

Shrubs

for San Joaquin Valley and Foothill
Landscapes



Recommended by
UC Master Gardeners of Tulare & Kings Counties
2007



INTRODUCTION

The shrubs that are featured in this booklet are proven winners in our local area, covering valley and foothill areas of Kings and Tulare Counties. We have featured shrubs that we have had success with in our own gardens and that we find of particular value in the landscape. We realize that this is only a partial list of available plants and there are many new varieties of shrubs that are being developed and released by the California nursery industry each year. We hope that the information provided will help you in selecting and caring for these wonderful components of our landscapes, SHRUBS.

Compiled by ANN BELAU



CAROL ISKENDERIAN

NORM CARPENTER

KAYE CANNAROZZI

MARY LOU CHASE

Master Gardeners of Tulare & Kings Counties

Edited by Michelle Le Strange, Master Gardener Advisor

With contributions from

Pam Geisel, California Master Gardener Program Coordinator

University of California Cooperative Extension

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GENUS*	Common Name	Botanical Family
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RHODODENDRON	Azalea	Ericaceae
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ROSA	Rose	Rosaceae
SALIX	Dappled Willow	Salicaceae
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TIBOUCHINA	Princess Flower	Melastomataceae
VIBURNUM	Viburnum	Caprifoliaceae
WEIGELA	Weigela	Caprifoliaceae
<i>Xylosma congestum</i>	Xylosma	Flacourtiaceae

* Occasionally a particular species (designated in italics) is listed.

Shrub Selection for Valley & Foothill Gardens

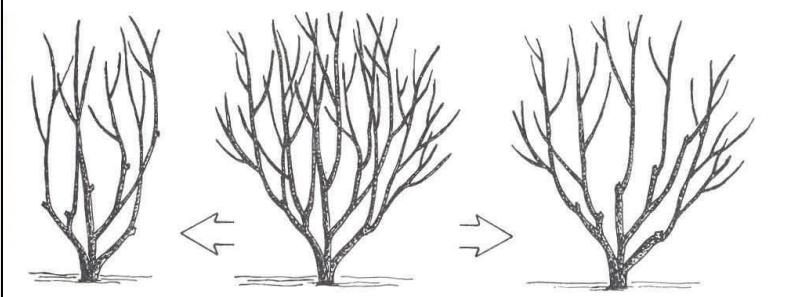
Pamela Geisel and Michelle Le Strange, UC Master Gardener Program

Shrubs are major components of most landscapes. They are used to screen, direct traffic, as accents, for wildlife habitats, as windbreaks, as fill and foundational plantings and for color and texture in the landscape. How we use shrubs should dictate the species selection for any given landscape. Before purchasing any shrubs, decide the ultimate use and make sure that the chosen plants fit the needs. Also make sure that cultural practices are appropriate for the species. For example, it isn't uncommon to see flowering quince sheared into a boxy shape resulting in an odd flowering habit associated with the incorrect pruning method for the species.

Consideration should also be given to the need for color. There are many deciduous and evergreen shrubs that contribute not only flower color but also berry, bark, and foliage color to the landscape. For example, leaves with white or yellow variegation can brighten up a dark corner. Spring flowering shrubs such as hydrangea contribute large showy flowers in spring. Evergreen shrubs such as juniper come in a variety of foliage colors and contribute significantly to a garden in winter.

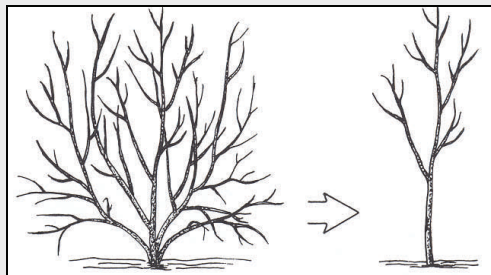
Shrub form is also important. Shrubs may be columnar, round headed, spreading and prostrate, or pyramidal. These shapes can add dimension and movement to a landscape. The columnar shape of a juniper repeated down a long driveway can add a sense of drama to the approach of your home.

The key to successful shrub selection however, is ultimate size. Shrubs are a permanent part of the landscape. They should be enjoyed for many years with little maintenance. We often plant shrubs (or small trees) that are too large for the site and as such must be frequently pruned to keep them confined. It is important that the ultimate size of the shrub be taken into consideration prior to planting to avoid frequent maintenance requirements.



Tips on Pruning Shrubs

A shrub (center) can be pruned so that it becomes more upright (left) or more spreading (right) in habit. Short stubs have been left to indicate where the cuts have been made.



An overgrown shrub can be pruned into an attractive small tree.

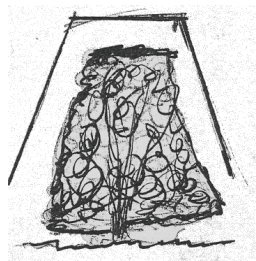
from "Arboriculture: Integrated Management of Landscape Trees, Shrubs, and Vines. 2004 edition by Richard W. Harris, James R. Clark, Nelda Matheny.

Pruning Tips for Evergreen Hedges

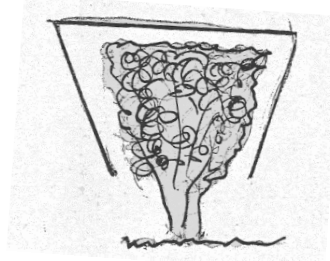
Pamela Geisel and Michelle Le Strange, UC Master Gardener Program

Start training your hedges very early. A well-shaped hedge will have been trained regularly and carefully from planting throughout the life of the hedge. Start with nursery stock that has multiple stems if possible. Cut plants back 6-8 inches when planting to induce low branching and more “bushy” growth. Late in the fall or before bud break in the spring, prune off half of the new growth. The following year trim that off by half again.

In the 3rd season, begin to shape the hedge. Know what sort of shape you want from your hedge at planting time. If you want a solid screen from top to bottom, it is important to keep the bottom wider than the top. Otherwise the top foliage will shade out the lower foliage leaving an open hedge at the base.

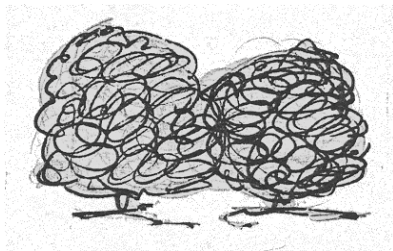


Correct hedging technique

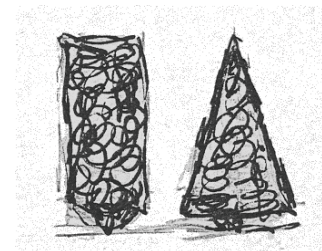


Incorrect

Many people hedge plants so that they have a flat top. This usually isn't successful and is a shape that is difficult to maintain without very frequent hedging. This is also true of hedges that have straight lines instead of peaked or rounded form. It is best to allow the shrubs to grow in a rounded shape, which is what nature intended. This shape will also require much less trimming.



