



BRING *New Life* **TO YOUR GARDEN**

Gardening For Birds With Local Native Plants



CALIFORNIA
NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

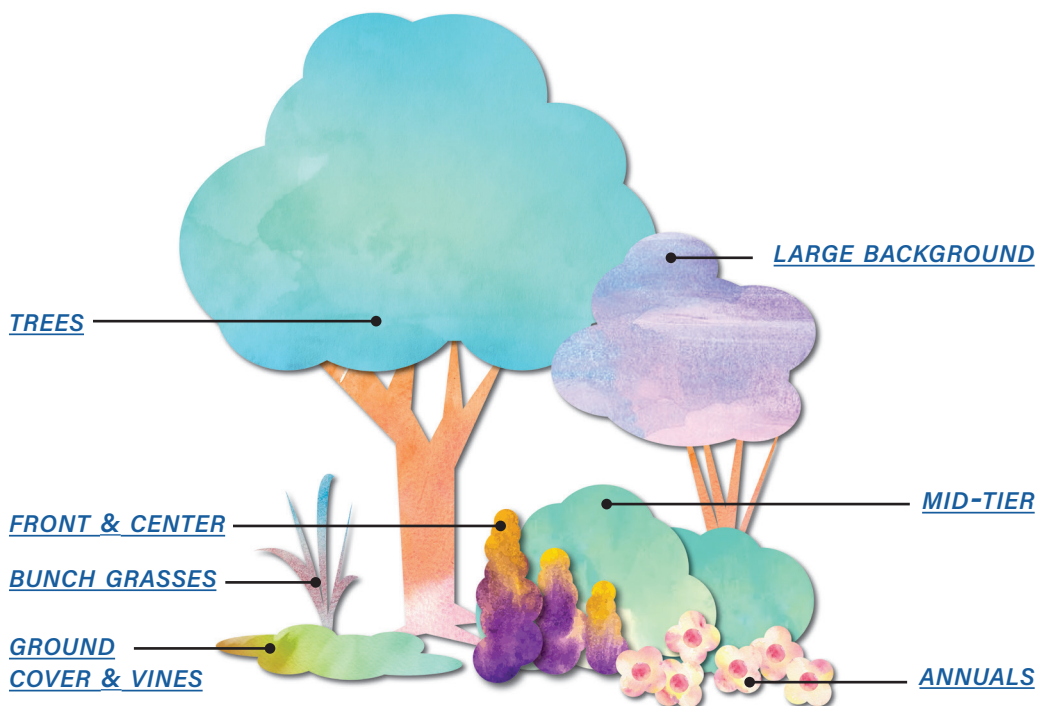
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Chapter

GARDENING FOR BIRDS WITH LOCAL NATIVE PLANTS

LANDSCAPING with bird-friendly native plants restores the food web, saves water and helps fight climate change. To survive, native birds need native plants and the insects that have co-evolved with them — mainly caterpillars. Most landscaping plants available in nurseries are exotic species from other countries. Many are prized for qualities that make them poor food sources for native birds—like having leaves that are unpalatable to native insects and caterpillars. With 96 percent of all terrestrial bird species in North America feeding insects to their young, planting insect-proof exotic plants is like serving up plastic food.

No insects? No birds. This guide will help you choose native plants instead. The following is a list of native plants that make great additions to your garden and host a wide variety of butterflies, moths and birds. Look for the number following the plant names to see how many species are hosted by each plant.

THIS GUIDE is broken into the following sections of plants for your garden, and the birds that use the:





LARGE BACKGROUND PLANTS

1. CALIFORNIA LILAC (*Ceanothus thyrsiflorus*) | 117

Birds nest in low-growing shrubby Ceanothus; seeds attract Bushtits, Northern Mockingbirds, and House and Purple Finches.

2. HOLLY-LEAF CHERRY (*Prunus ilicifolia*) | 246

Fruit attracts American Robins, House and Purple Finches, California and Spotted Towhees, Cedar Waxwing, and Black-headed Grosbeak; California and Steller's Jays, and Northern Mockingbirds love to nest in it.

