

GOING NATIVE (PLANTS)

Now that the house is in pretty good shape, it is time to start covering all of the bare earth around the house with plants. When we worked earlier with our landscape architect, Amy Cupples-Rubiano, she had put together a beautiful design with native plants and different climate zones in the yard. For the open, sunny, unirrigated areas the plan was for "open grasslands" – native grass and wildflower meadows that would go green in the winter rains, burst into color in the spring and then become a dormant golden brown during the summer. For the planters nearer the house on the sunny south side that tends to get very hot from both direct sun and reflection off a sunny wall, the plan was for chaparral species like manzanita. The shaded areas around the fruit trees would be filled with more shaded grassland species, the front yard would have redwood understory plants in around our huge Deodara tree in the front yard (and our new tiny redwood seedlings that we hope will grow up to join our neighbor's redwood grove). The final "climate zones" are the greywater wetlands with rushes and bog plants that will live with their roots down in the greywater gravel leach field, and then the orchard which is watered from the output from the greywater wetlands.

It will be a multi year process getting all of these plants established, but I have started with a combination of broadcasting seeds in the meadows (seeds available from [Larner Seeds](#), a specialty native plant seed company), starting the seeds that need more care in [littlegreenhouse trays](#), and buying container plants from our local [Summerwinds](#) nursery that has a California Natives section, and, of course, the famous [Yerba Buena](#) nursery where huge numbers of native plants are available, and ordering bare root fruit trees. Where possible, I tried seeds, as container plants run \$5-\$15 per container, and I have a LOT of bare earth to cover.



Seedlings in the "jiffy" planter

There will be updates as I go along, but the following plant species are the ones going into the various parts of the garden:

Open Grassland Grasses (all from seeds, sowed directly) :

1. California Fescue (*Festuca californica*)
2. Blue Fescue (*Festuca idahoensis*)
3. Purple needlegrass (*Nassella pulchra*)

Open Grassland Wildflowers (all from seeds, sowed directly):

1. California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*)
2. Blue Thimble flowers (*Gilia capitata*)
3. Tidy tips (*Layia platyglossa*)
4. Sky Lupine (*Lupinus nanus*)
5. plus "hills of California" wildflower mix from Larner seeds

Shaded Grasslands (all from seeds, grown as seedlings)

1. California Fescue (*Festuca californica*)
2. Douglas Iris (*Iris douglasiana*)
3. Pt. Reyes Checkerbloom (*Sidalcea calycosa rizomata*)
4. Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*)
5. Yellow-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium californicum*)

Chaparral garden (all container plants except as noted)

1. Marina Madrone Tree (*Arbutus 'marina'*)
2. Western Redbud Tree (*Cercis occidentalis*)
3. Manzanita densiflora (*Arctostaphylos densiflora "sentinel"*)
4. Wood's Manzanita ground cover (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi 'wood's compact'*)
5. Western Mock-Orange (*Philadelphus Lewisii*)
6. Coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californica 'Eve Case'*)
7. Collingwood rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)
8. Dark Star wild lilac (*Ceanothus 'dark star'*)
9. Blue blossom wild lilac (*Ceanothus thrysiflorus*) (attempting to grow from seeds, not successful yet)
10. White sage (*Salvia apiana*) (from seeds, grown as seedlings)



Manzanitas waiting for their planter to be made

Redwood understory (all container plants except as noted)

1. Western columbine (*aquilegia formosa*) (seeds, grown as seedlings)
2. Western sword fern (*polystichum munitum*)
3. coral bells (*heuchera*)
4. Redwood sorrel (*oxalis oregana*)
5. Wild Ginger (*asarum caudatum*)
6. Coastal strawberry (*fragaria chiloensis*)
7. Shaggy Alum root (*heuchera pilosissima*) (seeds, broadcast... we'll see)
8. Evergreen Huckleberry (*vaccinium ovatum*)



Planting "redwood understory" with redwood bark around it

Wetlands (some container, some seed, but I had a lot of difficulty finding suitable plants!)

1. Common horsetail (*equisetum arvense*)
2. California rush (*juncus patens*)
3. Slender sedge (*carex praegracilis*) (seed, grown as seedlings with some sown directly)
4. Bull clover (*trifolium fucatum*) (seed, to be sown directly)

Orchard and fruit shrubs/vines (greywater irrigated)

1. Pomegranate
2. 3-in-1 cherry tree (has bing, ranier and one other type grafted in)
3. 4-in-1 pluot tree (flavor king, flavor supreme, dapple dandy and ?)
4. Snow queen Nectarine
5. Blenheim apricot
6. Pinkerton avocado
7. Kiwi vines
8. Varigated Eureka lemon
9. Key lime
10. 6 kinds of blueberries (jewel, blueray, misty, star, sharpblue and an old one I had)
11. A heritage red raspberry (*rubus idaeus*)
12. and a thornless blackberry (*rubus ulmifolius*)



our little fruit trees with their various grafted limbs tagged

Source : <http://www.301monroe.com/?p=866>