Rounded forms need less frequent trimming



Straight lines require more frequent trimming

Trimming or shearing frequency will depend on the form and species of hedge. Generally, they should be sheared before the growth exceeds 1 foot. Boxwoods and other slow growing hedges will require pruning before that to maintain a clean shape and neat appearance.

If hedges have grown out of bounds and have become severely overgrown, it may be better to replace the hedge than try to rejuvenate them. Evergreen shrubs are less tolerant of the severe pruning that is usually required to get them back into shape. If some rejuvenation is possible, start by cutting the shrubs back each year by no more than 20-30% of the overall growth until the hedge is at the desired height and shape. Shear frequently to keep plants full. Deciduous shrubs can be cut back to a foot below the desired height in the spring before the new leaves appear. Then trim regularly for the next few years until the hedge has grown into the desired shape and fullness.

ABUTILON

(uh-BEW-tuh-lon)

**Flowering Maple, Chinese
Bellflower, Chinese Lantern**

Malvaceae

8–10' tall and wide

Partial shade

Moderate to regular water

Evergreen



Broad maple-like leaves, some variegated. Drooping bell-like flowers appear in white, yellow, pink, orange, or red. While the main bloom season is spring, many cultivars bloom year-round. Nice container plant, a few are striking as hanging plants. Fairly rich soil, good drainage is needed. Pinching branch tips will control size, make it bushier. This is a charming plant, easy to grow if you have the right place.

Tip: Abutilon makes a fine central valley substitute for cool-weather loving fuchsias. They are available in a wide variety of colors.

AUCUBA

(aw-KU-ba) or (AWK-yoo-bah)

Japanese Aucuba

Aucuba japonica

Cornaceae

**6-10' tall and as wide but easily trimmed
to reduce size**

Full shade in hot valley areas

Regular irrigation

Evergreen



Toothed leaves 3 to 8" long with differing leaf form, can be green or variegated by species. Used well in shady areas (protected from hot valley sun), several variegated leaf varieties add interest in these darker spots, good patio plant set in tubs. Small maroon flowers turn to berry clusters in late fall to winter. If a full crop is desired, both sexes must be planted. Green-leafed 'Rozannie' is self-fruiting and will produce a full crop without a pollinizer. Grows at a moderate rate to full size.

Tip: Keep humus mulch or compost several inches away from the plant to avoid fungus. Plant supplies great foliage for the shaded patio garden.

BERBERIS

(BUR-buh-ris)

Barberry

Berberidaceae

4-6' tall and wide. Smaller varieties available.

Full sun to light shade

Moderate to regular water, well drained

Evergreen, semi-evergreen, deciduous



Dense, spiny-stemmed plants that require no more than ordinary garden care. Normal growth is attractive. Cut out oldest wood each year and prune to shape and desired size after bloom for evergreen, late in the dormant season for deciduous kinds. Can be used for hedges and barriers such as under windows. Most have yellow flowers followed by red, bluish-black, or blue berries. Birds like the berries. The Golden Ring variety has purple leaves with a thin green or golden green border; Rose Glow has new foliage marbled bronze red and pinkish white, darkening with age. Tolerates harsh climate and most soil extremes.

Tip: For a splash of bright yellow to enhance your landscape, consider planting Golden Barberry (*Berberis 'Aurea'*). It is beautiful planted near burgundy colored plants.

BUDDLEJA

(BUD-lee-uh)

Butterfly Bush

Buddlejaceae

5-12' tall, can be trained to various shapes, arching branches

Full sun or light shade

Moderate to regular water, well drained slightly alkaline soil, many varieties

Evergreen, semi-evergreen, or deciduous



Many selections are available and all are valued for their flower color, fragrance, or both. *B. davidii* is described here. Semi-evergreen, fast growth each spring. Long, narrow 4 to 12" leaves, dark green above, felted beneath. Flowers are slender clusters of small blooms 6 – 12" long, various colors, light fragrance. Prune before spring growth begins. Easy to grow.

Tip: Almost like a summer lilac and it's called "butterfly bush" for a good reason. Both butterflies and hummingbirds enjoy it.

BUXUS

Boxwood

Buxaceae

**Size varies, dwarf, 4-5' tall.
Common, 15-20' tall and wide**

Sun or shade

Regular water

Evergreen



The most commonly used shrub for edging and hedges in landscapes. Can be trimmed in many shapes and forms and grown in containers or in the ground. Small glossy leaves are dense and hide pruning cuts. Flowers are inconspicuous. Tolerates dry heat and alkaline soil, but not intense heat or saline soils. Slow and easy to grow, but often neglected. A little extra care leads to improved visual quality. Watch for buildup of scale and mites.

Tip: Who said they must be hedged? They are a beautiful soft and billowing shrub when naturally left alone.

CALLISTEMON

(ka-lis-STEE-muhn)

Bottlebrush

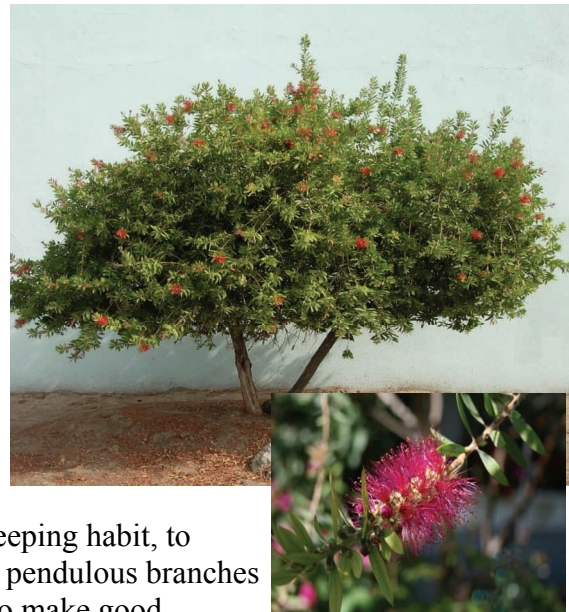
Myrtaceae

2-15' tall depending upon species

Full sun

Moderate to regular water

Evergreen



Growth habits from low-growing with a creeping habit, to upright and tree-like. Some have weeping, pendulous branches and others are dense and compact enough to make good informal hedges. Willow-like evergreen leaves 2-4" long are accented with red, pink or mauve flowers throughout the year. Flowers are round spikes of bristle-like stamens which account for the name bottlebrush. Flowers are followed by woody, bead-like capsules that seem pressed into the bark. The flowers are extremely attractive to hummingbirds and bees. *Callistemon viminalis* 'Little John' is a superior dwarf form, 3-4' tall and wide, with dense leafy growth and deep red flowers in spring through fall.

