

# Creating a Native Plant Garden



Biodiversity, pollinators, birds, bees, and beauty all come together in the native plant garden. And as with all gardens, planning goes a long way towards success. Whether adding just a few plants to an existing landscape, or starting a whole native garden, we suggest following these tips. For more on why plant natives, we recommend the CNPS website and the work of Douglas Tallamy:

<https://homegrownnationalpark.org/tallamys-hub-1>

**Design First, then Plant:** Think about your goals, how you will use the space, and where your hardscape is (paths, bird feeders, sitting areas, etc.) You can get assistance from your native plant nursery, local landscapers and designers, the library, and online at [www.cnps.org/gardening](http://www.cnps.org/gardening) For book ideas take a look at: [www.northcoastcnps.org](http://www.northcoastcnps.org)



**So Many Choices.** Flowering, leafy, tall, short, spreading or stays put, there are so many choices! The nursery volunteers can point you in the right direction for the spot you're thinking of. For inspired lists of plants by zip code, soil and site look at: [www.calscape.org](http://www.calscape.org) Also check our plant lists at: [www.northcoastcnps.org](http://www.northcoastcnps.org)

**Know what your plants like:** Shade or sun? Moist soil or dry and well drained? Native plants can do ok without their preferred conditions, but they will thrive with what they like. Space likeminded plants near each other, but far enough apart to support their natural growth habit. For planting instructions check out [www.calscape.org](http://www.calscape.org)



**Irrigation:** Many people think that native plants don't need water, but in fact they all need some, especially the first warm season. First understand the watering needs of your plants and then make a watering plan. For irrigation tips take a look at: [www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org)

**Prepare the soil before planting:** It's not as fun to prep soil as it is to plant, but preparation goes a long way towards lower maintenance needs down the road. Whether you're digging a hole for one or taking out a lawn with cardboard and mulch, instructions are at your fingertips at [Planting Guide \(calscape.org\)](http://www.calscape.org) and [www.cnps.org/gardening/prepping-and-planting](http://www.cnps.org/gardening/prepping-and-planting)



**Ready, Set, Weed:** Weeding can be tiresome or a meditation: However you approach it, pull weeds out by the roots and place where they will not regrow. Seed heads go in the trash. So sadly some weeds go deep and pulling is only cosmetic; horsetail, some thistles and bindweed come to mind. For more help with your weed problems try: [InvasiveWeedsofHumboldtCounty.pdf \(cal-ipc.org\)](http://www.cal-ipc.org), along with [www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org) and <http://ipm.ucanr.edu/>

**Know your neighbors:** Deer, gophers, voles, moles, cats, dogs, slugs, snails, racoons, and skunks can all be devastating in the newly planted garden. Fencing them out, fencing the plants in, or picking them off one at a time (snails and slugs!) all can work. But if you'd like more ideas about these critters and other related problems, check out Integrated Pest Management at UC Davis: <http://ipm.ucanr.edu/> and [www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org)

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