

County of San Mateo - Recommended Species Palette

Native trees in San Mateo County offer significant environmental benefits due to their co-evolution with local flora and fauna. Prioritizing native trees is crucial, and when one is removed, it should be replaced with a similar native species, unless site conditions prevent planting.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Tree Stature	Foliage Type ¹	Mature height (ft)	Canopy spread at maturity (ft)	Planting area (ft)	Protected Indigenous Tree	Overhead utility friendly	Water Use Rating ²	Appropriate Planting Habitat					On DPW Plant List
										Wetland/Riparian	Oak woodland	Forest	Coastal	Urban/Street Tree	
California Native Trees															
4 ft Planter Well or Similar Small Space															
California lilac	<i>Ceanothus thyrsiflorus</i>	Small	E	15	20	4			Low			✓	✓		
Manzanita	<i>Arctostaphylos manzanita</i>	Small	E	15	10	4		✓	Very low			✓	✓	✓	
Western redbud	<i>Cercis occidentalis</i>	Small	D	25	20	4			Very low			✓	✓		
4-7 ft Parkway															
Arroyo willow	<i>Salix lasiolepis</i>	Medium	D	40	25	4-7		✓	High	✓			✓		
California buckeye	<i>Aesculus californica</i>	Medium	D	25	20-30	4-7		✓	Very low		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Pinyon pine	<i>Pinus edulis</i>	Medium	C	40	25	4-7			Low			✓	✓	✓	
Toyon	<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>	Small	E	25	15	4-7			Low		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Engelmann oak	<i>Quercus engelmannii</i>	Large	E	70	80	4-7			Low			✓	✓	✓	✓
Wax myrtle	<i>Morella californica</i>	Small-Medium	E	30	30	4-7			Moderate			✓			
8+ ft Parkway, Yard, or Park															
Black oak	<i>Quercus kelloggii</i>	Large	D	70	50	>8		✓	Low		✓				
Blue oak	<i>Quercus douglasii</i>	Large	E	70	50	>8		✓	Very low		✓	✓	✓		
Canyon live oak	<i>Quercus chrysolepis</i>	Large	E	70	30	>8		✓	Very low		✓	✓	✓		
Coast live oak	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	Large	E	70	70	>8		✓	Very low		✓	✓	✓		✓
Coast redwood	<i>Sequoia sempervirens</i>	Very Large	E	200	100	>8		✓	High	✓		✓	✓		
Interior live oak	<i>Quercus wislizeni</i>	Large	E	70	80	>8			Very low		✓				
Oregon white oak	<i>Quercus garryana</i>	Very Large	D	90	60	>8		✓	Low		✓	✓	✓		
Pacific madrone	<i>Arbutus menziesii</i>	Large	E	70	50	>8		✓	Low						
Red willow	<i>Salix laevigata</i>	Medium	D	50	35	>8		✓	High						
Valley oak	<i>Quercus lobata</i>	Large	D	70	50	>8		✓	Low		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Non-Native Trees															
4 ft Planter Well or Similar Small Space															
Dragon tree	<i>Dracaena draco</i>	Small	E	30	15	4		✓	Low			✓	✓	✓	
Sonoran palo verde	<i>Parkinsonia praecox</i>	Small	D	30	20	4			Low				✓	✓	
Tea tree	<i>Leptospermum petersonii</i>	Small	E	20	15	4		✓	Low					✓	
Weeping bottlebrush	<i>Callistemon viminalis</i>	Small	E	20	20	4		✓	Low				✓	✓	
Yaupon holly	<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>	Small	E	20	15	4		✓	Low			✓	✓	✓	
4-7 ft Parkway															
Lemon bottlebrush	<i>Callistemon citrinus</i>	Small	E	25	25	4-7			Low					✓	✓
Eastern Redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	Medium	D	40	30	4-7			Medium					✓	✓
Brisbane box	<i>Lophostemon confertus</i>	Large	E	50	30	4-7			Low				✓	✓	✓
Water Gum	<i>Tristaniaopsis laurina</i>	Medium	E	40	25	4-7			Low					✓	✓
Snow-in-Summer	<i>Melaleuca linariifolia</i>	Medium	E	30	25	4-7			Low					✓	✓
Cork oak	<i>Quercus suber</i>	Large	E	70	70	4-7			Low					✓	✓
Abyssinian Coral Tree	<i>Erythrina abyssinica</i>	Medium	D	45	35	4-7			Medium					✓	✓
Chinese pistache	<i>Pistacia chinensis</i>	Large	D	40	35	4-7			Low					✓	✓
American smoke tree	<i>Cotinus obovatus</i>	Small	D	25	25	4-7		✓	Low					✓	✓
Compton oak	<i>Quercus x comptoniae</i>	Large	D	60	30	4-7			Medium					✓	✓
Evergreen maple	<i>Acer pauciflorum</i>	Medium	E	35	20	4-7			Low				✓	✓	
Hedge maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>	Medium	D	35	35	4-7			Low					✓	✓
Jacaranda	<i>Jacaranda mimosifolia</i>	Medium	D/E	50	30	4-7			Low			✓		✓	✓
Purple-leaf plum	<i>Prunus cerasifera</i>	Small	D	25	20	4-7		✓	Low					✓	✓
8+ ft Parkway, Yard, or Park															
Island oak	<i>Quercus tomentella</i>	Large	E	50	35	>8			Low					✓	✓
Holly oak	<i>Quercus ilex</i>	Large	E	70	55	>8			Medium					✓	✓
Raywood Ash	<i>Fraxinus angustifolia 'Raywood'</i>	Large	D	50	25	>8			Medium					✓	✓
Mexican blue oak	<i>Quercus oblongifolia</i>	Large	D	60	30	>8			Medium					✓	✓
Netleaf oak	<i>Quercus rugosa</i>	Large	E	60+E52	30	>8			Low					✓	✓
Redbay	<i>Persea barbania</i>	Large	E	50	50	>8			Low					✓	✓
Silver linden	<i>Tilia tomentosa</i>	Large	D	50	30	>8			Low					✓	✓
Silverleaf oak	<i>Quercus hypoleucoides</i>	Large	E	80	25	>8			Low					✓	✓
Sour gum	<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>	Large	D	50	30	>8			Low					✓	✓
Southern red oak	<i>Quercus falcata</i>	Large	D	80	50	>8			Low					✓	✓