Tip: The blossoms are a favorite of hummingbirds and bees the year round.

CAMELLIA

(kam-EEL-ya)

Camellia

Theaceae

C. japonica: 6–12' tall & wide, partial shade, blooms Feb. through May.

C. sasanqua: 1½' tall to 6' wide to 12' tall & wide, some tolerate sun, smaller flowers bloom profusely in fall and into winter.

Partial sun or shade

Evergreen, semi-glossy leaves



Needs moist, rich, well-drained acid soil, protection from very hot sun and drying winds. Fertilize with acid plant food, do not over fertilize. Keep roots covered with thick layer of organic mulch. Use as specimen plants or shrub borders. Prune lightly after bloom.

Tip: Camellias planted on the north side of houses require less water and suffer less heat and sun stress than when planted on a south or west exposure. Extend bloom time to 6 months or more, by planting a variety of both *C. sasanqua* and *C. japonica* camellias.

Carpenteria californica

(kar-pen-ter-EE-a kal-if-or-nick-uh)

Bush Anemone

Philadelphaceae

8' tall 10' wide

Sun to partial shade

Little to moderate water

Evergreen



California native plant from the foothills of the southern Sierra Nevada in the Central Valley. Attractive formal evergreen shrub. Leaves are long and dark above and whitish beneath. Late spring and summer clusters of fragrant yellow centered white flowers appearing at branch ends. This is a tough shrub. It does well in ordinary gardens and resists oak root fungus. Prune to shape after flowering.

Tip: Although a foothill native, they accept ordinary garden conditions of zone 9. If pruning is necessary to shape or restrain growth, do so after flowering.

CEANOTHUS

(see-uh-NO-thuhs)

Wild Lilac

Rhamnaceae

7-9' tall

Full sun

Little water once established

Evergreen



In the wild, plants grow on rocky slopes. They need plenty of light and well draining soil in gardens. Flowers bloom in spring and colors range from white through all shades of blue. Generally evergreen, plant habits vary from low and spreading to compact and bushy. They may live up to 10 years but spread their wealth to bees and butterflies. Some watering once established depending on the variety. Small dark green leathery leaves with profuse powder blue flowers. The harbingers of spring.

Tip: A favorite of native plant enthusiasts. Once established, most require little, and in some varieties, no water. Popular Ceanothus varieties include Concha, Ray Hartman and Snowflurry.

CHAENOMELES

(kee-no-MAY-leez)

Flowering Quince

Rosaceae

**Tall species are 6' tall or more,
low ones are 2-3' high**

Full sun

Moderate to regular water

Deciduous



Among the first to bloom each year. Some are thorny, a few are thornless, some have small fruit, all are good as hedges and barriers. Easy to grow, tolerates light to heavy soil. Prune to shape or to limit growth at any time. New growth will bear next year's flowers. Attracts birds. Blooms on small spurs along stems, white and many shades of pink, orange, and red. Leaves are reddish when young, then shiny green.

Tip: Branches can be cut in early spring and forced into bloom in a vase of water indoors.

CHAMAECYPARIS

(kam-uh-SIP-uh-ris)

Sawara False Cypress

Chamaecyparis pisifera

Cupressaceae

6-8' tall, very slow growing

Partial shade

Regular water

Evergreen



C. pisifera 'Boulevard' (cypress)

Makes an excellent focal point or specimen plant because the silvery blue-green and soft, short needle-like foliage offers such a lovely color contrast next to green or yellow-leaved plants. Pinch out or cut back tips of new growth to control size and shape, but do not cut into old leafless wood. Needs regular water, good drainage and protection from strong winds. A good entranceway or foundation shrub.

Tip: The lovely blue-gray of *Chamaecyparis* 'Boulevard' is striking with *Hakonechloa macra* 'Aureola' grass planted in front of it.

COLEONEMA

(koh-lee-oh-NEE-muh)

Breath of Heaven

Rutaceae

3-5' tall, 3-5' wide.

Sun to partial shade

Regular water

Evergreen



C. pulchellum (Pink Breath of Heaven, Pink Diosma)

A medium sized upright and dense, billowy evergreen shrub with aromatic soft needle-like (heather-like) leaves. The small star-like pink flowers are held at the ends of the slender branches and bloom spring through fall. A nice plant used along pathways where brushing the foliage brings out its fragrance. Requires regular watering and good drainage. Care, must be taken to not over water. Avoid heavy soils unless planted on a slope. Hardy to 20°F.

Tip: The delicate, wispy branches of Breath of Heaven make attractive fillers in flower arrangements.

CORNUS

(KOR-nus)

REDTWIG DOGWOOD, RED-OSIER DOGWOOD

Cornus stolonifera (C. sericea)

Cornaceae

Rapid growth to 7-9' tall x 12' wide

Full sun or light shade

Regular water

Deciduous

The redbud dogwood is grown for its brilliant red fall foliage and winter twigs. It can be cut back severely in winter to control size. Spreads by creeping underground stems and rooting branches. May be kept smaller by cutting spreading roots with a spade, and trimming branches that touch the ground. Oval, 1½" to 2½" long, deep green leaves. Small creamy white flowers in 2 inch clusters appear in summer, followed by white or bluish fruits. Great space filler and nice winter interest.

Tip: Cut back about one-third of old wood in late winter or early spring to keep bright red stems coming back.



COTINUS

(koe-TYE-nuhs)

Smoke tree

Anacardiaceae

12–15' tall

Full sun

Moderate water

Deciduous shrub or tree



Unusual and colorful shrub-tree creating broad, urn-shaped mass usually as wide as high. Naturally multi-stemmed, but can be trained to a single trunk. Common name derived from dramatic puffs of “smoke” from fading flowers making stalks clothed in a profusion of fuzzy lavender-pink hairs.

Plants are at their best under stress in poor or rocky soil. In cultivated gardens, give them fast drainage and avoid overly wet conditions. Resistant to oak root fungus. Often they are more like big shrubs. They do like water but it must drain quickly.