3. CALIFORNIA COFFEEBERRY (*Frangula californica*) | 25

Black fruit in Fall attracts thrushes, California and Steller's Jays, Northern Mockingbirds, California Thrashers, American Robins, Cedar Waxwings, and Purple Finch.

4. TOYON (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) | 9

Fruit attracts Cedar Waxwing, Towhees, Black-headed Grosbeak, Western Bluebird, robins, thrushes, thrashers, and mockingbirds; Main Winter food here for Band-tailed Pigeon, Waxwings, Quail, and Tanagers.

5. WILLOWS (*Salix* sp.) | 327

Used by many birds in multiple ways. Catkins, scales, galls and aphids provide a rich food source.

6. BLUE ELDERBERRY (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) | 31

Beloved by berry eaters.

7. RED ELDERBERRY (*Sambucus racemosa*) | 31

Beloved by berry eaters.

8. TWINBERRY (*Lonicera involucrata*) | 30

Hummingbirds love the flowers; fruit eaten by American Robins, Wrentits, California and Spotted Towhees, Hermit and Swainson Thrushes, Western Bluebird, and Chestnut-backed Chickadee.

9. CALIFORNIA WAX MYRTLE (*Morella californica*) | 10

Berries attract Northern Flickers, American Robins, and American or Lesser Goldfinches in late summer.



69% of caterpillar species develop on just one plant species, further emphasizing the *irreplaceable role of native plants to insects*, and thus, birds.



FRONT & CENTER IN THE GARDEN



- 1. WESTERN COLUMBINE (*Aquilegia formosa*)** | 8
Attracts hummingbirds, which serve as its primary pollinator.



- 2. CREVICE ALUM-ROOT (*Heuchera micrantha*)** | 3
Flowers attract hummingbirds.



- 3. BLUFF LETTUCE (*Dudleya farinosa*)** | 5
Useful to hummingbirds in spring/summer.



- 4. FRINGE CUPS (*Tellima grandiflora*)** | 1
Attracts hummingbirds in early spring.



- 5. PITCHER SAGE (*Lepechinia calycina*)** | 3
Attracts hummingbirds.



- 6. COYOTE MINT (*Monardella villosa*)** | 10
Attracts hummingbirds.



- 7. HEDGE NETTLE (*Stachys ajugoides*)** | 24
Attracts hummingbirds.



- 8. BLEEDING HEART (*Dicentra formosa*)** | 1
Attracts hummingbirds.



Birds need water for drinking and preening.
Consider adding a water feature to draw birds
into your garden.

FRONT & CENTER — CONTINUED

9. GUMPLANT (*Grindelia stricta*) | 21

Provides seeds for juncos, sparrows and towhees.

10. COAST GOLDENROD (*Solidago spathulata*) | 55

Blooms and seeds late, supplying food for finches and migrating buntings.

11. YARROW (*Achillea millefolium*) | 19

Seeds eaten by ground-feeders such as Mourning Doves.

12. CALIFORNIA ASTER (*Symphotrichum chilense*) | 53

Seeds for goldfinch and sparrows.

13. COAST BUCKWHEAT (*Eriogonum latifolium*) | 56

Leaves eaten by California Quail; seeds eaten by finches, juncos and towhees.

