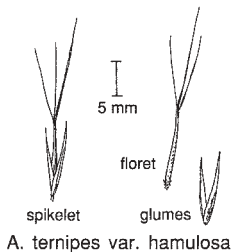
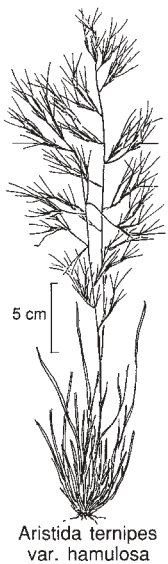


California was once a state dominated by vast and beautiful native grasslands and meadows. These grasses, however, have all but been destroyed by grazing from non-native animals, choked out by exotic invasive plants, and by the lack of a natural fire regime to keep down the competition from native trees and shrubs. It is estimated that over 99% of these plant communities and habitats have been lost.

Grasses add textures and colors to your garden that are not found in other plants, as well as uncommon beauty and drama, especially in late summer and early fall when other garden plants are waning. In memory of grasslands past, include native grasses in your landscape and garden.

Quote from "Attracting Birds to Your Garden"
by Carolyn Chainey-Davis, Mark Chainey, and Helen Henthorn.

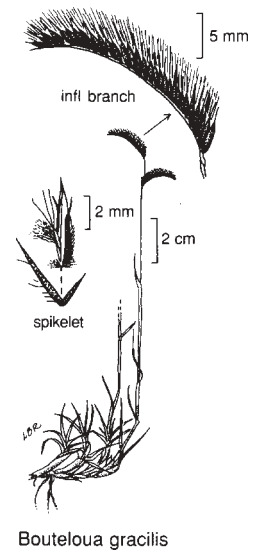
Native Perennial Grasses, Sedges, and Rushes for Nevada and Placer County Landscapes



Aristida ternipes
var. hamulosa

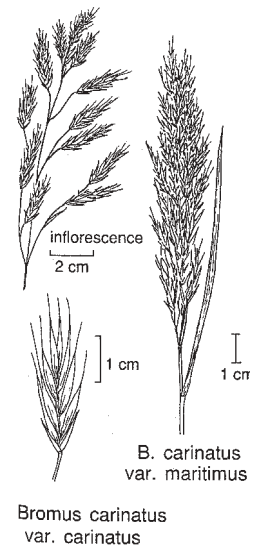
Aristida ternipes variety hamulosa: Three-awn is a perennial grass with a cespitose, or cushionlike, growth form that is loose and airy. Height 10–32". Plants remain green well into summer in spite of growing on dry sites. Very drought tolerant. Awns may be harmful to livestock. Good tolerance to mowing and fire.

Bouteloua gracilis: Blue Grama or Grandma's Eyelashes is best known for its eyelashlike seed heads. It is a short, clump-forming, perennial grass, growing 18–24" high and 12" wide, flowering from May to August. It requires drainage, full sun, and some summer water. Best used as a ground cover, soil stabilizer in a border, as a specimen plant, in a rock garden, or an alternative lawn. Deer resistant.



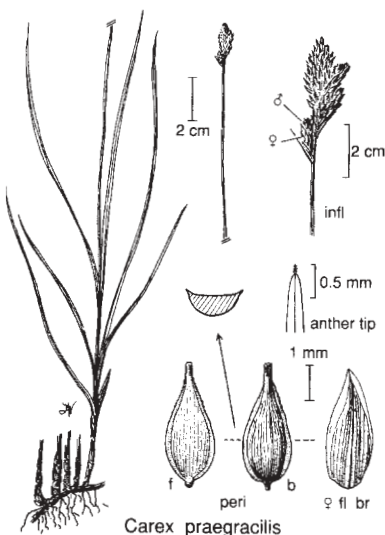
Bouteloua gracilis

Bromus carinatus: California Brome is a large (18–36" tall), short-lived, perennial bunchgrass with open, spreading, drooping flower heads. Native to many habitats throughout California, but most commonly found in woodlands in the low to middle elevations of the foothills. Drought tolerant. Provides cover for wildlife and seeds were used by Native Americans for food.