Tip: Give Cotinus a little filtered shade during the heat of the summer for best color and plant health. Natural growth is an interesting shape.

COTONEASTER

(koe-toe-nee-AS-tuhr)

Cotoneaster

Rosaceae

Varies from 25' tall and wide to low growing ground covers

Full sun for most, some varieties need partial shade

Little to moderate water once established

Evergreen, semi-evergreen, deciduous

Small oval leaves vary in shades of green, some turn red in the fall; large varieties look best with natural fountain growth pattern. Can be cut and thinned to shape. Tiny flowers are white or pinkish followed by orange or red berries that birds love. The small varieties can be used in rock gardens or against walls. Prefers well drained slightly alkaline soil.

Tip: The smaller, compact Cotoneasters are very graceful and pretty. The large varieties grow very long fountain branches and need a lot of room to grow naturally and can get quite leggy.



ESCALLONIA

(es-kuh-LOW-nee-uh)

Escallonia

Escalloniaceae

3-15' tall & wide, depends on variety

Partial shade

Regular water

Evergreen



Escallonia exoniensis 'Fradesii' PINK PRINCESS ESCALLONIA

Native to South America, clean looking, glossy leaves with nearly year-round rich, rosy-red flower clusters on this upright, compact shrub. Moderate grower to 5 to 6 ft. tall and wide. May be kept smaller with pinching and it responds well to shearing. Prune by cutting to the base, or shape into multi-trunk trees. Although drought tolerant, the plants look better with regular water. Great for foundation planting along fences and walls, or as individual specimens. May freeze at 15°, but will come back.

Tip: To insure an abundance of delightful flower clusters, feed with an all purpose fertilizer in spring before new growth emerges.

EUONYMUS

(yoo-ON-i-mus)

Euonymus japonicus

Evergreen Euonymus

Celastraceae

8-10' tall and 6' wide although often trimmed to be shorter

Sunny locations, tolerates some shade

Regular water

Evergreen



Glossy, deep green leaves 1-2½" long, variegated forms as shown above are widely used. Flowers are inconspicuous. Best in full sun with air circulation to reduce powdery mildew. Used in hedges or as individual specimen in garden, in planting strips (along the house or fence line). Susceptible to some insects. Many species available with other forms, leaf variegations and sizes.

Tip: Emerald Gold Euonymus is fun to watch all year round as its colors change from green to pinkish leaves as the season progresses from spring to winter.

EURYOPS

(yoor-RY-ops)

Euryops daisy

Asteraceae (Compositae)

2-6' tall depending upon species

Full sun

Little to regular water

Evergreen



Species: *E. acraeus* or *E. pectinatus*

Daisy-like yellow flowers and finely divided leaves on a mounded shrub. Good container plant. Most common is *E. pectinatus* which has green leaves and a long flowering season. Makes a good filler, background plant, or low screen. *E. acraeus* has silver-green leaves and blooms in May and June. Cut back in late spring or early summer to maintain compactness.

Tip: For best effect, hide the legs of the Euryops daisy by planting other flowering plants, such as blue Ageratum and Purple Wave Petunias at the base.

FREMONTODENDRON

(free-mont-oh-DEN-dron)

Flannel Bush

Serculiaceae

20' tall and 12' wide

Full sun

Drought tolerant occasional water

Evergreen



Fast growing evergreen, with dark, leathery leaves above and felt-like undersides. Showy saucer-shaped yellow blossoms. Shallow rooted so sometimes needs to be staked while young. Pinch young growth to encourage branching. Truly one of the beauties of the foothills. Blooms are so profuse, it can appear to be on fire.

Tip: For a less profuse but longer bloom time, try *Fremontia mexicanum* with its brilliant display of orange-tinted yellow blooms

GARDENIA

(gar-DEEN-ee-uh)

Gardenia

Rubiaceae

4–6' tall and wide, miniature 6–12" tall and wide

Full sun in eastern exposure, otherwise partial shade

Regular to ample water

Evergreen



Needs rich, fast draining soil with plenty of organic matter, fertilize with acid plant food. Prune to keep shape, remove dead wood and spent flowers. White, fragrant flowers bloom spring and summer, and display shiny dark green leaves. Pretty shrub year around. Several varieties, large and miniature.

Tip: Gardenias planted in too much shade will not bloom. They do well with only late afternoon shade.

HIBISCUS

(hye-BIS-kuhs)

Rose-of-Sharon, Shrub Althaea

Hibiscus syriacus

Malvaceae

6-10' tall

Full sun or partial shade

Regular water

Deciduous



This shrub produces 2-4" single, double, or semi-double flowers throughout summer. Flower colors are white, pink, red, blue, and violet bi-colors often with a conspicuous red to purple throat. Foliage is light green. Plant likes moist, well-drained soil. Good late-blooming color. Can be kept short for hedge, or used as specimen plant. A beautiful plant in moonlight as well as daylight.

HYDRANGEA

(hye-DRAIN-jee-uh)

Bigleaf Hydrangea, Garden Hydrangea, Mop-head Hydrangea

Hydrangea macrophylla

Hydrangeaceae (Saxifragaceae)

4-8' tall and as wide

Morning sun, afternoon shade

Regular water to heavy water in summer

Deciduous



Rounded, fast-growing, shrub with thick, shiny coarsely toothed leaves. Blooms in summer with pink, red, or blue flowers in big, long lasting clusters. Prune as needed to control form after bloom. Lace cap hydrangea, features a cluster of small fertile flowers surrounded by a ring of big sterile ones.

Oakleaf Hydrangea (*H. quercifolia*) is a rounded shrub to 6' tall x 8' wide. Leaves resemble oaks, turn bronze or crimson in fall, elongated clusters of white flowers in late spring and early summer, turn purple with age. Some varieties described: 'Snow Queen' has larger flower clusters, 'Snowflake' bears double flowers, 'Vaughn's Lillie' has extraordinary full heads of white flowers. Prune after bloom.

Tip: Cut flowers for drying in late summer or fall when heads have matured and developed a papery consistency.

ILEX

(EYE-lex)

Holly

Aquifoliaceae

6–8' tall and wide, or trained as tree

15–40' tall and 10–25' wide

Partial shade in hot valley locations

Regular water

Evergreen, deciduous

Most varieties need rich, slightly acid soil with good drainage. All do better with a mulch to deter weeds and keep soil cool and moist. Sun is best for compact growth and good berries, but performs best in Tulare/Kings counties with partial late afternoon shade. Prune for shape and to remove dead branches. Shortened branches allow new growth to fill in. Some can be sheared into hedges or topiary plants. Many varieties available for different areas of the garden or in containers. For best berry formation, plant both a male and female plant of the same species.

