



A **California Friendly**® garden is filled with native and low-water use plants, perfectly suited to our mild winters and warm, dry summers. They are low maintenance, use little to no water, don't need soil preparation or fertilizing, and even attract wildlife like birds and butterflies. Here are some favorites to start; there are many more choices. Visit [bewaterwise.com](http://bewaterwise.com) for a more complete catalogue of plant possibilities, garden ideas, rebate information and conservation tips. And click on our Native Plant Profile tab for inspiration.



[bewaterwise.com](http://bewaterwise.com)



**The Metropolitan Water District  
of Southern California**  
700 N. Alameda St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

P.O. Box 54153  
Los Angeles, CA 90054-0153  
(213) 217-6000  
(800) call-mwd (255-5693)

# TOP



## California Friendly® Native Plants

[bewaterwise.com](http://bewaterwise.com)®





**Deer Grass**  
*Muhlenbergia rigens*

This native California grass is narrow-leafed and forms a dense clump up to 2-3 feet high and wide with flower stocks that can reach 6 feet high. The bright green leaves are joined by spiky cream-colored flowers in spring. The deer grass is drought tolerant and does best with little to moderate water in full sun or light shade. Deer grass can be fire-prone if not properly maintained and should not be planted within 5 feet of a structure. They attract birds and beneficial insects.

**Wild Strawberry**  
*Fragaria sp.*

Wild strawberries make an excellent lawn substitute since they grow only about 2-4 inches high. Beach strawberry prefers sandy soil and rarely fruit. Woodland strawberry can grow in multiple soil types but need afternoon shade when grown inland. Woodland strawberry has emerald green leaves and delicious half-inch berries.



**California Lilac**  
*Ceanothus sp.*

The California lilac blooms late winter to spring with clusters of flowers in white and every shade of blue from very light to deep violet. Generally an evergreen, the California lilac comes in all shapes and sizes including low and spreading, tightly grouped and bushy, and straight and angular. Only a few varieties lose their leaves in cold weather. They require full sun and little to no water.



**Toyon**  
*Heteromeles arbutifolia*

Toyon is also known as Christmasberry or California Holly for their brilliant red berry clusters from November through January. They are a large evergreen shrub with thick, leathery, glossy-green leaves 2 to 4 inches long. They have small white flowers in flattish clusters, which bloom June through July. Toyon can be fire retardant when given enough moisture and make excellent hedge plants to protect privacy. Birds, butterflies and beneficial insects like them.



**Coral Bells or Alum Root**  
*Heuchera sp.*

Slender, spiky stems of loose, small bell-shaped flowers grow from clumps of round scalloped leaves. The delicate blossoms come in shades of red, coral, rose pink, greenish and white. Most varieties bloom between early spring and late summer, with some lasting until fall. In warmer areas, they do best with afternoon shade and moderate to regular water. Hummingbirds love them.



**Douglas Iris**  
*Iris douglasiana*

This easygoing and easy-growing iris is native to the California coast. A spring bloomer, the Douglas Iris has evergreen leaves and long stems up to 2 feet that are sometimes branched and crowned with purple and blue flowers. They like partial to full shade and moderate to little water in summer, with well-drained soil. Many cultivated varieties are available with yellow, rose, burgundy and purple flowers.



**Foothill Penstemon**  
*Penstemon heterophyllus*

Penstemons, also known as beardtongues, are brightly flowered perennials that vary in size, shape and color. Flower colors vary from electric blue-lavendar, to bright red to pink. Penstemons can be grown in any garden provided that they have good drainage. They attract hummingbirds and beneficial insects.



**Dudleya**  
*Dudleya sp.*

Dudleyas are one of the largest group of native California succulents. They vary in shape, size, and flower color and are usually under 4 inches until they flower. They are easy to grow and make excellent accent plants. Surround them with rocks and make sure they have good drainage. And watch the hummingbirds that come to visit.



**Bigberry Manzanita**  
*Arctostaphylos glauca*

This slow-growing native Californian has blue-gray leaves which offset clusters of pink to white urn-shaped flowers. The flowers bloom in late winter to early spring and are followed by berrylike red or brown fruits that attract birds. Known for its crooked branches of dark purple bark, this variety is a tall shrub that can spread up to 15 feet tall and 20 feet wide. There are many different varieties of manzanita; all are evergreen, take full sun or light shade and require little to moderate water.



**Hummingbird Sage**  
*Salvia spathacea*

This hardy, small clumping sage is a magnet for hummingbirds because of its spikes of deep magenta flowers. This sage prefers shade to partial sun and requires moderate water. Its root system helps it to survive drought.

