

Recommended Native Riparian Plants for the Corte Madera Creek Watershed

The following plants are native to eastern Marin, and when planted in appropriate locations, should thrive without any maintenance after the first couple of years of periodic watering and weed control. In addition to salinity and shade considerations, some plants require moister soil than others, so should be located lower on the creek bank. Heavy soil can be fatal to some plants. Native plants have their own beauty, help to stabilize creek banks, and will attract birds and butterflies to your area. When ordering plants from a nursery, be sure to use the scientific names in addition to the common names. It may be hard to find suppliers for some of these plants.

In each group below, the list begins with larger species and progresses to smaller ones.

TIDAL WATERWAYS:

At high water level: alkali heath (*Frankenia salina*), gumplant (*Grindelia humilis*), pickleweed (*Salicornia virginica*), fat hen (*Atriplex triangularis*), saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*).

On levee slope: coast live-oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), coyote-brush, (*Baccharis pilularis*, upright form), California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*).

On adjacent filled marshland: buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), blue elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*), sticky monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*), in addition to those listed for levees.

FRESHWATER CREEKS:

Shade: giant chain fern (*Woodwardia fimbriata*), lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*), sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*), whiteroot sedge (*Carex barbarae*), vanilla grass (*Hierochloa occidentalis*), redwood sorrel (*Oxalis oregana*), redwood violet (*Viola sempervirens*), wild ginger (*Asarum caudatum*), and wake-robin (*Trillium ovatum*).

Note: coast redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) and California bay (*Umbellularia californica*) are relatively fast-growing trees native to this area, and may be planted in the shade. When mature, they can create deep shade which tends to limit understory plantings to those listed in this group.

Semi-shade: valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), coast live-oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), Oregon oak (*Quercus garryana*), white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*), black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*), Oregon ash (*Fraxinus latifolia*), bigleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), box elder (*Acer negundo californica*), buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), blue elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*), osoberry (*Oemleria cerasiformis*), rose-bay (*Rhododendron macrophyllum*), western azalea (*Rhododendron occidentale*), coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californica*), hazel (*Corylus cornuta californica*), creek dogwood (*Cornus sericea occidentalis*), twinberry (*Lonicera involucrata*), ninebark (*Physocarpus capitatus*), flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum*), California gooseberry (*Ribes californica*), oregon grape (*Mahonia nervosa*), snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus* var. *laevigatus*), thimbleberry (*Rubus parviflorus*), wood rose (*Rosa gymnocarpa*), California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*), and California pipevine (*Aristolochia californica*), reed grass (*Calamagrostis nutkaensis*), rush (*Juncus patens*, *Juncus effusus*), in addition to those listed for shade. Spice bush (*Calycanthus occidentalis*) is an attractive additional shrub, native to Napa, but not to Marin.

Relatively open areas: yellow willow (*Salix lucida lasiandra*), red willow (*Salix laevigata*), gray willow (*Salix exigua*), arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), creambush (*Holodiscus discolor*), California rose (*Rosa californica*), and honeysuckle (*Lonicera hispidula*), California fescue (*Festuca californica*), in addition to those listed for semi-shade.

Nurseries selling native plants (retail and wholesale):

California Flora Nursery, Fulton (707) 528-8813
CNPS, Marin Chapter, plant sales (415) 332-4117
Circuit Rider Productions, Windsor (707) 838-6641
Fairfax Lumber, Fairfax (415) 578-4430
Mostly Natives, Tomales (707) 878-2009
North Coast Native Nursery, Petaluma (707) 769-1213

O'Donnell's, Fairfax 453-0372
San Francisco Botanical Garden plant sales (415) 662-1316
Sunnyside Nursery, San Anselmo (415) 453-2701
The Watershed Nursery, Richmond (510) 234-2222
Yerba Buena Nursery, Woodside (650) 851-1668