

Xeriscaping with Drought-Tolerant California Native Plants

Plants for Full Sun

Tall

Arctostaphylos manzanita 'Dr. Hurd', Dr. Hurd Manzanita
Ceanothus 'Blue Jeans', Blue Jeans Ceanothus
Ceanothus cuneatus, Buckbrush
Ceanothus 'Dark Star', Dark Star Ceanothus
Fremontodendron californicum cultivars, Flannelbush*
Pinus ponderosa, Ponderosa Pine*
Prunus virginiana, Western Chokecherry*
Quercus douglasii, Blue Oak*
Quercus kelloggii, California Black Oak*
Quercus lobata, Valley Oak*
Ribes malvaceum, Chaparral Flowering Currant
Rhamnus tomentella, Hoary Coffeeberry*

Medium

Arctostaphylos densiflora cultivars, Vine Hill Manzanita
Baccharis pilularis 'Pigeon Point', Coyote Bush
Ceanothus griseus horizontalis cultivars
Eriogonum fasciculatum, California Buckwheat
Fallugia paradoxa, Apache Plume
Lepichinia calycina, Pitcher Sage*
Lepichinia fragrans, Fragrant Pitcher Sage
Lupinus albifrons, Silver or Bush Lupine*
Muhlenbergia rigens, Deergrass*
Nassella pulchra, Purple Needlegrass*
Romneya coulteri, Matilija Poppy
Salvia clevelandii cultivars, Cleveland Sage
Salvia leucophylla, Purple Sage
Trichostemma lanatum, Woolly Blue Curls

Low

Artemisia ludoviciana, Silver Wormwood*
Baccharis pilularis 'Twin Peaks', Dwarf Coyote Bush
Ceanothus griseus horizontalis, Carmel Creeper
Dudleya spp., Live Forever
Eschscholzia californica, California Poppy*
Polystichum munitum, Sword Fern*
Salvia spathacea, Hummingbird Sage
Yucca whipplei, Yucca

Plants for Sun or Shade

Tall

Aesculus californica, California Buckeye*
Calocedrus decurrens, Incense Cedar*
Ceanothus 'Ray Hartman', Ceanothus
Ceanothus thrysiflorus cultivars, Blue Blossom Ceanothus
Cercis occidentalis, Western Redbud*
Cupressus macnabiana, McNab Cypress*
Heteromeles arbutifolia, Toyon*
Rhus ovate, Sugar Bush
Umbellularia californica, California Bay*

Medium

Aristolochia californica, Pipevine or Dutchman's Pipe*
Baccharis pilularis, Coyote Bush*
Lupinus albifrons, Silver or Bush Lupine*
Mimulus aurantiacus, Bush Monkeyflower*

Low

Arctostaphylos uva ursi cultivars, Bearberry
Ceanothus lemmonii, Lemmon's Ceanothus*
Delphinium variegatum, Royal Larkspur*
Eriogonum umbellatum polyanthum, Sulfur Buckwheat*
Lonicera hispidula, Hairy Honeysuckle*
Monardella spp., Coyote Mint
Penstemon heterophyllus, Foothill Penstemon*
Sisyrinchium bellum, Blue-eyed Grass*
Epilobium canum, California Fuchsia*

Xeriscaping refers to the conservation of water through creative landscaping. Originally developed for drought-afflicted areas, the principles of xeriscaping have an ever broadening appeal. With water now considered an expensive and limited resource, all landscaping projects, residential and commercial, can benefit from this alternative. Here's an introduction to the basics of xeriscaping:

Water-wise planning and design: The goal of xeriscape design is water conservation. For most of

(continued)

* native to Nevada and Placer County region

Plants for Shade

Tall

Carpenteria californica, California Bush Anemone
Ceanothus integerrimus, Deerbrush*
Garrya fremontii, Mountain Silktassel*
Holodiscus discolor, Cream Bush*
Lithocarpus densiflora, Tanbark Oak*
Prunus ilicifolia, Hollyleaf Cherry
Rhamnus tomentella, Hoary Coffeeberry*
Ribes aureum, Golden Currant*

