



Support and Enhance HABITAT

Basic Guide - Planting and Maintaining Trees and Vegetation

Provided by your Friends at Madrone Audubon Society

Federal Policy of the National Audubon Society:

Natural Climate Solutions – “We support the protection of landscapes that can naturally store carbon and provide places that birds need to survive. These landscapes include forests, wetlands, coasts, grasslands, and agricultural land. Natural solutions rely on living things that remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, like forests, prairies, sea grass, and soil. We call these features carbon sinks because they remove more emissions from the atmosphere than they emit...”

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Nearly half of all wild animal species on Earth have been lost in the last 40 years. Now more than ever, we must take a stand - *Dr. Jane Goodall*

Beginning ...

We can create and enhance habitat in all kinds of spaces - a large yard, more acreage, a small yard, patio and porch.

The Process ...

Plant 70% native plants to support and sustain habitat.

Decisions for planting are *site specific*. Consider your area of the County, surrounding land and/or yards, soil type, irrigation needs, expense and availability of trees and plants you'd like to add to your local environment. Consider nearby existing trees and plants. Plan for the size of mature trees and plants over time. Plan your habitat area aligned with seasonal planting. Add bird baths, low trays of water during dry summer months, a small or sizable fresh-water pond, bird feeders, hummingbird feeders, and other supports to planted areas.

Tree Choices and Benefits

California Sycamore: Nesting for Red-tailed, Red-Shouldered Hawks. Nesting and food for woodpeckers, and hummingbirds. Food source for Western Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly.

California Red Alder: Black-tailed deer, elk, redpolls, Pine Siskins, goldfinches, mice, and beavers. (As with California White Alder, a thirsty tree.)

Native Oaks: Very high richness of bird species in a mixed oak and riparian community. Band-tailed Pigeon, Acorn Woodpecker, CA Scrub-Jay, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, White-breasted Nuthatch, Bushtit, Lark Sparrow, Oak Titmouse, Yellow-billed Magpie, Western Bluebird, Hutton's Vireo. Also, many butterfly and moth species.

California Buckeye: Pollinators, butterflies, hummingbirds and squirrels (Squirrels are the only animals that can eat the seeds because the seeds are toxic to all other animals. The flowers are not toxic.)

Gray Pine: Red-shafted Woodpecker, CA Scrub-Jay, Band-tailed Pigeons, Chestnut-backed Chickadees, Gray Squirrels, Mule and White-tailed Deer, and Black Bear.

California White Alder: This is a thirsty tree that resides near streams. Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pine Siskins, Mule Deer.

Willows: Chickadees, hummingbirds, flycatchers, warblers, egrets, herons, moths, butterflies.

Coastal Redwood: Band-tailed Pigeon (closest relative to the Passenger Pigeon), doves, Pileated Woodpecker, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Steller's Jay, Great Gray Owl, Rufous Hummingbird, Mountain Chickadee, Spotted Owl, Barred Owl, Western Tanager, White-breasted Nuthatch, Black-throated Gray Warbler Varied Thrush, Townsend's Warbler, Pacific Wren, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Anna's Hummingbird, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Northern Goshawk, Vaux's Swift, Marbled Murrelet.

Pacific Wax Myrtle (*Myrica californica*) – smaller tree, naturally occurring on the coast. Evergreen that grows to 15' tall. Multitudes of hard berries provide an important food source, mid to late winter, for many species (warblers, woodpeckers even the Pileated).

Big Leaf Maple: Northern Mockingbird, thrashers, wood warblers, cardinals, grosbeaks, vireos, sparrows, finches, deer, squirrels.

Black Hawthorne: Wood warblers, chickadees, titmouses, nuthatches, sparrows, wrens, waxwings, butterflies.

California Box Elder: This is a tough tree that does well in a riparian habitat. Woodpeckers, wide range of water birds, hummingbirds, swifts, pigeons, doves, grouse, pheasants, hawks, owls, Black-tailed Deer, White-tailed Deer, butterflies, moths.