14. CHECKERBLOOM (*Sidalcea malviflora*) | 11

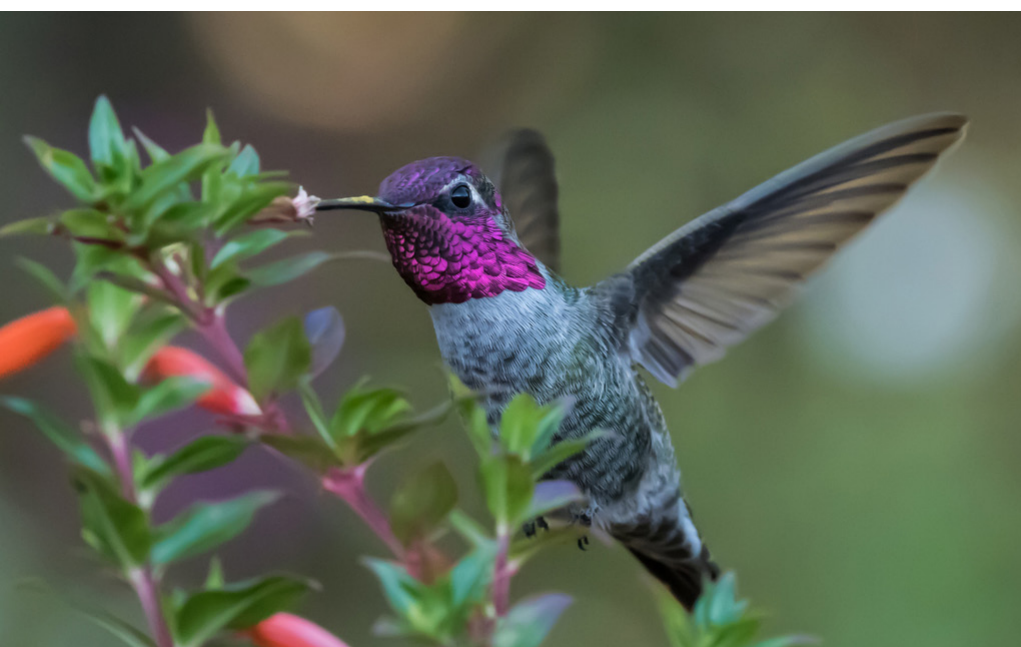
Provides food in the summer for seed gleaners like California Thrasher and others.

15. BLUE WITCH (*Solanum umbelliferum*) | 48

Birds don't care that the berries are poisonous to humans.

16. NARROW-LEAF MULE EARS (*Wyethia angustifolia*) | 3

Attracts seed eating birds.



GROUND COVER & VINES



- 1. KINNICKINNICK MANZANITA (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) | 68**
Flowers provide nectar for hummingbirds; fruit feeds many birds.
- 2. CALIFORNIA HONEYSUCKLE (*Lonicera hispidula*) | 30**
Flowers attract Anna's and Allen's Hummingbirds and Hooded Orioles; berries eaten by California Thrasher, California Towhee, American Robins and Western Bluebirds.
- 3. BEACH STRAWBERRY (*Fragaria chiloensis*) | 58**
Fruit eaten by Song Sparrow, finches, robin, Black-headed Grosbeak, waxwings, California Scrub Jay, California Thrasher and towhees; leaves eaten by California Quail.
- 4. WOODLAND STRAWBERRY (*Fragaria vesca*) | 58**
Fruit eaten by Song Sparrow, finches, robin, Black-headed Grosbeak, waxwings, California Scrub Jay, California Thrasher and towhees; leaves eaten by California Quail.
- 5. HUMMINGBIRD SAGE (*Salvia spathacea*) | 14**
Attracts hummingbirds.
- 6. CALIFORNIA FUCHSIA (*Epilobium canum*)**
A hummingbird favorite mid-summer when many other plants aren't blooming.
- 7. CHAPARRAL CLEMATIS (*Clematis lasiantha*) | 11**
Attracts hummingbirds; other birds use it for nesting materials.
- 8. VIRGIN'S BOWER (*Clematis ligusticifolia*) | 11**
Attracts hummingbirds; other birds use it for nesting materials.



Make sure to leave open areas for birds that **scratch and forage for seeds**. Ground-favoring birds also need low, evergreen — and often thorny — plants as cover to evade predators.

TREES

1. **BIG-LEAF MAPLE** (*Acer macrophyllum*)

Seeds and flowers eaten by Black-headed Grosbeak, goldfinches and Pine Siskin; deciduous foliage provides good insect foraging for warblers, vireos, bushtits and kinglets; good for shelter and nesting.

