

Why We Liked This Garden

Showcase Features:

This Bay Friendly Demonstration Garden located in Palo Alto is a collaboration between the City of Palo Alto employee Green Team and the local non-profit Acterra and well as a number of other departments, organizations and businesses. The garden is open to the public and demonstrates sustainable garden practices that can be applied to a home garden or yard. Interactive signage provides information to visitors of the features in the garden. Various elements of the garden highlight the Seven Principles of Bay-Friendly Landscaping and Gardening, such as giving plants ample room to achieve their mature size and reducing waste generated from pruning. The garden also creates valuable habitat, by providing food and shelter for insects, birds, and other creatures. Monarchs and other butterflies rely on plants such as the Narrow Leaf Milkweed (not pictured) in this garden as food sources, while hummingbirds love the tubular shaped flowers of the Hummingbird Sage (SH).

Plants:

This California native garden was planted to provide seasonal interest and year round beauty. The plants chosen are native not only to California, but more specifically to the San Francisco Bay Area, making them suitable for our local climate and soil types. Colorful poppies and lupine seeded into the meadow areas add bright oranges and purples in the spring while the deep red flowers of the California Fuchsia (Z) bloom late into the summer. Chaparral plants that require excellent drainage have been planted into berms while Flowering Currant (RS) and Western Sword Fern (P) fill in the shadier areas beneath the Magnolia and Horse Chestnut trees. A variety of clumping and spreading native grasses such as Purple Needle Grass (NP), Deer Grass (MR), and Junegrass (K) highlight the versatility of our native grasses.

Light:

This garden has both full sun and full shade areas. Plants have been grouped according to their light needs.

The Wildlife Garden Plant Legend*

Symbol	Botanical Name	Common Name	Size
AM	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow	2' x 2'
AC	<i>Arctostaphylos crustacea</i>	Brittleleaf Manzanita	4' x 5'
CT	<i>Ceanothus thyrsiflorus</i>	Blue Blossom	20' x 15'
D	<i>Delphinium variegatum</i>	Royal Larkspur	3' x 1'
EC	<i>Eschscholzia californica</i>	CA poppy	1' x 1'
F	<i>Festuca idahoensis</i>	Idaho Fescue	1' x 1'
FC	<i>Fragaria chiloensis*</i>	Beach Strawberry	1' x spreading
FR	<i>Fremontodendron sp.</i>	Flannel Bush	Varies by species
PH	<i>Penstemon heterophyllus</i>	Foothill Penstemon	2' x 2'
PC	<i>Phacelia californica</i>	California Phacelia	1' x 18"
P	<i>Polystichum munitum*</i>	Western Sword Fern	3' x 3'
RC	<i>Rhamnus californica</i>	Coffeeberry	10' x 10'
R	<i>Ribes californica*</i>	Hillside Gooseberry	5' x 5'
RS	<i>Ribes sanguineum</i>	Flowering Currant	6' x 6'
SA	<i>Salvia apiana</i>	White Sage	3' x 3'
SM	<i>Salvia mellifera</i>	Black Sage	5' x 5'
SS	<i>Salvia sonomensis</i>	Creeping Sage	1' x 3'
SH	<i>Salvia spathacea</i>	Hummingbird Sage	2' x 4'
S	<i>Sisyrinchium bellum</i>	Blue-eyed Grass	1' x 1'
VL	<i>Verbena lasiostachys*</i>	Robust Verbena	1' x 2'

* This is a partial plant listing.

Sustainable Gardening Resource List

For general installation, understanding of sustainable gardens, and other details, read the factsheets in the Green Gardens Healthy Creeks series. Each of those factsheets provides in depth information to guide homeowners through the process of installing sustainable gardens.



Working together for the greener good



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Printed on recycled paper. 0413/Q300/JY

Watering Needs:

The plant groupings in this garden have different water needs and should be irrigated separately. The sunnier, higher locations in the garden are planted with low water using plants. Low lying, shadier parts of the garden receive more water and if used in the home landscape, should be irrigated separately from low water using plants.

Constuction Notes for Sustainable Landscaping

- Create berms or mounds to improve drainage for plants that require dryer conditions.
- Limit the amount of green waste generated from pruning by allowing ample room for plants to grow to their mature size.
- Amend the soil with compost to improve water retention and organic content.
- Apply at least 3" of mulch after planting to suppress weeds, limit erosion and retain soil moisture.
- Reapply mulch as needed.
- Include items in the garden that provide habitat for native bees, insects, and animals, such as partially buried boulders, stick piles, and nest boxes.
- Protect the root zone of established trees during construction to avoid damage.
- Evaluate the site for sensitive habitats before construction and protect accordingly.
- Use a weather-based irrigation controller to override the watering schedule in rainy conditions to limit water use.
- Do not install overhead irrigation within 2' of hardscape surfaces to limit runoff and overspray.
- Test the irrigation system seasonally to detect leaks or clogged drip emitters.
- Grade the site in such a way to avoid surface water runoff into the storm water system or storm drain.
- Install only permeable path and patio surfaces to decrease runoff and allow percolation and groundwater recharge.