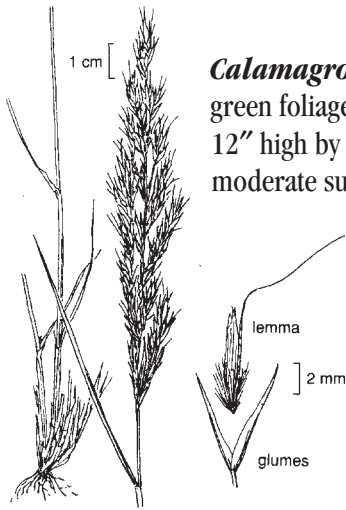
Bromus carinatus
var. carinatus

Carex barbarae: Basket Sedge, White Root Sedge, Barbar's Sedge is a very robust, strongly rhizomatous grasslike plant, important as a soil stabilizer in waterways and streamside areas. It is fire, drought, and flood tolerant and provides great waterfowl and wildlife nesting habitat. Requires some summer water. Grows 1–3' high and 2–3' wide. Likes sun to partial sun. It is an important basket fiber.



Carex praegracilis

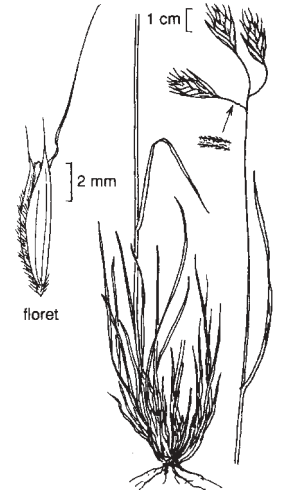
Carex praegracilis: Slender, Field, Black Creeper, or Clustered Sedge is a warm season, rhizomatous, grasslike plant growing 7–30" high. Useful in a variety of habitats, including flood plains, meadows, and uplands, and grows in sun, dappled sun, and shade. Good for soil stabilization and for restoring degraded areas. Tolerant of fire, long periods of standing water, and extended dry periods; may go dormant in the winter, depending on conditions. Suitable substitute for lawns and handles mowing well. Provides cover for nesting waterfowl and other wildlife. Deer resistant.



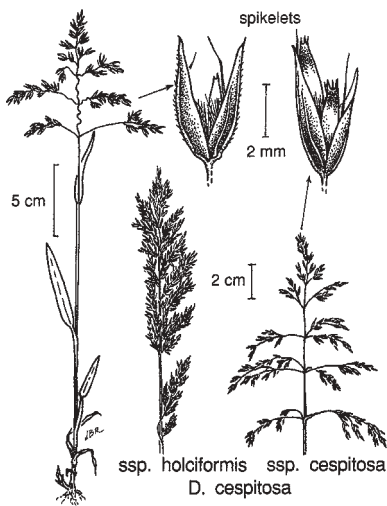
Calamagrostis foliosa

Calamagrostis foliosa: Leafy Reed Grass is a low-growing, evergreen bunchgrass with beautiful gray-green foliage and purplish red highlights. Generally found along the rocky coast and is uncommon. Grows 12" high by 24" wide. Flowers spring and summer in full sun with excellent drainage and has low to moderate summer watering needs. Deer resistant.

Danthonia californica: California Oatgrass is a perennial bunchgrass found throughout the mountains and Coast Ranges of the western US in both open and partly shaded areas. Forms dense, leafy tufts with flower stalks of nodding spikelets to 18" tall. Not to be confused with the invasive, alien wild oats, this native makes a good basic grass for a meadow planting. Withstands trampling and traffic. Good for soil stabilization. Sun to very light shade. Little to no summer water once established. Deer resistant.