2. **BOX ELDER** (*Acer negundo*) | 116

Birds eat seeds, buds and work the flowers.

3. **PACIFIC MADRONE** (*Arbutus menziesii*) | 45

Flowers eaten by Black-headed Grosbeak and Band-tailed Pigeon (May and June); fruits eaten by Band-tailed Pigeon, Song Sparrow, flickers, grosbeaks, robins, thrushes, and waxwings in November.

4. **COAST LIVE OAK** (*Quercus agrifolia*) | 270

Acorns cherished by California Scrub Jay, Band-tailed Pigeons, Acorn Woodpeckers, Western Bluebirds and California Quail; Bushtits eat leaf galls and insects on leaves and twigs; Woodpeckers probe the bark for insects.

5. **CALIFORNIA BUCKEYE** (*Aesculus californica*) | 16

Hummingbirds like the flowers in April. Bark insects attract woodpeckers and nuthatches.



A study shows that it takes 350 to 570 caterpillars every day for sixteen days for a pair of chickadees to raise a family. And it's **native plants that provide this kind of food source**, while most non-natives do not.

Consult the Golden Gate Audubon Society about constructing bird houses to further help for cavity nesting birds.



BUNCH GRASSES



Nutritious, high-fat seeds; thatch provides good nest-weaving material.

1. **CALIFORNIA FESCUE** (*Festuca californica*) | 11
2. **IDAHO FESCUE** (*Festuca idahoensis*) | 11
3. **GIANT WILDRYE** (*Elymus condensatus*) | 16
4. **PURPLE NEEDLEGRASS** (*Stipa pulchra*)
5. **BLUE WILDRYE** (*Elymus glaucus*) | 16
6. **PACIFIC REEDGRASS** (*Calamagrostis nutkaensis*) | 4
7. **TUFTED HAIRGRASS** (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) | 2
8. **CALIFORNIA MELICGRASS** (*Melica californica*) | 1
9. **CALIFORNIA OATGRASS** (*Danthonia californica*) | 3



ANNUALS



Often their bounty of ripening seed attracts diverse multitudes of small insects. They provide plenty of food for birds, too.

1. **INDIAN THISTLE** (*Cirsium brevistylum*) | 22
2. **GOLDFIELDS** (*Lasthenia californica*) | 1
3. **TIDY-TIPS** (*Layia platyglossa*) | 1
4. **MINIATURE LUPINE** (*Lupinus bicolor*) | 75
5. **SKY LUPINE** (*Lupinus nanus*) | 75
6. **CHICK LUPINE** (*Lupinus microcarpus*) | 75
7. **TOMCAT CLOVER** (*Trifolium willdenovii*) | 89
8. **BABY-BLUE EYES** (*Nemophila menziesii*) | 6
9. **STINGING PHACELIA** (*Phacelia malvifolia*)
10. **PURPLE FIESTA FLOWER** (*Pholistoma auritum*) | 2
11. **RUBY CHALICE CLARKIA** (*Clarkia rubicunda*) | 8
12. **CALIFORNIA POPPY** (*Eschscholzia californica*) | 3
13. **CREAM CUPS** (*Platystemon californicus*) | 1
14. **GLOBE GILIA** (*Gilia capitata* ssp. *chamissonis*) | 7
15. **RED MAIDS** (*Calandrinia ciliata*)
16. **OWL'S CLOVER** (*Castilleja densiflora*) | 25
17. **CHINESE HOUSES** (*Collinsia heterophylla*) | 4
18. **SEEP-SPRING MONKEYFLOWER** (*Mimulus guttatus*) | 14
19. **INDIAN LETTUCE** (*Montia perfoliata*) | 1
Formerly miner's lettuce





RESOURCES

<https://cnps-yerbabuena.org>
<https://goldengateaudubon.org/>
<https://calscape.org/>

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