

Use of Local Native Plant Species



Native wetland freshwater marsh and wet meadow plants of the Santa Clara Valley

Botanical Name	Common Name	Wildlife Value	Wetland Status ¹
Alisma triviale	Northern water plantain	Low to fair for insects	OBL
Bolboschoenus maritimus	Alakali bulrush	High	OBL
Carex barbarae	Valley sedge	High	FAC
Carex serratodens	Bifid sedge	Good to high	FACW
Eleocharis macrostachya	Common spikerush	Good to high	OBL
Epilobium ciliatum	Northern willow herb	Fair to good, flowers	FACW
Hordeum brachyantherum	Meadow barley	Fair to good	FACW
Juncus balticus	Wire rush	High	FACW
Juncus effusus	Common rush	High	FACW
Juncus patens	Spreading rush	High	FACW
Juncus xiphioides	Iris leaved rush	Good to high	OBL
Mimulus guttatus	Yellow monkeyflower	Fair, flowers	OBL
Nasturtium officinale	Watercress	Fair	OBL
Paspalum distichum	Knot grass	Fair to good	FACW
Sparganium eurycarpum	Broadfruit bur reed	High	OBL
Schoenoplectus acutus	Hardstem bulrush	High	OBL
Schoenoplectus californicus	California bulrush	High	OBL
Scirpus microcarpus	Small fruited bulrush	Good	OBL
Stachys pycnantha	Shortspike hedgenettle	Low to fair, flowers	FACW
Typha latifolia *	Broadleaf cattail*	Fair to good *	OBL*

*Cattails can outcompete other plants, forming monotypic stands (reduced biodiversity, see [Bansal et al. 2019](#) and Snyder 1993). They have been described as native invasive, but are essential for some species, such as red-winged and tricolored blackbirds. Narrowleaf cattail ([Typha angustifolia](#)) is classified as non-native in California and another cattail species ([T. domingensis](#)) also grows in Santa Clara County marshes.

Click on the wildlife value link for the plant to see a description of the plants' habitat value for animals or insects, or search here for more information on each plant species from the [USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service](#)

Click on the botanical name for more information on each plant from [CalFlora](#)

Wetlands are among the most important and productive ecosystems on Earth (Mitsch and Gosselink 2007). Creeks, rivers, ponds, lakes, reservoirs, riparian and wetland habitats are protected by the United States [Army Corps of Engineers](#) with oversight by the United States [Environmental Protection Agency](#), [California Department of Fish and Wildlife](#), [State Water Resources Control Boards](#), and [Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency](#). Contact the agencies about any activities in creeks, rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, including their banks and floodplains, riparian and wetland habitats.

¹ Wetland status categories for vascular plants (United States Army Corps of Engineers 2018) show the likelihood of the plant growing in wetlands. This gives an idea of how much water, type of habitat, and position on the bank or slope the plant prefers. Species listed as OBL, FACW, and FAC are considered wetland plants.

Wetland status category	Symbol	Probability of occurrence in wetlands
Obligate	OBL	Greater than 99 %
Facultative Wetland	FACW	67 - 99 %
Facultative	FAC	34 - 66 %
Facultative Upland	FACU	1 - 33 %
Upland	UPL	Less than 1 %
No Indicator	NI	Insufficient information exists to assign indicator status
Not Listed	NL	Plants generally not considered to be found in wetlands and, therefore, not listed

The three facultative categories are subdivided by (+) and (-) modifiers to show a tendency toward either wetter (+) or drier (-) conditions.

* Please consult native plant experts or Valley Water about planting cattails (*Typha* spp.) about potential to establish dense monotypic stands. Wetlands dominated by cattails and cattail stands are valuable habitat for mammals, waterfowl, blackbirds, and other marsh birds.

For information on growing plants that are pest and pathogen free, click here: [Phytophthora species in CA native habitats](#)

California Native Plant Society (CNPS) [Guidelines For Landscaping To Protect Native Vegetation From Genetic Degradation](#)

Like CNPS, the Santa Clara Valley Water District strives to protect, conserve, maintain, and reestablish watershed specific native plants. If natural revegetation from surrounding areas or the native soil seed bank is inadequate, actively assist revegetation by planting seeds or plants grown from seeds, cuttings or divisions collected locally. If planting is necessary, please use plant materials collected from the project site first, adjacent or nearby sites second, and the same watershed at the same approximate elevation and slope aspect as the project site.

Please talk to your local native plant and nursery experts! The local CNPS Santa Clara Chapter's website is <http://www.cnps-scv.org/>.

Click here for information on the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) [California Native Plant Program](#)

For useful advice, read the [Water Resources Protection Collaborative Guidelines and Standards for Land Use Near Streams: A Manual of Tools, Standards, and Procedures to Protect Streams and Streamside Resource in Santa Clara County](#), and the [Water Resources Protection Manual](#).

Information on historic riparian habitats can be found in the San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI) historical ecology reports. Look for the Santa Clara Valley and Santa Clara County at: <http://www.sfei.org/he/HE-publications>

References

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