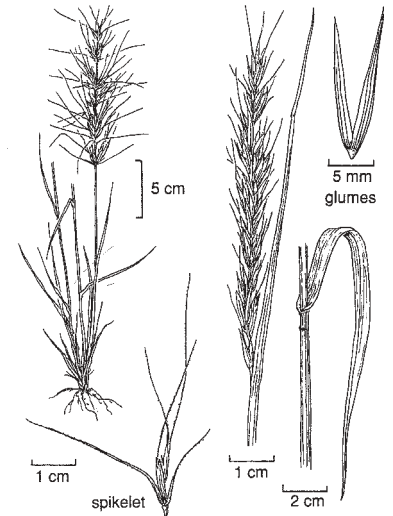
Danthonia californica var. californica



Deschampsia atropurpurea

Deschampsia cespitosa: Tufted Hairgrass produces a profusion of purplish, feathery, upright spreading flowers from late May to September depending on elevation. Warm season, dark green, clumping grass to 10" tall. Tolerates partial shade and heavy clay soils. Good in waterside plantings and meadows. Not tolerant of hot, dry situations. Best for areas without foot traffic. Deer resistant.

Elymus glaucus: Blue Wildrye is a cool season, upright perennial bunchgrass, 2-3' tall with bluish blades and summer flowers. Tolerates drought, clay soils, and establishes rapidly. Good for wildlife habitat and forage. If watered, Blue Wildrye will stay green all year. Good for stream bank restoration and meadow seeding. "A garden must."



E. elymoides

Elymus glaucus

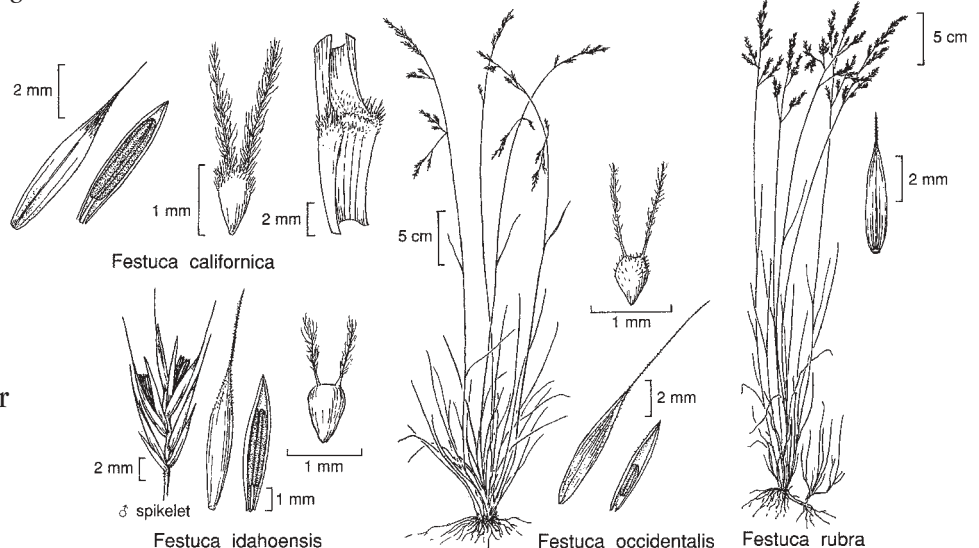
Festuca californica: Cool season bunchgrass with blue-green blades to 2' and flower stalks to 5' high, creating fountainlike clumps. Drought tolerant for sun or shade.

California Fescue prefers north-facing slopes and is often found in brush lands, under deciduous oaks, and in mixed evergreen forests. A mass planting on a slope gives the impression of falling water.

Festuca idahoensis: Cool season, densely tufted, fine-leaved perennial grass, usually blue in color but can be green. Flowering stalks 1-2' tall.

Idaho Fescue grows in dry, open, or shady places. "A garden must."

Festuca rubra: Red Fescue has fine foliage and a spreading character good for natural landscapes and low maintenance buffer areas. Requires shade and supplemental watering. Quite drought tolerant, long lived, but better adapted to areas of cooler summers and more than 18" of rain per year. Several ecotypes of California Red Fescue are available.