Notes: **Small shade tree choice:** California Hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta* Marsh. var. *californica*)

Large tree, exceptional habitat contribution, naturally occurring in riparian areas:

Fremont's Cottonwood: Butterflies, moths, Viceroy Butterfly, Tiger Swallowtails, flycatchers, warblers, other migratory birds, insectivorous birds, hawks, egrets, vireos, herons, and cormorants are attracted to the Cottonwood/Riparian habitat.

Plants, Flowers, Grasses

Select a combination of pollinators, nutrition and cover plants, flowers and/or grasses to support our local birds and wildlife.

Toyon – berries – winter (good for hedge rows)

Coffee berry – berries - fall (good for hedge rows)

Manzanita – flowers attract butterflies and bees; safe cover; nesting for songbirds

Ribes – (genus-about 200 plants providing nutrition, gooseberry, currant) - nectar and berries

Mallow – (flowering plants such as Hibiscus) - nectar, insects

Coyote bush – insects, seeds, nesting material, nesting habitat, safe cover

Native grape – berries

Elderberry – nectar, berries – summer

Ceanothus – (genus of about 50–60 species, nitrogen-fixing shrubs & small trees in the buckthorn family (Rhamnaceae). Common names: Buckbrush, California lilac, or just ceanothus. Cedar Waxwings love Hawthorn berries - nectar, insects, roosting and nesting habitat, safe cover.

Some berry loving birds are robins, mockingbirds, bluebirds, waxwings.

Saltbush/Quailbush – tender tips of plant are gently pruned and consumed by finch and sparrow species all year, provides safe cover and nesting habitat

Sticky Monkey Flower – nectar

California Fuchsia (various) – nectar

Hummingbird Sage (*Salvia spathacea*) – Ground plant spreads naturally, hummingbirds love

Buckwheat (various) – nectar, seeds

Goldenrod – nectar, seeds

Aster (various) – nectar, seeds

Honeysuckle - Native California *Lonicera* - attractive and fragrant vine for hummingbirds, Orioles. If selecting non-native for hummingbirds, maintain as pruned fence or structure vine.

Honeybush (*Melianthus major*), non-native evergreen; flowers attract migratory Hooded Orioles.

Red Hot Poker Plant “Torch Lily” (*Kniphofia uvaria*) – non-native evergreen; Hooded Orioles, hummingbirds, bees. (Select variety w/open tubular flowers so nectar can be accessed.)

Salmonberry – food source & cover for multiple species

Huckleberry – food source & cover for multiple species

Narrowleaf Milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*) - Butterflies, esp. Monarch

Common Yarrow (bush-like evergreen - spring, tall white flowers, good for containers)

Hearty Native Grasses: Deer Grass and Purple Needle Grass –Will grow to good height and provide great cover for wildlife.

Fruit trees –add small fruit trees in outer yard or garden - nutrition for you & wild species.

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Examples for site-specific planning – Benefit many species. Consider water needs.

Where will your planted trees mature? Observe sun and shade areas. Create additional planted areas for conservation and abundance to benefit many species.

Benefit many species...

Combine plants in an area visited by, for example, hummingbirds, bees and butterflies, with multiple benefits. A pollinator garden in proximity to a small food garden will support synergy of activities. Add a birdbath in a safe area of the garden. Plan a palate of multiple plants: Narrowleaf Milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*) for butterflies, varieties of California Fuchsia (various) for hummingbirds, Honeysuckle, non-native vine, will attract hummingbirds and bees, Hummingbird Sage (*Salvia spathacea*) as an anchor native to naturally spread. Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos*), a hardy shrub, attracts bees and butterflies to its flowers; a clump of Manzanita provides both cover and nesting area for songbirds. (Paula Lane Action Network)

Watering ...

A landscaping best practice: Select or group plants with the same watering needs.

For example, if you have a damp/watered garden, some riparian (creekside) plants may be the best choices: Huckleberry (*Vaccinium ovatum*), Western Wild Ginger (*Asarum caudatum*), California Hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta ssp. californica*), Thimbleberry (*Rubus parviflorus*), Salmonberry (*Rubus spectabilis*), Monkey Flower Savory (*Clinopodium mimuloides*), Salal (*Gaultheria shallon*) are examples of grouped plants with many benefits. (Audubon California).

This Guide was compiled from years of combined experiences of contributors and local, regional and national resources.

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