Tip: Holly berries are mildly toxic and will cause vomiting and/or diarrhea when ingested by people. However they are extremely important food for numerous species of birds, and also are eaten by other wild animals.



JASMINUM

(JAZ-muh-nuhm)

Jasmine

Oleaceae Family

10-20' tall and wide

Full sun to light shade

Moderate to regular water

Evergreen , semi-evergreen, or deciduous

J. mesnyi - This primrose jasmine is commonly seen on freeway medians or cascading down embankments. Long arching vining branches 4 to 6' long. Dark green leaves with three lance-shaped leaflets. Bright lemon yellow unscented flowers. Main bloom in winter or spring but can surprise you with sporadic blooms. Needs room to grow or severe pruning if unruly, but nearly indestructible. Great for soil erosion, pergolas, or walls. Tie it up to a certain height and then let it cascade down for a waterfall effect.

J. parkeri - A true shrub. Evergreen dwarf twiggy to 1'tall and 1-2' wide. Bright green leaflets with small scentless flowers. Profuse flowers in spring. Great choice for a rock garden or container.

Tip: These viney-shrubs grow rapidly in good soil and bloom more profusely in sunny sites.



JUNIPERUS

(joo-NIP-uh-ruhs)

Juniper

Cupressaceae

Height varies by species

Full sun to partial shade

Minimum to regular water by species

Evergreen



Junipers are conifers however they produce berry-like fruits instead of woody cones. Shrub types include mounding, spreading, irregularly twisted, or spire-like forms. Sizes range from low ground covers to large trees. Leaf color can include shades of green as well as soft creamy-yellow, silvery-blue and even bright yellow. There is a juniper to fit every need. Consider mature size when making a selection. Common mistake is to plant too large a juniper in too small a space. They are hardy in winter months. Avoid planting junipers near lawn sprinklers and over watering junipers in general or they will develop root rot.

Tip: Junipers offer great texture and provide an evergreen backdrop to more colorful blooming plants.

LAGERSTROEMIA

(lay-gur-STREE-mee-uh)

Crape Myrtle

Lagerstroemia indica or hybrid

Lythraceae

3-20' tall depending upon cultivars

Full sun

Moderate water

Deciduous



Plant height ranges from less than 3' to more than 20', making it one of the most versatile plants. Because white, pink, lavender or red flowers bloom on new wood, prune in winter. Leaves of some cultivars produce brilliant fall color. For strong growth and abundant flowering, plant crape myrtle in full sun. Mildew can be a problem; best solution is to plant mildew-resistant hybrids. If wanting a shrub and not a tree, pay special attention to label when making a selection. Plants perform best with infrequent but deep watering.

Tip: It is possible to encourage additional flowering in the same season by removing spent blossoms before they set seed.

LANTANA

(lan-TAN-uh)

Hybrid 'Confetti' Lantana

Verbenaceae

Fast growing 2-3' tall by 6-8' wide,

Full sun

Moderate water, tolerates drought

Evergreen



Blossoms of yellow, pink, and purple, tiny flowers in tight clusters are valued for profuse show of color over long season. Light frosts keep shrub in check. Heavy frosts may seriously damage or kill plants in some, but not all winters. Prune hard in spring to remove dead wood and prevent woodiness. Too much water and fertilizer reduces bloom. 'Confetti' has beautiful spreading form and does well as an accent or low hedge. 'Gold Rush' is a smaller variety, 1½-2' by 4-6', and some dwarf varieties average 2-4' tall and wide.

Tip: This heat loving, mounding shrub attracts butterflies with its explosion of colorful blossoms.

LOROPETALUM

(lor-oh-PET-uh-lum)

Fringe flower

Loropetalum chinense

Hamamelidaceae

6-10' tall and as wide

Full sun to partial shade

Regular water

Evergreen



Native to China and Japan; neat, compact habit with tiers of arching or drooping branches and nearly round, soft textured leaves 1-2" long. Flowering is heaviest in spring, but blooms may appear at any time, even winter. Can take any amount of pruning to control shape. Provide well drained soil, rich in organic matter. Feed with an acid fertilizer after bloom, and keep roots cool with a thick layer of mulch. 'Sizzling Pink' blooms winter into spring and sporadically throughout the year. Showy new growth is deep burgundy, remaining purple tinged all year. 'Razzleberri' has clusters of raspberry red fringed flowers throughout the year. New growth is burgundy tinged, maturing to olive green.

Tip: The green or burgundy foliage is attractive filler in floral arrangements. Young plants can be used in hanging baskets.

MAHONIA

(ma-HO-nee-uh)

Oregon Grape

Mahonia aquifolium

(Related to barberry (*Berberis*))

Berberidaceae



6-12' tall, 5' wide, smaller varieties available

Full sun, partial shade

Water needs vary, but mostly regular water

Evergreen

Dense shiny deep green spiny leaves divided into leaflets, quite prickly. Clusters of yellow flowers in spring producing blue-black berries later. Needs good soil, good drainage. Several varieties available for this area. Berries make good jelly. Most need pruning to control rank growth, spreads by roots. Pretty plant all year, easy to grow.

Tip: Because it has prickly leaves, Mahonia can help deter intruders when planted under windows.

MYRTUS

(MER-tus)

Myrtle

Myrtus communis

Myrtaceae



Height: 5–6' high, 4–5' wide

Full sun or partial shade

Little to moderate water

Evergreen

Rounded plant is bulky and dense but has fine-textured foliage. Glossy bright green leaves are pointed, 1-2" long, aromatic when bruised. White, sweet scented, small flowers bloom in summer, followed by bluish black berries. Takes any soil, needs good drainage, not a lot of water. Some have pretty, peeling red bark. Can be pruned to almost any shape, even topiaries, hedges or small trees. Needs to be shaped about twice a year. Flowers and small berries on largest cultivars can be messy. *M. buxifolia* has small ½-1" leaves. *M. variegata* has white-edged leaves.

Tip: Because sheared leaves hardly show on Myrtle, it is one of the best plants for topiaries. In the garden, birds love the density of this shrub.

