



Welcome to Vacaville's California Native Tree and Shrub Demonstration Garden



In spring 2016, Solano Resource Conservation District (RCD) and the City of Vacaville created a small demonstration garden in the southwest corner of the Irene Larsen Ballfield Park (located at 1800 Alamo Drive in Vacaville). The 10 species of trees and shrubs featured are native to California and are adapted to our dry climate. Once established, they require very little water to survive and thrive. They also provide excellent habitat and food resources for local wildlife species, and many do quite well in Vacaville's heavy clay soils.

This flyer provides information on each species planted in the Demonstration Garden. Please use the key below to quickly determine favorable features of these plants and visit the Demonstration Garden to see what they look like.

Solano RCD holds workshops for Solano County residents on how to use native plants in the landscape, reducing irrigation needs and improving wildlife habitat. Please contact us at 707-678-1655 x101 for more information.

The Larsen Demonstration Garden was funded by the California Natural Resources Agency with an Urban Greening grant and Proposition 84 bond funds.



Attracts Hummingbirds



Attracts Songbirds



Attracts Butterflies



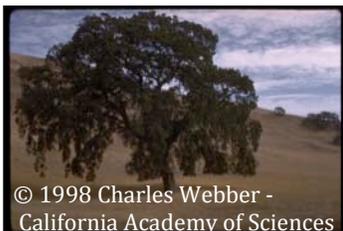
Suitable under oaks



Fragrant



Slope stabilizer



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Valley oak

Quercus lobata



- 40'-100' H x 40'-100' W
- Growth rate - moderate
- Full to part sun

This deciduous oak has a broad rounded crown and is the largest of the California oaks. It can

live to be 400-600 years old. The leaves are deeply lobed and the bark is light gray with rectangular patches. In the past, acorns were the primary daily food of the majority of California Native Americans. Today, many animals, birds and insects depend upon oak acorns and oak pollen for food. Once the most common oak in the Central Valley, habitat loss due to agriculture and urbanization has greatly reduced valley oak



© 1995 Br. Alfred Brousseau, Saint Mary's College

Interior live oak

Quercus wislizeni



- 30'-75' H x 20'-65' W
- Growth rate - moderate
- Part to full sun

This evergreen oak can live to be more than 200 years old. The simple leathery leaves come in two forms; younger leaves have spiny toothed edges to discourage herbivory

while older leaves are smooth edged. The bark is dark gray and furrowed. This tree has a much narrower crown than the valley oak and also grows more slowly than the valley oak. Interior live oak is shade tolerant and provides important forage and habitat for wildlife. It is native to California's foothills.



© 2001 Julie Kierstead Nelson



Box elder *Acer negundo*



- 30'-80' H x 15' W
- Growth rate - fast
- Full to part sun



This deciduous tree blooms in April before its leaves appear. Male flowers are pale pink while female flowers are green. Box elders are pollinated by the

wind, not insects. Female trees produce seeds called samaras which spin like helicopter blades as they fall to the ground. Leaves are compound and fuzzy. This fast growing tree produces large amounts of samaras which must be cleaned up from underneath them. Box elders are often planted as a street tree in the Central Valley. Native to streams and rivers in the Central Valley, box elders are quite drought tolerant once established.



California sycamore *Platanus racemosa*



- 30'-80' H x 20'-50' W
- Growth rate - fast
- Full sun



The California Sycamore has an irregularly shaped crown and large maple-like leaves. The beautiful bark forms a puzzle pattern in cream, tan and gray. Sycamores drop large quantities of leaves each fall.

Fall foliage color is yellow to brown, and ball-shaped flowers/seeds persist on bare branches through the winter. The spherical fruits provide food for birds. Sycamores flower in the spring and are wind pollinated. These trees can live to more than 200 years old.



California buckeye *Aesculus californica*



- 15'-40' H x 15'-40' W
- Growth rate - moderate
- Full sun

This broadly-canopied deciduous tree provides year round beauty. Candle-like inflorescences of fragrant pale pink flowers bloom in spring attracting

pollinators. Buckeyes lose their bright, apple green compound leaves in midsummer, exposing smooth, beautiful grayish-white bark. Pear-shaped fruit develop in the fall. The leathery skin splits to reveal single large shiny brown seed resembling a male deer's eye thereby giving buckeye its common name. In the past, Native Americans crushed the seeds and sprinkled them on water to stupefy fish.



Western redbud *Cercis occidentalis*



- 6'-18' H x 10' W
- Growth rate - fast
- Full to part sun

One of the earliest plants to flower, redbud blooms with magenta colored flowers before their

simple bright green heart shaped leaves appear. This deciduous plant can grow as a large shrub or small tree with a smooth reddish brown trunk. Cinnamon brown seed pods persist on bare branches through the winter. California Native Americans coppice the plant to produce straight new stems for basketry. Redbud grows naturally in foothill woodlands. Redbud has root nodules that allow it to use atmospheric nitrogen.



