



Recommended Plants for Sonoma County To Use As Ground Covers

The selection of plants on this list is not intended to be exhaustive. There are many more plants that can be—and are—grown successfully in Sonoma County. The selected plants are likely to be the most successful. Our 30 very favorites, which we call the Sonoma Superstars, are marked with a star in the left margin.

This list includes plants classified as ground covers or that may be used as such. These plants provide wide coverage but vary in height.

See our glossary of plant list descriptors at [http address] for explanations of these descriptors.

- ★ = Sonoma Superstars
- s = small
- m = medium
- g = large
- H = high water
- M = moderate water
- L = low water
- V = very low water
- S = full sun
- A = afternoon shade
- P = part shade
- F = full shade
- N = CA native
- W = wildlife habitat
- B = beneficial insects
- E = evergreen
- D = deer resistant
- C = erosion control
- T = frost tender
- X = poisonous
- 1 = for ground covers
- 2 = for dry shade
- 3 = for small gardens
- 4 = for Garden Sense

Shrubs

| | | | | | |
|---|-------|---|-------|-------------|---------|
| ★ Arctostaphylos spp (manzanita) | s m g | L | S A P | N W B E D C | 1 2 3 4 |
| <i>Plants vary from creeping groundcovers to treelike shrubs. A. densiflora 'Howard McMinn' is one of the most garden tolerant manzanitas and is native to Sonoma County. Remove dead or twiggy branches.</i> | | | | | |
| Rosmarinus officinalis (rosemary) | s m | L | S A P | W B E D C | 1 3 4 |
| <i>Varies from groundcover to upright or trailing shrubs.</i> | | | | | |

Ground Covers

| | | | | | |
|---|-------|-----|---------|-------------|---------|
| ★ Arctostaphylos uva-ursi and cvs (kinnikinnick) | s m g | L | S A P | N W B E D C | 1 2 4 |
| <i>Prostrate, spreading and rooting as it grows. Slow to establish. Recommended varieties are 'Radiant' and 'Point Reyes'. 'Point Reyes' is more tolerant of heat and drought. Remove dead or twiggy interior branches.</i> | | | | | |
| Baccharis pilularis cvs (dwarf coyote brush) | s m | L | S A P | N W B E D C | 1 2 4 |
| <i>'Pigeon Point' and 'Twin Peaks' are recommended varieties. Shear in early spring before new growth appears. Cut out old arching branches.</i> | | | | | |
| ★ Ceanothus spp and cvs (California lilac) | m g | M L | S A P | N W B E D C | 1 4 |
| <i>The most drought tolerant and deer resistant have small, dark green, crinkly leaves. C. griseus 'Yankee Point' is a superior form; 'Diamond Heights' is lime green and variegated. Neither of these is deer resistant. Remove dead or twiggy branches.</i> | | | | | |
| Ceratostigma plumbaginoides (dwarf plumbago) | s m g | L | S A P | W D | 1 2 4 |
| <i>Spreads by underground runners. Generally dies back in winter.</i> | | | | | |
| Chamaemelum nobile (chamomile) | s | L | S A P | W E D | 1 3 4 |
| <i>Sheer as a lawn substitute; 'Treneague' requires no mowing.</i> | | | | | |
| Cotoneaster dammeri cvs | m g | L | S | W E D C | X 1 4 |
| <i>Superior groundcover forms include 'Lowfast' and 'Coral Beauty'.</i> | | | | | |
| ★ Dymondia margaretae (dymondia) | s | L | S A P F | E D | 1 2 3 4 |
| <i>Excellent walk-on lawn substitute.</i> | | | | | |
| Euonymus fortunei (winter creeper) | m g | M | S A P | E C | X 1 3 |
| <i>Many cultivars available.</i> | | | | | |

★ = Sonoma Superstars H = high water S = full sun N = CA native D = deer resistant 1 = for ground covers
s = small M = moderate water A = afternoon shade W = wildlife habitat C = erosion control 2 = for dry shade
m = medium L = low water P = part shade B = beneficial insects T = frost tender 3 = for small gardens
g = large V = very low water F = full shade E = evergreen X = poisonous 4 = for Garden Sense

| | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-------|---------|---------|---------|
| Grevillea lanigera 'Coastal Gem' (grevillea 'Coastal Gem') <i>Avoid phosphorus fertilizers.</i> | m | L | S A P | W | E D | 1 2 4 |
| Grindelia stricta [G. arenicola] (Pacific grindelia, gumplant) | s | L | S A P | N | B E D T | 1 3 4 |
| Lupinus albifrons collinus (prostrate lupine) | s | V | S | N | B E D C | 1 3 4 |
| Mahonia repens [Berberis aquifolium var repens] (Oregon grape) <i>Needs part shade in hottest locations.</i> | s m | L | S A P | N W | E D C | 1 2 3 4 |
| Myoporum parvifolium (prostrate myoporum) | m g | L | S | | E D C T | 1 4 |
| Ophiopogon japonicus nanus (dwarf mondo grass) <i>Full sun only in coastal regions.</i> | s | M | A P F | | E D C | 1 3 |
| Rosmarinus officinalis Prostratusø (prostrate rosemary) | g | L | S | W B E | D C | 1 4 |
| Rubus calycinoides (trailing thimbleberry) <i>Requires little water in shade.</i> | m | M | S A P | W | E D C | 1 2 3 |
| Salvia Bee's Blissø (bee's bliss sage) | m | L | S | N W B E | D C | 1 4 |
| Salvia spathacea (hummingbird sage) | m | L | A P | N W B | D C | 1 2 4 |
| Satureja [Clinopodium] douglasii (yerba buena) | s | L | P F | N W B E | D C | 1 2 3 4 |
| Teucrium cossonii majoricum (Majorcan germander) | s | V | S | | B E D | 1 3 4 |
| ★ Thymus praecox (creeping thyme) <i>Excellent as a walkable groundcover.</i> | s | L | S A P | | B E D | 1 4 |
| ★ Verbena spp (verbena) | s | M L | S | | B E D | 1 3 4 |

Vines

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---------|-------|-----|---------|
| Lonicera hispidula (western or California honeysuckle) <i>Can be grown as a ground cover,</i> | m | L | S A P F | N W B | C | 1 2 3 4 |
| Trachelospermum jasminoides (star jasmine) <i>Can be used as a ground cover.</i> | g | M | S A P | | E C | 1 |

Perennials

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|-------|---|-------|-------|
| Fragaria vesca (woodland strawberry) <i>Can be used as a groundcover.</i> | s | M | S A P | N | E D | 1 3 |
| Thymus spp (thyme) <i>Genus includes ground-covers and upright or mounding perennials.</i> | s | L | S A P | | B E D | 1 2 3 |