Medium

Amelanchier pallida, Serviceberry
Arctostaphylos 'Howard McMinn', Manzanita
Arctostaphylos 'Sentinel', Manzanita
Lilium humboldtii, Humboldt Lily*
Mahonia aquifolium, Oregon Grape*
Rhus trilobata, Squaw Bush*
Ribes nevadensis, Sierra Currant*
Ribes viburnifolium, Catalina Currant
Rosa californica, California Rose*
Styrax officinalis, Snowdrop Bush*
Symphoricarpos albus, Snowberry*

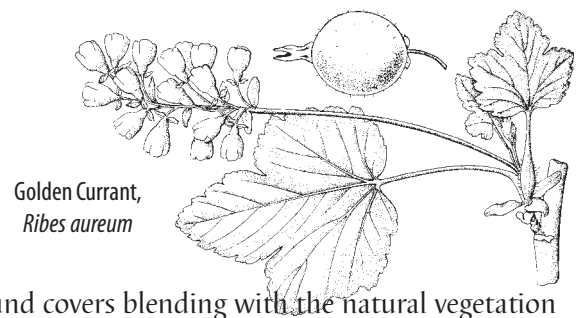
Low

Achillea spp., Yarrow
Ceanothus hearstiorum, Hearst Ceanothus
Chlorogalum spp., Soaproot
Clematis lasiantha, Chaparral Clematis*
Iris 'Pacific Coast' hybrids, Wild Iris hybrids
Mahonia aquifolium repens, Creeping Oregon Grape*
Rhamnus ilicifolia, Hollyleaf Redberry*
Salvia sonomensis, Creeping Sage*
Stachys ajugoides rigida, Rigid Hedge Nettle*

North America, 50% of residential water use is applied to landscape and lawns. Xeriscaping can reduce this by 50–75%. The “zoning” of landscape plantings by water use is one of the most useful concepts of xeriscape design.

For example, areas near your home can be zoned for higher water use plants. Vines, potted plants, a small lawn, perennials, ground covers, and shrubbery will help cool the home through shading and evapo-transpiration. Farther out from the house can be zones for drought tolerant trees, shrubs and

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Golden Currant,
Ribes aureum

ground covers blending with the natural vegetation found on your property.

Soil improvement: The ideal soil in a water-conserving landscape does two things: it drains quickly and stores water at the same time. This is achieved by increasing the amount of organic material in your soil and keeping it well aerated. Compost is the best organic additive.

Use appropriate plants: For best results, select plants that are native to our region. Native plants are adapted to variations in rainfall and summer drought conditions. Group plants according to their water and sun needs. Using native plants in your landscape also increases habitat and forage for beneficial insects, birds, and wildlife.

Limit lawn areas: Turf is the most water-thirsty landscape component. Design lawn areas for practical purposes, such as play areas. Consider replacing lawn areas with low ground covers, shrubs, native grasses, boulders, pathways, or mulched areas.

The use of lawn mowers contributes to air pollution. Herbicides, pesticides, and chemical fertilizers are expensive and pollute water, especially in run off from irrigation.

Mulch: Cover the surface of all bare soil with a mulch of wood chips, bark, leaves, coarse compost, pine needles, or gravel. A mulch several inches thick helps retain soil moisture and moderates temperature. Mulching prevents erosion and compaction and discourages competing weeds.

Irrigation: Soaker hoses and drip irrigation systems offer the easiest and most efficient watering for xeriscapes. Native plants need some irrigation for 1–3 years until they become established. Water deeply but infrequently to encourage the growth of a healthy root system.

Maintenance: Low-maintenance is one of the benefits of xeriscaping. Native plants do not need to be fertilized and seldom need any pruning. Over fertilization and heavy pruning of any plants will promote excessive growth and increase water needs. California generates 6 million tons of yard waste annually. Less than 10% is diverted from landfills. Xeriscaping will save you the time and expense of hauling yard waste and lawn trimmings.