

# PLANTING A

# HEALTHY GARDEN



Planting a variety of flowering plants that bloom throughout the spring and summer gives you a beautiful garden, and can also reduce the number of garden pests. Many commonly available plants—including drought tolerant plants—attract beneficial insects that feed on pests you don't want around!

## ATTRACT BENEFICIAL INSECTS, AND KEEP THEM AROUND

Beneficial insects are the ultimate non-toxic pest control. And they do all of the work for you! Soldier beetles, syrphid flies, and ladybugs and their larvae attack aphids. Lacewings will go after just about any insect pest.



Lady beetle (ladybug)



Syrphid fly



Green lacewing



Soldier beetle

Use pesticides only as a last resort. If you must use a pesticide, choose the least toxic product designed to kill the specific target pest. Bees and other beneficial insects are often more sensitive to pesticides than the pests you want to kill. What's worse, after pesticide use has eliminated the beneficial insects, the pests are free to multiply... and you'll need to spray again.

## GOOD GARDEN CHOICES

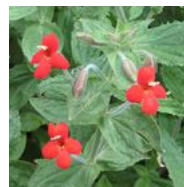
These plants are rich in pollen and nectar, and will attract beneficial insects and pollinators—like bees and butterflies.



Baby blue eyes



Ceanothus



Monkey flower



Rudbeckia



Tidy-tips

Aster species

Baby blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*) **N**

Calendula species

Ceanothus species **N, D**

Calif. poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*) **N, D**

Chervil (*Anthriscus cerefolium*)

Chrysanthemum species

Cosmos species

Coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*) **N, D**

Dill (*Anethum graveolens*)

Elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*, also known as *Sambucus nigra*) **N, D**

Fleabane (*Erigeron*)

Lavender (*Lavandula* species) **D**

Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* species) **N, D**

Marguerite daisies (*Argyranthemum* species)

Monkey flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus* and *cardinalis*) **N**

Native buckwheat (*Eriogonum* species) **N**

Pincushion flower (*Scabiosa* species)

Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) **D**

Rudbeckia species **D**

Sunflower (*Helianthus* species)

Tidy-tips (*Layia platyglossa*) **N**

Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) **N, D**

Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) **N**

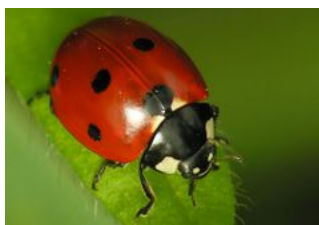
**N=Native D=Drought-tolerant**



Choose eco-friendly products for your home and garden. Look for this symbol before you buy.

Learn what beneficial insects look like in their various stages of development. People often kill juvenile ladybugs and other good bugs by mistake.

Go to [www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/NE/index.html](http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/NE/index.html) to see what beneficial insects look like as "babies" and adults.



Adult ladybug



Juvenile ladybug (larva)

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT PLANT

Plant for success! Many of the plants that attract beneficial insects are California natives that should do well here. It's important to learn about your garden—what type of soil you have and how much sunlight you get throughout the day and during different seasons—and choose plants that fit in.

- Read the label! Most nurseries provide detailed information about plants' blooming habits and water and sunlight requirements. For plants that are pest-prone, such as hollyhocks and fuchsias, look for varieties described as pest- and disease-resistant.
- Before you buy a plant, check the roots. Gently pull or knock the plant out of its pot to make sure it's not root-bound. Don't buy a plant with roots that are kinked, growing out of the bottom of the container, or surrounding the root ball. Also, don't buy a plant if its root crown (the area where the roots meet the stem or trunk) is soft or rotten.

Talk to your local garden club, and check out these resources to help you choose the right plants:

- University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners [mg.ucanr.edu/Become\\_a\\_Master\\_Gardener/Counties](http://mg.ucanr.edu/Become_a_Master_Gardener/Counties)
- California Native Plant Society [www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org)
- Search the web for *waterwise plants* to find a list for your area.

## CARING FOR YOUR PLANTS

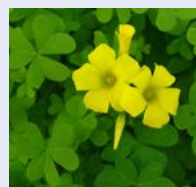
Knowing your plant's needs for water, pruning, and fertilizer will help you keep your garden healthy.

Even drought-tolerant plants need regular water to become established. During their first two growing seasons, water new plants deeply twice a week so that their roots will grow down into the soil. You may have to water young plants more often during hot weather.

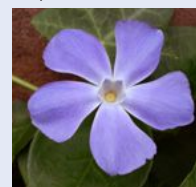
- Don't pile soil around the plant any higher than the root crown. Don't plant in a depression that will allow water to wash soil down around the stem or trunk and cover the root crown. A continually moist root crown can cause rot.
- Cover bare soil with mulch. Mulch conserves soil moisture so plants don't dry out as quickly. A four-inch layer of mulch will prevent most annual weeds from growing, and any weeds that do sprout can be pulled out more easily.
- Use a mulch of leaves, bark, or composted manure and/or garden waste to provide organic matter to the soil and a slow, steady flow of nutrients to plants. Make sure not to cover the crown of the plant.
- If you need to fertilize, use organic, slow-release fertilizers.
- Learn how and when to prune your plants, and don't prune more than recommended. Severe pruning can damage the plant and encourage pests and diseases.

## AVOID INVASIVES!

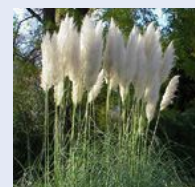
Beware of invasive species like these:



Sour grass  
*Oxalis pes-caprae*



Periwinkle  
*Vinca major*



Pampas grass  
*Cortaderia selloana*

For a list of more plants to avoid, go to the California Invasive Plant Council Website: [www.cal-ipc.org/paf/](http://www.cal-ipc.org/paf/)



[WWW.OURWATEROURWORLD.ORG](http://WWW.OURWATEROURWORLD.ORG)

Common home and garden pesticides are found in stormwater runoff, treated wastewater, and in local waterways, sometimes at levels that can harm sensitive aquatic life. **Our Water Our World** is a joint effort by water pollution prevention agencies, participating retail stores, and pesticide distributors and manufacturers—working together to reduce the risks associated with pesticide use.

**Our Water Our World** fact sheets and store displays educate residents about less-toxic pest management. For the rest of the series of fact sheets, visit [www.OurWaterOurWorld.org](http://www.OurWaterOurWorld.org). Look for the *Eco-friendly* tag next to less-toxic products in participating stores and nurseries. See the *Pesticides and Water Quality* fact sheet for information on active ingredients in common pesticides that may cause water quality problems.

Pest control strategies and methods described in this publication are consistent with integrated pest management (IPM) concepts, and are based on scientific studies and tests in actual home and garden settings. Use suggested products according to label directions and dispose of unwanted or leftover pesticides at a household hazardous waste collection facility or event. For more information on pesticide disposal, visit [www.earth911.com](http://www.earth911.com). No endorsement of specific brand name products is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products that are not mentioned.

For more information, contact:

Bio-Integral Resource Center (BIRC), 510.524.2567, [www.birc.org](http://www.birc.org)  
University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners in your area  
University of California IPM website, [www.ipm.ucanr.edu](http://www.ipm.ucanr.edu)