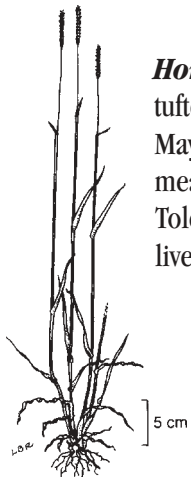


Festuca californica

Festuca idahoensis

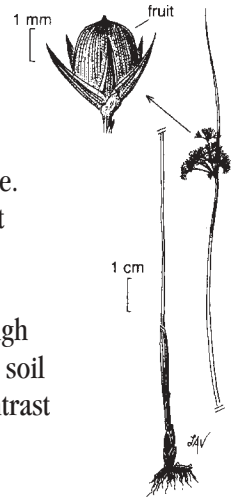
Festuca occidentalis

Festuca rubra



Hordeum brachyantherum

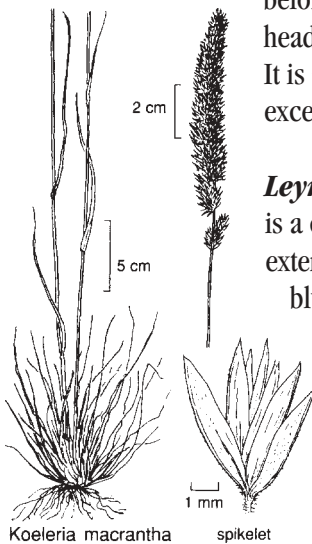
Hordeum brachyantherum: Meadow or California Barley is an attractive, densely tufted, short-lived, fast-growing perennial. Grows 10–13" tall with purplish flower spikes from May to August. It prefers moist areas, and is found on heavier soils or wetter areas, such as meadows and stream edges. Not invasive and goes dormant in late spring. Likes sun to part shade. Tolerates clay and serpentine soils; deep rooted and good for erosion control. Provides excellent livestock forage and edible seed for nesting waterfowl.



J. patens

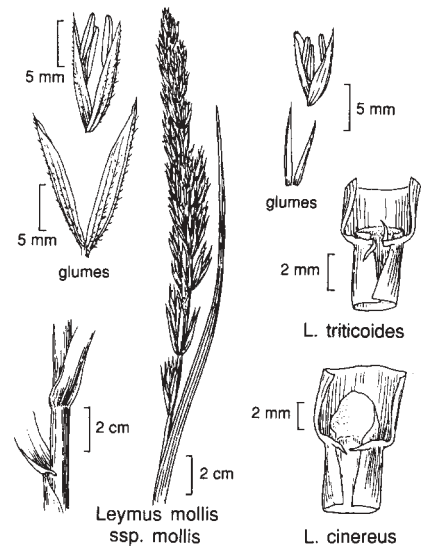
Juncus patens cultivar "**Carmen's Grey**": **California Gray Rush** forms a clump 1–3' high and wide with stiff, upright, steel grey stems. Heat and drought tolerant, but thrives in moist soil or even shallow water. It prefers light shade but will tolerate full sun if kept moist. Adds contrast to a bouquet. Deer resistant.

Koeleria macrantha: June Grass is a small, perennial bunchgrass that looks like it belongs in a Japanese Garden. It grows 8–24" tall with green to purple dense, narrow seed heads tapering at both ends, flowering from May to July. Found in dry open sites with clay to rocky soils. It is a good soil stabilizer, fire resistant, and provides good livestock and wildlife forage. Makes an excellent native lawn: mow every 3–4 weeks, water only once per month, and no fertilizer!



Koeleria macrantha spikelet

Leymus triticoides: Creeping Wildrye, Beardless Wildrye is a cool season, long-lived perennial and loose sod former with an extensive root system. This mat-forming (rhizomatous) grass with blue-green leaves grows 2–4' tall with upright 8" long spikes (seed heads). It thrives along creeks and in seasonally wet soil, reproducing by underground runners. Provides erosion control and can withstand the force of fast-moving water. Excellent bio-swale plant. Extremely saline and alkali tolerant. Prefers full sun. Excellent wildlife plant. Deer resistant.



