coast live Oak – (large evergreen oak, native to coastal California, small holly-like leaves, greedy roots, not a good lawn tree)

Quercus douglasii – Blue Oak – (medium deciduous tree, native to Northern California, including Alameda County, blue-green leaves, adapted to hot dry summers)

Quercus lobata – Valley White Oak – (very large deciduous tree, inland California native, deeply lobed and rounded leaves)

Quercus suber – Cork Oak – (large evergreen oak, Mediterranean native, good substitute for Coast Live Oak, small holly-like leaves, deeply fissured bark, good lawn or garden shade tree, but will also adapt to little or no summer water)

Rosa species – Roses (surprisingly drought tolerant once established)

Rugosa roses (old species, disease resistant), Shrub roses, (modern trade mark names, like ‘Meideland’, ‘Knockout’ or ‘David Austin’, are generally disease resistant)

Syagrus romanzoffianum – Queen Palm – (Hardy to 20-25 degrees F, slender feather palm tree, moderate water)

Symphoricarpos x chenaultii ‘Hancock’ – Coral Berry - (deciduous, bank cover, little to moderate water, greenish white flowers, red fruit, partial shade)

Tuhlbaghia violacea – Society Garlic – (perennial, blue-green leaves, several variegated and silver leaved cultivars, clusters of small pink/lavender flowers, moderate water, but can survive drought once established)

Vitus californica ‘Roger’s Red’ – Wild California Grape – (deciduous vine, brilliant red fall color, insignificant fruit, little or no water)

Recommended reference books:

Plants and Landscapes for Summer-Dry Climates of the San Francisco Bay Region (available EBUD, Amazon, Barnes & Noble)

Sunset Western Garden Book (available everywhere)

The American Meadow Garden by John Greenlee (available Amazon, Barnes & Noble)