¹C: Coniferous, D: Deciduous (seasonally drops leaves), E: Evergreen

²Water use rating according to WUCOLS (<https://ccuh.ucdavis.edu/wucols>) and Selectree (SelectTree, UFEI, 1995-2023, Cal Poly State University, San Luis Obispo) instead of WUCOLS.

Do Not Plant List

Common Name	Scientific Name	Justification
Tree of Heaven	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Rapid growth and ability to outcompete native plants.
Blue Gum Eucalyptus	<i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>	Highly flammable and can dominate landscapes, reducing biodiversity.
Blackwood Acacia	<i>Acacia melanoxylon</i>	Spreads aggressively and displaces native vegetation.
Sydney Golden Wattle	<i>Acacia longifolia</i>	Forms problematic thickets, outcompeting native species.
Silver Wattle	<i>Acacia dealbata</i>	Rapid spread and ability to outcompete native vegetation.
Paradox Acacia	<i>Acacia paradoxa</i>	Disrupts local ecosystems by forming dense thickets.
Brazilian Pepper Tree	<i>Schinus terebinthifolia</i>	Forms dense stands that displace native vegetation and alter habitats.
Chinaberry	<i>Melia azedarach</i>	Rapid growth and ability to form dense thickets, disrupting ecosystems.
Silk Tree	<i>Albizia julibrissin</i>	Spreads rapidly and outcompetes native species.
Norway Maple	<i>Acer platanoides</i>	Dense canopy shades out native plants and alters soil conditions.
Princess Tree	<i>Paulownia tomentosa</i>	Fast-growing and can dominate landscapes, displacing native vegetation.
White Mulberry	<i>Morus alba</i>	Hybridizes with native red mulberry, leading to genetic pollution.
Golden Rain Tree	<i>Koeleruteria paniculata</i>	Spreads aggressively and establishes in natural areas, outcompeting natives.
Paper Mulberry	<i>Broussonetia papyrifera</i>	Spreads aggressively and displaces native species, particularly in disturbed areas.
Callery Pear	<i>Pyrus Calleryana</i>	Spreads aggressively, displacing native species