

Nifty 50

Plants for WaterSmart Landscapes



Dudleya



Lavandula



A LOCAL GUIDE FOR THE SAN DIEGO REGION



BROUGHT TO YOU BY



San Diego County Water Authority

GET INSPIRED

The Nifty 50 plants are attractive, non-invasive, easy to maintain, long-term performers and are water-wise once established. You can find them at local nurseries.

For a list of environmentally friendly gardens around San Diego County, visit [SDCWA.org](https://www.sdcwa.org). These gardens are the perfect places to get ideas for how you can create your own beautiful, low-water landscape.

Learn how to enhance your garden with WaterSmart plants at [SDCWA.org/conservation](https://www.sdcwa.org/conservation)



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These Nifty 50 plants have been selected because they are attractive, non-invasive, easy to maintain, long-term performers, typically available in retail nurseries, scaled for residential landscapes and once established, water-wise.

These climate-appropriate plants are excellent pollinators for birds, bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. Choosing WaterSmart plants that thrive in San Diego's climate zones create more beautiful and sustainable landscapes for generations to come. Work with your local nursery and landscape professionals to find the right plants for your local climate.

Enhance your garden with WaterSmart plants that reflect the beauty of San Diego's natural environment.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, [SDCWA.ORG/CONSERVATION](https://www.sdcwa.org/conservation)

Garden Like a Pro

01 SELECT

Choose WaterSmart plants that flower and provide food for wildlife. Prioritize native plant species that thrive in our climate and are less susceptible to drought, pests and disease.



02 RESEARCH

Plant with the full-grown plant in mind — a one gallon plant can grow into a tree!

03 WATER BEFORE SUNRISE

Soil absorbs water best when the temperature, evaporation rate, and wind are lower. Keep leaves dry overnight to minimize pests and diseases.

04 WATER DEEPLY

To establish deep roots and happy plants, water deeply once a week or less rather than frequent shallow watering.

05 CYCLE AND SOAK

For clay soil and slopes, set your timer to water in short bursts (30 to 60 minutes apart). This allows time for water to soak into the soil instead of running off.

06 CARE

Baby your new plants. New plants need extra water during their establishment period, which lasts about the first 12 months. Water often for the first few weeks, water regularly in the first summer and then taper off.



10 STEPS TO SAVE WATER AND CREATE A HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE GARDEN

07 HYDROZONE YOUR PLANTS

Put plants with similar needs for water and sun on the same irrigation valve.

08 DRIP IRRIGATION

If you have shrubs, consider replacing your sprinkler system with drip irrigation, which will direct water only where needed.

09 MULCH

Layer 3" of mulch over all planting beds, surrounding every plant without touching the stems or trunks. Mulch retains soil moisture while it "feeds" the soil.



10 LAWN

If you decide to keep some grass, make sure to aerate it periodically and adjust the sprinkler heads to minimize runoff and overspray. Set the lawnmower higher, as tall lawns use less water than short lawns.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

on sustainable landscaping, free landscape classes, rebates and other programs, visit [sdcwa.org/conservation](https://www.sdcwa.org/conservation).

For more info on the benefits and water use of Native Plants visit [CalScape.org](https://www.CalScape.org).

TIPS FOR A GREEN THUMB

- Group plants together on the same valve according to plant type, water needs, and sun exposure. This strategy, called "hydrozoning," is important for water conservation and healthy plant growth.
- In addition, design your landscape to capture and hold rainwater runoff using downspouts, rain barrels, swales, and dry stream beds.

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Plants for WaterSmart Landscapes

The Nifty 50 plants you see here thrive in San Diego's climate. They're attractive, non-invasive, easy to maintain, and last for a long time. They're low or very low water users and you can typically find them in retail nurseries. Best of all, **the plants invite pollinators such as birds, bees, hummingbirds, and butterflies into your garden!** This is just a small sampling of WaterSmart plants. Work with your local nursery or landscape professional to find the right plants for your garden.



SMALL PLANTS

Desert Globemallow



Sphaeralcea Ambigua

Blue Grama



Bouteloua Gracilis

Deer Grass



Muhlenbergia Rigens

Red Buckwheat



Eriogonum Grande var. Rubescens

Boxwood Beauty Natal Plum



Carissa 'Boxwood Beauty'

Lavender



Lavandula (many kinds)

De La Mina Verbena



Verbena Lilacina 'De La Mina'

Little John Bottle Brush



Melaleuca Citrina

MEDIUM PLANTS

Palmer's Indian Mallow



Abutilon Palmeri

Rosemary



Salvia Rosmarinus

Baja Fairy Duster



Calliandra Californica

California Lilac



Ceanothus (many kinds)

Cleveland Sage



Salvia Clevelandii

Bush Germander



Teucrium Fruticans

Lion's Tail



Leonotis Leonurus

White Sage



Salvia Apiana

LARGE PLANTS

Conebush



Leucadendron (many kinds)

Toyon



Heteromeles Arbutifolia

Manzanita



Arctostaphylos (many kinds)

Lilac Vine



Hardenbergia Violacea

Roger's Red Grape



Vitis 'Roger's Red'

Bougainvillea



Bougainvillea (many kinds)

Mexican Bush Sage



Salvia Leucantha

Blue Gem™ Westringia



Westringia 'Blue Gem'

Grevillea



Grevillea (many kinds)

Arabian Lilac



Vitex Trifolia 'Purpurea'

SUCCULENTS

Live Forever



Dudleya (many kinds)

Rock Purslane



Cistanthe Grandiflora

Red Yucca



Hesperaloe Parviflora

Hens-and-Chicks



Echeveria (many kinds)

Aloe



Aloe (many kinds)

Aeonium



Aeonium (many kinds)

TREES

Tecate Cypress



Hesperocyparis Forbesii

Catalina Cherry



Prunus Ilicifolia/ Lyonii (many kinds)

Chitalpa



Chitalpa Tashkentensis

Western Redbud



Cercis Occidentalis

Sweet Bay



Laurus Nobilis

Desert Willow



Chilopsis Linearis

Desert Museum Palo Verde



Parkinsonia x 'Desert Museum'

Oak



Quercus (many kinds)

Strawberry Tree



Abrutus 'Marina'

GROUND COVER

Creeping Rosemary



Rosmarinus Officinalis 'Prostratus'

Bee's Bliss Sage



Salvia 'Bee's Bliss'

Yarrow



Achillea Millefolium

Kurapia



Lippia Nodiflora

Trailing Lantana



Lantana Hybrids

Seaside Daisy



Erigeron Glaucus

Silver Carpet



Dymondia Margaretae

South African Daisy



Arctotis (many kinds)

Dwarf Coyote Bus



Baccharis Pilularis 'Pigeon Point'