

FAQ: What are low-water and drought-resistant plants?

Plants that are adapted to long, dry summers and short, rainy winters are called “Mediterranean-zone” plants. These include plants that are native to California, as well as those that originated in southern Europe, South America, and other “Mediterranean” climates. These plants don’t need much water in the summer and have thrived in water-scarce conditions for thousands of years.

The plants listed below are appropriate for California’s climate and use less water than what you may already have in your garden. This list is a good representation of low-water-consuming plants that are easily available. Check with your local nursery for its suggestions about what is best suited to your area.

Perennials, Shrubs, and Ornamental Grasses

- Agave species (Agave)
- Alyogyne huegelii (Blue Hibiscus)
- Arctostaphylos species (Manzanita)
- Artemisia species (Sagebrush)
- Ceanothus species (California Lilac)
- Chamelaucium uncinatum (Geraldton Waxflower)
- Cistus species (Rockrose)
- Dudleya species (Live Forever)
- Echeveria species (Hens-and-Chickens)
- Encelia californica (California Encelia)
- Galvezia speciosa (Island Bush Snapdragon)
- Grevillea species (Grevillea)
- Heteromeles arbutifolia (Toyon)
- Lavandula species (Lavender)
- Leucophyllum species (Texas Ranger)
- Lobelia laxiflora (Mexican Bush Lobelia)
- Mahonia nevinii (Nevin’s Barberry)
- Melalueca nesophila (Pink Melaleuca)
- Myrtus communis (Common Myrtle)
- Nassella species (Needlegrass)
- Penstemon species (Penstemon)
- Rhus species (Sumac)
- Rosmarinus officinalis (Rosemary)
- Salvia, selected species (Sage)
- Sisyrinchium bellum (Blue-Eyed Grass)
- Tapetes lemmonii (Copper Canyon Daisy)
- Verbena, selected species (Verbena)

Trees

- *Arbutus unedo* (Strawberry Tree)
- *Chitalpa tashkentensis* (Chitalpa)
- *Geijera parviflora* (Australian Willow)
- *Laurus nobilis* (Sweet Bay)
- *Olea europaea* 'Swan Hill' (Swan Hill Olive)
- *Pinus eldarica* (Afghan Pine)
- *Prosopis chilensis* (Chilean Mesquite)
- *Quercus agrifolia* (Coast Live Oak)
- *Rhus lancea* (African Sumac)

Vines

- *Bougainvillea* species (Bougainvillea)
- *Macfadyena unguis-cati* (Cat's Claw)
- *Vitis californica* (California Wild Grape)

Turf

- *Buchloe dactyloides* (Buffalograss)
- *Cynodon dactylon* (Hybrid Bermudagrass)
- *Zoysia* 'Victoria' (Victoria Zoysiagrass)

Ground Cover

- *Acacia redolens* 'Desert Carpet'
- (Dwarf Prostrate Acacia)
- *Achillea* species (Yarrow)
- *Baccharis* species (Coyote Brush)
- *Cotoneaster dammeri* (Bearberry Cotoneaster)
- *Lampranthus* species (Ice Plant)
- *Lantana montevidensis* (Trailing Lantana)
- *Myoporum parvifolium* (Myoporum)
- *Sedum* species (Stonecrop)