NANDINA

(nan-DEE-nuh)

Nandina domestica

Heavenly Bamboo, Sacred Bamboo

Berberidaceae

Varies from 1½' tall and wide to 6-8' tall and 3-4' wide

Full sun to partial shade

Low to regular water

Evergreen, semi-evergreen



Lightly branched, cane-like stems and delicate, fine-textured, lacy looking foliage. Slow to moderate growth. New foliage is pinkish and bronzy red, turning to soft light green, taking on purple and bronze in the fall, and fiery crimson in winter. Does best in rich soil and regular water. Un-pruned plants become top heavy, prune old canes at the base or at varying heights in the spring to encourage denser foliage. Variety 'Fire Power' grows to 2' tall and wide. Brilliant crimson foliage in fall and winter. Neat, rounded shrub requires no pruning, makes a nice specimen, or use several in a grouping.

Tip: Avoid the mistake of over pruning so that stems are like legs of flamingos. Instead strive for a cascade of lacy leaves from top to bottom of the shrub.

NERIUM

(NEE-ree-uhm)

Oleander

Apocynaceae

3–20' tall, 4–12' wide. Dwarf varieties are now available.

Full sun

Little to moderate water once established

Evergreen



Narrow, 4–12' long, dark green leathery leaves, some semi-glossy. Blooms late spring to fall. Flowers in colors from white to shades of yellow, pink, salmon, and red. Some are fragrant. Nice shrub in all seasons. It is facing a threat from leaf scorch, a bacterial disease spread by the glassy-winged sharpshooter (an insect pest). No cure is known, although the disease's progress may be slowed by pruning out bad parts (sterilize tools after each cut). All parts are toxic if ingested, smoke from this plant can cause irritation.

Tip: Dwarf varieties are useful in a smaller garden. All varieties are toxic if ingested.

OSMANTHUS

(oz-MAN-thuhs)

Sweet olive, Tea olive

Osmanthus fragrans

Oleaceae

6-10' tall, 6-8' wide, but can be trimmed narrower

Full sun, Partial shade

Little to regular water

Evergreen



Oval, glossy evergreen leaves to 4" long. Fragrant, tiny blossoms bloom heaviest in the cool weather of fall, winter and spring and sporadically during the summer. They have a lightly sweet scent like that of ripe apricots. Give afternoon shade in the hottest climates. Can be trained as an espalier or grown in a large container. *O. heterophyllus* has holly-shaped leaves either green or variegated.

Tip: Plant *Osmanthus fragrans* where the wonderful fragrance of its tiny flowers can be enjoyed both in the garden and wafting in through open windows.

PHILADELPHUS

(fil-uh-DEL-fuhs)

MOCK ORANGE

Hydrangeaceae

(Philadelphaceae)

6-8' tall and wide (size varies with other varieties)

Partial shade

Moderate to regular water

Deciduous, evergreen



This shrub is grown for white or cream colored flowers, usually fragrant, that bloom in late spring or early summer. Plants are usually large and vigorous with fountain-like form. Prune every year just after bloom, cutting out oldest wood. To rejuvenate, cut to the ground. Needs good drainage, but not fussy about soil type.

Hybrid, *P. x virginialis* 'Minnesota Snowflake', is a popular old fashioned deciduous flowering shrub with masses of fragrant double white flowers in spring. Plant where fragrance can be enjoyed.

Tip: Plant this spring blooming shrub near a patio or sitting area to enjoy its lovely fragrance.

PHOTINIA

(foe-TIN-ee-uh)

Photinia

Photinia x fraseri

Rosaceae

Moderate to fast growth

10-15' high and wide

Full sun

Moderate to regular water

Evergreen



Densely foliated plants with elliptical to oval leaves and bright colored new growth that matures to dark green. Good for screen and background plantings. Many photinias may be trained as trees from the beginning. In spring, all bear small white flowers. Good espalier, cut branches are excellent in arrangements. Prune to control shape.

Tip: Dramatic fiery red spring growth will liven up a border or fence line.

PIERIS

(pee-AIR-uhs)

Lily-of-the-Valley Shrub

Pieris japonica

Ericaceae

2-6' depending upon cultivar

Partial shade

Regular water

Evergreen



The showy cascading white, pink, or red flowers and colorful new growth of pieris provides a rich show of color with azaleas, camellias, and other spring flowering shrubs.

Flowers are followed by colorful new foliage growth, which varies by variety, from bronze, brilliant pink to scarlet. As the evergreen leaves mature, they turn bright dark green. The flower buds are often red and develop in late autumn, covering the plant until they burst into bloom in earliest spring. Needs acid, well-drained, but moisture-retentive soil like that of azaleas and camellias.

Tip: *Pieris japonica* "Mountain Fire" is the very floriferous **plant** shown in the photograph.

PITTOSPORUM

(pit-TOS-POE-RUHM) or (pit-toe-SPOER-uhm)

Tobira, Pittosporum

Pittosporum tobira

Pittosporaceae

6-15' tall and wide

Full sun to part shade

Moderate to regular water

Evergreen



Tends to have dense rounded growth with whorls of shiny dark green leaves. Shrub can be kept shorter by careful heading back and thinning, doesn't look as well with shearing. Fragrant creamy white flowers in early spring that smell like orange blossoms. A good specimen plant or hedge plant; often used as a foundation plant around commercial buildings. A favorite compact variety is 'Wheelers Dwarf' which grows to 2-3' tall and 4-5' wide, making a compact, rounded semi-circle often used in edges and low boundaries. Good near swimming pools. The new variety 'Golf Ball' remains small, grows into a round ball, and has smaller leaves.

Tip: Good basic, dependable plant with a pleasing shape if allowed to grow naturally and thinned periodically.

PLUMBAGO

(plum-BAY-go)

Cape Plumbago

P. auriculata (P. capensis)

Plumbaginaceae

Mounding to 6' tall, 8 – 10' wide

Full sun or light shade

Little to regular water

Evergreen, semi-evergreen



These are sprawling plants that bloom a long season with phlox-like clusters of blue, sky blue or white flowers at branch ends. One of the few shrubs with blue flowers. Best grown from cuttings or from nurseries for true color. Small, light to medium green leaves. Tolerates most soils but need good drainage. Prune back hard in late winter to control growth and keep them compact. Recovers fast from frost damage. This is a tough plant, easy to grow.

Tip: Plumbago is best for the middle or back of flower beds. If planted too close to a pathway, the flowers will stick to the clothing of passersby.

