

Exploring our Urban Understory

Sisyrinchium bellum

Common name(s): Blue Eyed Grass

HEIGHT: 1 feet.

WIDTH: 2 feet.



Family:

Iridaceae

Origin:

California

Water Needs:

Low

Flower/Foliage:

1 inch blue, lavender, purple flowers and grass like leaves

Habitat:

Open spaces, fields, grassy areas, woodlands

Grows all over the west coast

Maintenance:

Low, likes full sun

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Primula hendersonii

Common name(s): Henderson's Shooting Star, Mosquito Bills, Sailor Caps

HEIGHT: 1 feet.

WIDTH: 3 in.



Family:

Primulaceae

Origin:

Western North America

Water Needs:

Dry summer, moist winter/spring

Flower/Foliage:

Magenta, white, or lavender tiny flowers, no more than 1 inch wide. No other primula blooms before May or grows below 3,500 ft elevation

Habitat:

Yellow Pine Forest, Foothill Woodland, Chaparral, Valley Grassland.

Maintenance:

Average, performs best in full sun to part shade



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Adelina grande

Common name(s): Pacific Hound's Tongue

HEIGHT: 1 - 2 feet.

WIDTH: 1 - 2 feet.



Family:

Borage

Origin:

Western North America

Water Needs:

Infrequent

Flower/Foliage:

Blue, purple

Tiny Flowers, no more than 1 in.

Habitat:

Northern Oak Woodland, Mixed Evergreen Forest, Yellow Pine Forest

Maintenance:

Low, likes full sun



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Lupinus bicolor

Common name(s): Miniature lupines

HEIGHT: 1 feet.

WIDTH: 1 feet.



Family:

Fabaceae

Origin:

Western North America

Water Needs:

Infrequent

Flower/Foliage:

Blue, lavender, purple, white
Flower is up to 3 inches tall

Habitat:

Dry meadows, prairies, grasslands, open or
disturbed places

Maintenance:

Low



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Lupinus hirsutissimus

Common name(s): Stinging Lupine

HEIGHT: 3 feet.

WIDTH: 1 feet.



Family:

Fabaceae

Origin:

California

Water Needs:

Low

Flower/Foliage:

Pink, purple

Flowers no greater than 2 inches

Habitat:

Chaparral or coastal sage scrub, dry rocky slopes or flats, recently burned areas

Maintenance:

Low, likes full sun to light shade



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Eschscholzia californica

Common name(s): California Poppy

HEIGHT: Up to 2 feet.

WIDTH: 1 - 2 feet.



Family:

Papaveraceae

Origin:

Western US

California State Flower!

Water Needs:

Very low

Flower/Foliage:

Orange, yellow

Petals only open in sunny weather.

Habitat:

Open, grassy spaces

Maintenance:

Very low and easy to grow

Likes full sun

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Calystegia macrostegia

Common name(s): Coast Morning Glory / False Bindweed / Island Morning Glory

HEIGHT: 1 feet.

WIDTH: 20 - 30 feet.



Family:

Convolvulaceae

Flower/Foliage:

Pink, white

Origin:

California

Habitat:

Dry, rocky places (often coastal)
Found in coastal habitats, typically
between Monterey and Baja California

Water Needs:

Very low

Maintenance:

Low, does best in afternoon shade in
interior heat, or full sun near coast.



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Ranunculus californicus

Common name(s): California Buttercup

HEIGHT: 0.5 - 2.5 feet.

WIDTH: 6 in.



Family:

Ranunculaceae

Origin:

West Coast USA

Water Needs:

Moderate

Flower/Foliage:

Yellow

Are edible when cooked! Can be grounded and used in bread

Habitat:

All but desert

Maintenance:

Low, likes full sun to light shade

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Solanum xanti

Common name(s): Purple Nightshade

HEIGHT: 2 - 4 feet.

WIDTH: 2 - 4 feet.



Family:

Solanaceae

Origin:

Western US

Water Needs:

Very Low

Flower/Foliage:

Small purple/blue 1 in flowers
Poisonous, especially the fruit

Habitat:

Foothills, canyons, valleys

Maintenance:

Moderate, likes full sun to part shade



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Amsinckia tessellata

Common name(s): Fiddlenecks - Devil's Lettuce

HEIGHT: 2 - 4 feet.