© 1999 Joseph Dougherty /ecology.org



© 2012 Julie Kierstead Nelson



© 2006 Chris Wagner, SBNF

Toyon

Heteromeles arbutifolia



- 6'-10' H x 6'-10' W
- Growth rate - fast
- Full to part sun



© 2003 Michael Charters

Toyon is a dense evergreen shrub. It can be trained as a small tree or pruned into a hedge. Rounded clusters of

white flowers in late spring produce brilliant red berries in late autumn and winter. These berries are an important winter food source for birds. Toyon has dark green leathery leaves with sharply toothed margins. In past times, California Native Americans cooked the berries to remove the bitter taste before eating them. Early settlers made a cider-like drink from the berries. The abundance of this shrub and its resemblance to holly gave Hollywood its name.



© 2009 Anna Bennett

Hollyleaf cherry

Prunus ilicifolia



- 10'-25' H x 10'-25' W
- Growth rate - slow to establish then fast
- Full to part sun



© 2011 Jean Pawek

Hollyleaf cherry has glossy, bright green leathery leaves with smooth or spiny margins. These densely branched

evergreen plants can be large shrubs or small trees. Hollyleaf cherry has clusters of flowers up to 5 in long that bloom in spring. Its fruits are deep red, dark purple or black with a very thin covering of sweet pulp over the stone. Falling fruits can create a nuisance on pathways.



© 2011 Steven Thorsted

California flannelbush

Fremontodendron californicum



- 6'-15' H x 6'-8' W
- Growth rate - fast
- Full sun



© 2013 Jean Pawek

This large evergreen shrub is most spectacular when flowering. Its dark green felted foliage affords a sharp

contrast with the numerous showy yellow to orange to burnt red flowers. Stellate hairs on flannelbush may be irritating to humans, however, and care should be given to their placement in the landscape. It is best to set them back from pathways and patios to reduce the chance of brushing into them. Deer find its foliage very palatable. Flannel bush grows in woodlands and chaparral communities throughout California and is capable of resprouting after a fire.



© 2016 Carla Murphy

California lilac

Ceanothus 'Ray Hartman'



- 12'-18' H x 15'-20' W
- Growth rate - fast
- Full sun



© 2007 John J. Kehoe

Ceanothus can be deciduous or evergreen shrubs. Ray Hartman is an evergreen variety. In April, inflorescences bloom with clear medium-blue small but showy flowers, releasing a sweet corn-like scent. These blooms will soon be covered in bees mining flowers for

nectar. This shrub produces nitrogen and releases this important nutrient back into soil, fertilizing other plants. It has a short lifespan of 8-20 years. Ceanothus is particularly adapted to California's gravelly soil, and is thereby susceptible to root rot. Plant away from lawns or regularly watered areas.

Pond Plantings at the back of the garden

Although most of the trees and shrubs in the demonstration garden are drought tolerant, along the edge of the seasonal pond at the back of the demonstration garden, you will find native trees that need regular watering to survive, including:

Fremont cottonwood *Populus fremontii*
Oregon ash *Fraxinus latifolia*
Red willow *Salix laevigata*

These three plants are typically found along stream banks or other areas with high soil moisture. Since the seasonal pond along the back of the garden already supported a mature Cottonwood, these water loving California natives were planted as examples of plants that are successful with access to seasonal water.



©2009 Thomas Stoughton



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Fremont cottonwood

Populus fremontii



- 40'-60' H x 30' W
- Growth rate - fast
- Full Sun

Fremont cottonwood is found in riparian habitats in the inland regions. This deciduous tree grows with a broadly rounded or cylindrical crown. The bark is pale gray and separated by deep furrows. The glossy yellow-

green heart-shaped leaves have coarsely toothed margins and turn bright yellow in the fall. Catkins appear in spring before the leaves open. Female trees produce masses of cottony seeds that blow around. Cottonwood is a critical habitat for wildlife. This tree has aggressive surface roots and is best kept away from drain pipes and pavement.



© 2014 Jean Pawek



©2011 Jean Pawek

Red willow

Salix laevigata



- Up to 45' H x 25' W
- Growth rate - fast
- Full Sun

Also known as pussy willow due to the young catkin buds covered with silky white hairs, red willow is a deciduous tree. This plant grows a rounded crown with rough reddish brown bark. The

long, narrow leaves have finely scalloped margins. Yellow pollen-bearing catkins bloom as or after leaves emerge in the spring, causing problems for hay fever sufferers. Red willow is easy to propagate by simply burying cuttings and providing sufficient water. The root system aggressively seeks water sources and should be planted away from drain pipes and pavement. Branches have been used for boats, baskets, and furniture. Willow bark tea has medicinal qualities similar to aspirin.



© 2014 Zoya Akulova



© 2009 Neaf Kramer

Oregon ash

Fraxinus latifolia



- 35'-80' height
- Growth rate - moderate
- Full to partial sun

While named Oregon ash, this plant's native geographic range is from Northern Washington to Southern California. Oregon ash live to about 250 years with crowns that can vary from short and narrow in forest stands to broad and rounded in open stands. This deciduous plant thrives in heavy soils and poorly drained areas subject

to seasonal flooding. It is fairly tolerant of summer drought, but this stunts its growth and it drops its leaves when weather is hot and dry. The winged seeds are spread by wind early fall and are eaten by wildlife. Oregon ash wood is commonly used for lumber, tool handles, and baseball bats.