PODOCARPUS

(poe-doe-KAR-puhs)

Yew Pine

Podocarpus macrophyllus

Podocarpaceae

15-50' tall, widths 6-15'

Full sun to partial shade

Prefers occasional deep watering

Evergreen shrub or tree



Often planted as a tree the yew pine is easily trimmed to be a shrub and used as a background plant, screen, thick hedge, or topiary; it is often used beside buildings (in shady areas) to reduce sharp edges at corners. Heading pruning cuts will increase width and density of foliage. Does well in partial shade, given some protection from the hot valley sun. In its natural form it is a narrow, upright tree with long, slender evergreen leaves (broader than '*P. gracilior*'), 4" long and ½" wide, no flowers. The shrubby yew pine, *P. macrophyllus* maki, is smaller (8-15'tall) and slow growing, and a better choice for small spaces.

Tip: Sometimes used in flower arrangements (especially funeral baskets), yew pine foliage lasts a long time when cut. Leaves hang on even when dry, and a bowl full of greenery can be handsome for months, even after it turns brown.

PUNICA (Pomegranate)

(PU-ni-kuh)

Pomegranate 'Chico'

Punica granatum

Punicaceae

3' tall and wide

Full sun

Moderate to regular water

Deciduous



'Chico' is a dwarf carnation- flowered pomegranate with double orange flowers. Compact shrub to 3' high, but can be kept smaller with occasional pruning. This shrubs' fruit is more decorative than tasty; but this lower growing variety is excellent for edgings, borders, or in containers. Narrow leaves are bronzy when new, maturing to bright or golden green, and then turning brilliant yellow in fall.

Tip: Very showy flowering pomegranate is easily kept under 2' tall with occasional pruning done in late dormant season. The fruit may be dried for use in wreaths and floral arrangements.

PYRACANTHA

(pie-ra-KAN-thuh)

Firethorn

Rosaceae

8-10' tall

Full sun

Moderate to low water

Evergreen

Grown for bright fruit and evergreen foliage, this shrub is versatile in the landscape. It is fast growing and may be trained into a thick hedge for privacy. Small spring flowers are a dull white, sometimes considered an unpleasant smell. Pyracantha tolerates most soils and should not be over-watered.



Tip: When grown as a hedge its thorny nature provides privacy and security from trespassers, both animal and human.

RHAMNUS

Rhamnus californica

Coffeeberry

Rhamnaceae

3-15' tall and 8' wide

Sun to partial shade

Established plants need no irrigation

Evergreen



Grown for form and foliage, clusters of flowers are inconspicuous but mature to pea sized berries that attract birds and volunteer seedlings. Berries turn from green to red to black as they mature. Leaves are shiny or dull, dark green to yellow green and 2" long. Often leaves are paler on the underside and sometimes hairy. Plant accepts pruning and shaping. Excellent for drought tolerant and low water landscapes.

Tip: A background planting with inconspicuous flowers that turn to colorful pea-size berries. Can be messy, but the birds will love them.

RHAPHIOLEPIS

(raf-ee-o-LEP-uhs) or (raf-ee-OL-uh-pis)

Indian Hawthorn

Rhaphiolepis indica

Rosaceae

4-5' tall, 5-6' wide

Full sun to part shade

Tolerates occasional to regular irrigation

Evergreen



Easily grown in valley climates; makes a good hedge, individual, or grouping; plant along house, fence, or use as a specimen plant where showy spring color is desired. Leaves are about 1½ to 3" long, and pointed at petiole (stem); new leaves are bronze to reddish; flowering is profuse with white to red blooms in clusters, turn to dark blue berry-like fruit in fall.

Can be pruned by cutting out branches to retain a more open effect or pinched yearly for a more dense appearance (pinch back after bloom in late summer or fall). Many varieties are available with various colors and height/width. Sheltered exposure protects from sunburn during hot San Joaquin Valley summers.

Tip: Great in valley climates. The variety 'Enchantress' or pink Indian hawthorne is a slightly smaller plant that grows to 3 feet.

RHODODENDRON/ Azalea

(ro-do-DEN-dren)

Azalea

Ericaceae

2-5' tall depending upon cultivar

Partial shade

Regular to ample water

Evergreen (deciduous azaleas are not included here)



Most rhododendrons cannot be grown in the valley but the azaleas can. With many groups of evergreen azaleas, both species and hybrids, the choices seem limitless. Blooming in the spring with a wide variety of colors, they are excellent shrubs for the shade garden, either as specimen or focal point plants, or in combination with camellias, pieris and other spring-flowering shrubs. Often used as a background for spring blooming bulbs. Most prefer partial shade. Well-drained, but moisture-retentive acid soil, are ideal conditions. A thick layer of organic mulch helps keep roots cool in summer.

Tip: Azaleas planted on the north side of houses or in shade of large trees require less water and suffer less heat and sun stress than when planted on a south or west exposure.

RIBES

(REI-bees)

Golden Currant

Ribes aureum

Grossulariaceae (Saxifragaceae)

3-6' tall and wide

Full sun to partial shade

Moderate watering

Deciduous



This spicy shrub can be smelled before it is seen. The long, tubular, yellow blossoms appear among the thin, light-green leaves. Summer berries turn yellow to red then black. This is a great shrub for attracting birds. To anyone from the East Coast, the golden currant can conjure up memories of an old fashioned garden.

Tip: Those without spines are called currants. Those with spines are called gooseberries.

ROSA

(RO-sa)

Rose

Rosaceae

All sizes: tiny to 6' tall and taller

Full sun, except some need partial shade in the afternoon

Regular water

Mostly deciduous, some semi-evergreen



Tolerates most soils but must have good drainage. Plant where they have good air circulation and away from large trees or shrubs that will compete for sun, water and fertilizer. Regular moisture is essential but must drain well, mulch beneath plants to help conserve moisture. Fertilize throughout the growing season. Prune in January removing dead, weak or crossed limbs and some old growth. Most roses are forgiving if a pruning mistake is made. They are pretty tough for such beautiful flowers of so many colors. Thorns are an integral part of the rose bush. There are miniatures (some have small flowers on large plants, some are true miniatures); there are teas with long elegant stems and about everything in between including climbers that can grow up to 3 stories high - the 'Belle of Portugal' has been seen that high.

Tip: Remove the spent rose flowers to promote re-bloom all spring and summer. Start leaving them on the bush in October to encourage dormancy of the plant for winter.

SALIX

(SAY-lix)

Dappled Willow

Salix integra

Salicaceae

4-6' tall and wide

Full sun

Regular to ample water

Deciduous



Grown for its variegated foliage. Twigs and buds are salmon pink. Leaves are ½"- 1¼" wide and 4" long. Solid white; green and white, solid green, speckled green and white, and pale pink leaves on the same shrub make this a beautiful and unusual addition to a garden. Requires consistently moist soil, regular watering, but not over watering. Do not let dry out between waterings.