WIDTH: 1 - 1.5 feet.



Family:

Boraginaceae

Flower/Foliage:

Small, yellow, orange

Origin:

California, Eastern Washington,
Idaho

Habitat:

Chaparral, Oak Woodlands, Temperate
Valleys, Desert

Water Needs:

Low

Maintenance:

Low

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Artemisia californica

Common name(s): California Sagebrush / Coastal Sagebrush

HEIGHT: 1 - 8 feet.

WIDTH: 4 feet.



Family:

Asteraceae

Origin:

California, can be found along most any trail here

Water Needs:

Very low

Flower/Foliage:

Cream, white, yellow

Known for its aroma, which is especially prominent after it rains

Habitat:

Coastal scrub, chaparral, dry foothills, on slopes

Maintenance:

Low, likes full sun

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Lupinus microcarpus

Common name(s): Chick Lupine

HEIGHT: 0.3 - 2.6 feet.

WIDTH: 1 feet.



Family:

Fabaceae

Flower/Foliage:

White, pink, yellow, purple

Origin:

Western North America, Chile,
Argentina

Habitat:

Open or disturbed places

Water Needs:

Very low

Maintenance:

Low, likes full sun

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Dichelostemma capitatum

Common name(s): Blue Dicks / Purplehead / Brodiaea

HEIGHT: 1.5 - 2 feet.

WIDTH: 2 in.



Family:

Liliaceae

Flower/Foliage:

Lavender, blue

Origin:

Arizona, California, Utah, New Mexico, Northern Mexico

Habitat:

Meadows, grassy, chaparral, coastal scrub, rocky slopes, canyons, desert transition

Water Needs:

Low

Do well in disturbed environments; common as a post-fire succession species

Maintenance:

Moderate, prefers full sun



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Diplacus aurantiacus

Common name(s): Orange Bush Monkeyflower / Sticky Monkey Flower

HEIGHT: 3.9 - 5 feet.

WIDTH: 5 feet.



Family:

Phrymaceae

Flower/Foliage:

Orange, yellow

Origin:

Southwest North America

Habitat:

Chaparral, Woods, on slopes and banks

Water Needs:

Very low

Maintenance:

Moderate, prefers full sun but will tolerate part or even full shade



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Salvia rosmarinus

Common name(s): Rosemary

HEIGHT: 2 - 4 feet.

WIDTH: 4 - 6 feet.



Family:

Lamiaceae

Origin:

Northern Africa, Western
Asia, Southern Europe

Water Needs:

Low to medium

Flower/Foliage:

White, pale blue
Known for its aromatic scent

Habitat:

Sunny, well-draining, rocky spots

Maintenance:

Medium - tolerates heavy pruning to stay neat
Likes full sun exposure



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Vicia villosa

Common name(s): Hairy Vetch / Fodder Vetch / Winter Vetch

HEIGHT: 2 - 5 feet.

WIDTH: spreading



Family:

Fabaceae

Flower/Foliage:

Blue to purple/white

Origin:

Europe, Western Asia
While beautiful, this plant is actually invasive here in California!

Habitat:

Cool, temperate conditions, sandy/clay soils
Grows at low elevations, prefers damp and shady areas

Water Needs:

Low

Maintenance:

High, often used as a cover crop, can be invasive
Likes full or partial sun



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Vinca major

Common name(s): Greater Periwinkle / Bigleaf Periwinkle

HEIGHT: 1 feet.

WIDTH: 3 feet.



Family:

Apocynaceae

Flower/Foliage:

Lavender, blue

Origin:

Europe and Western Asia

Habitat:

Many - invasive in California!

Water Needs:

Low

Maintenance:

Moderate, prefers partial shade



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Genista monspessulana

Common name(s): French broom / Montpellier Broom / Cape Broom

HEIGHT: 5 - 8 feet.

WIDTH: 3 - 8 feet.



Family:

Fabaceae

Flower/Foliage:

Yellow

Origin:

Native to the Mediterranean

Habitat:

Many - very invasive, displacing natives and reproduces quickly

Can live up to 20 years

Water Needs:

Low

Maintenance:

Moderate, prefers full sun but can tolerate some shade

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