Tip: Can become susceptible to borers if the soil is allowed to dry out.

SOLANUM

(soe-LAN-uhm)

Purple Potato bush

Solanum rantonnetii

Solanaceae

8-12' tall, 6-10' wide

Full sun or partial shade

Regular water, needs good drainage

Semi-evergreen, most lose leaves in Valley winters



Nurseries have a variety called 'Grandiflorum' that has 2" oval bright green leaves and purple 1½" flowers that bloom almost all year except the coldest months. It can be shaped into a small tree and grown in a container or allowed to grow very large each year (lightly prune twice during season and then back to 4' high in early spring). Responds to all kinds of pruning and shaping. Can be trained as a vine on a lattice. This bush is a good screen right down to the ground. Very few weeds grow beneath it. A few starters come up from the roots; this makes sharing plants a pleasure. Very easy to grow.

Tip: This, almost care and pest free, plant will cover itself with cheerful, purple blossoms for nine (or more) months every year.

SPIRAEA

(spye-REE-uh)

Double Bridal Wreath

Spiraea cantoniensis 'Flore-Pleno'

Rosaceae

5-6' tall, 10' wide

Full sun or light shade

Regular to moderate water

Deciduous



There are two distinct kinds of spirea: the bridal wreath type and the shrubby type. The double bridal wreath is an early spring/summer stunning bloomer. Bridal wreath species need less pruning than other spirea. Tough and easy to grow, the double white flowers crown the leafy branches. Lance-shaped blue-green leaves drop late and show no fall color.

Tip: The *Spiraea japonica* 'Anthony Waterer' in the photograph bears flowers of various shades of pink. Some Spiraeas have yellow, instead of green leaves.

SYRINGA

(sy-RIN-gah)

Lilac

Oleaceae

20' tall and wide

Light shade

Light to moderate water

Deciduous



Syringa vulgaris

Common lilac. Needs two to five years to bear full size flowers with a true color. Early spring blooms develop after leaves have formed. Blooms reek of nostalgia and heady aroma. Remove spent blossom clusters cutting back to a pair of leaves. Growth buds at this point will make flowering stems for next year. Gradually discontinue watering at the end of summer to force dormancy.

French hybrids are numerous: *Syringa vulgaris* x 'Krasavitsa Moskv'y' ('Beauty of Moscow') is one. Lavender-rose tinted buds open to creamy white double petal flowers. Beautifully fragrant and also attracts butterflies.

Tip: For the best spring show of bloom, be sure soil is well draining, neutral to slightly alkali. If soil is strongly acidic, dig lime into it before planting.

THUJA

(THOO-yuh)

Arborvitae

Cupressaceae

**3-4' tall and wide to over 25' tall
and 15' wide**

Partial shade

Moderate to regular water

Evergreen



These are rather formal shrubs with tight growth, often trimmed into geometrical forms. Young foliage is scale-like in a fan formation; some varieties are yellow-green or bright golden-yellow. Thujas need rich, moist soil; some can tolerate fairly dry conditions. All varieties need well drained soil and are low growing. Cones are green or bluish green, turning to brownish.

Tip: Fragrant, dense foliage blocks noise, wind, and prying eyes. Makes a nice addition to holiday swags and wreaths.

Tibouchina

(tib-oo-KYE-nuh)

Princess Flower

Tibouchina urvilleana

Melastomataceae

6-10' tall depending upon cultivar

Full sun, partial shade

Regular water

Evergreen



Gardeners willing to take the risk of losing a Tibouchina to a severe frost are rewarded with beautiful royal purple flowers. The large shrub grows a little rampant and tends to sprawl if not pruned. Large velvety 5" evergreen leaves with a coarse appearance and a fine dark green color are covered with soft white hairs. In cold weather a few leaves turn a bronzy-red, adding to the visual appeal. Water regularly, but do not over water.

Tip: Nice planted among white or yellow flowering plants such as Euryops or Shasta Daisies.

VIBURNUM

(vie-BUHR-nhum)

Viburnum

Caprifoliaceae

3-4 ft. tall and wide to 8-15' tall and wide

Full sun or partial shade

Regular water, with some exceptions

Deciduous and evergreen shrubs or small trees



Viburnums are a very diverse group of plants, from flower displays to leaf and flower color; most have oval leaves and clusters of white-whitish flowers in the spring, followed by beautifully colored, small, single seeded fruits. Some viburnums are grown for their showy flowers and others for their very attractive dark blue fruit. Moderate upright growth pattern.

Viburnum tinus 'Spring Bouquet' ('Compactum') is a low maintenance plant, moderately growing to 4-6 ft. tall and wide, great for foundation planting, or could be a small hedge. Prune as necessary for shaping, and give regular water.

Tip: *V. opulus* 'Roseum' is what is commonly known as the Snowball Bush. *V. x carlcephalum* is similar, but has the added bonus of nice fragrance.

WEIGELA

(wye-JEE-luh)

Weigela

Caprifoliaceae

5' tall and wide on average, others vary.

Full sun or light shade

Regular water

Deciduous



Lavish springtime display of funnel shaped 1" long flowers. Coarse leafed and stiff, can become rangy unless pruned. After flowering, cut back stems that have bloomed to the side shoots that have not yet flowered. Cut some of the oldest stems to the ground.

'Wine & Roses' is a compact, mounding shrub with bright rose-pink flowers against dark burgundy leaves. Excellent focal point or accent plant. *W. 'Variegata'* has deep rosy red flowers and creamy yellow to white leaf edges. Full sun ensures strongest color and sure to attract hummingbirds. Moderate to rapid growth.

Tip: There are variegated forms of this shrub as well as a dwarf variety, "Midnight Wine," only reaching 18-24" tall.

XYLOSMA congestum

(ZY-lohs-muh)

Xylosma

Flacourtiaceae

8-10' tall and wide

Full sun or partial shade

Moderate water

Evergreen or deciduous shrub or small tree



This is a basic landscape foliage plant with spreading growth and stems that zigzag upward in an interesting shape. Can be trained as a small tree, but this requires a lot of shaping. The bright-green shiny leaves are pointed and oval, the flowers are insignificant. If allowed to grow free, it grows long, graceful side branches that arch or droop, sometimes on the ground. It can be espaliered on a wall or fence, or used as a clipped or unclipped hedge. It loses leaves in a hard frost. This shrub needs shaping for about 3 years, then seems to mature and retain its shape. Tolerates heat very well.

Tip: Great for shading a large wall. Plant in front of a hot, sunny wall to help cool the inside of your house. It can cover a 10' x 10' wall.