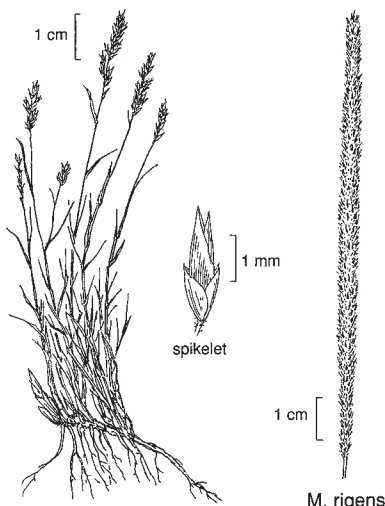
L. triticoides

Leymus mollis ssp. mollis

L. cinereus

Melica californica: A cool season grass that grows 1–2' tall with flower spikes tinged purple. Tolerates full sun or partial shade and is summer dormant. Called **California Oniongrass** for the tiny edible bulblets that form at the base of the plant. Doesn't form clumps, can be mowed. Avoid summer watering.

Muhlenbergia rigens: A warm season perennial grass forming large, dense clumps from the base. Spikelike flower stalks 2–3' tall. Striking fountain form. **Deergrass** can live in dry, damp, or moist conditions and in full sun to partial shade. "A garden must." Ladybird beetles are highly dependent on Deergrass for overwintering habitat. Native Americans used the culms of this grass as foundations for basketry. Deergrass provides shelter for fawns. Deer resistant.

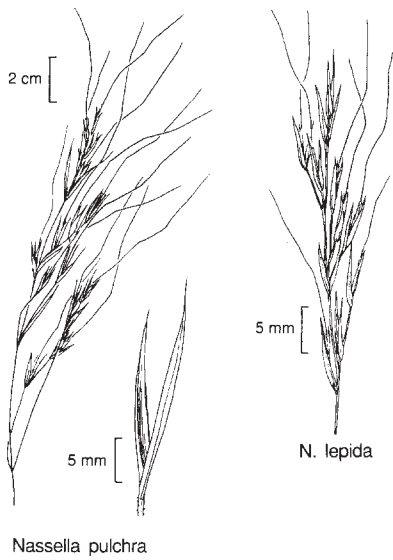


Muhlenbergia richardsonis

M. rigens

Nassella cernua: Nodding Needlegrass, a drought tolerant and showy 2–3' perennial bunchgrass, needs full sun and good drainage. Deer resistant. Nice plants that work in interior gardens, all soil types, with little or no water. Use it in rock gardens, rock walls, cactus gardens, or perennial gardens.

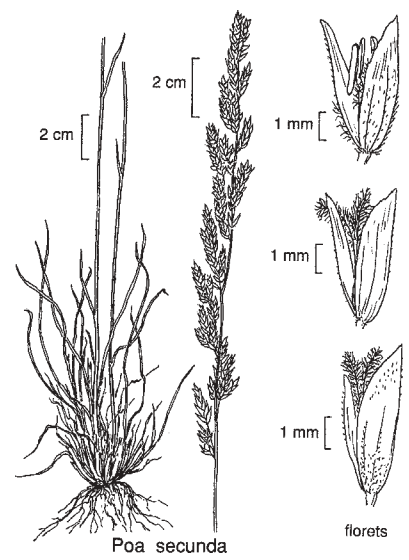
Nassella lepida: Foothill Needlegrass is an appealing native grass of dry slopes with fine basal foliage to 2' tall with graceful drooping seed heads 2" long. Likes sun or part shade and is drought tolerant. No summer water the first year in the ground (will go dormant). Green in spring only but may stay green with small amount of regular water. Deer resistant.



Nassella pulchra: Purple Needlegrass is California's State Grass. Historically, it was found in grasslands, chaparral, and oak woodlands from southern Baja to northern California. Where it once covered over 20 million acres, it is currently found on only about 100,000 acres. It is a cool season bunchgrass growing 1–2' high. Tough basal leaves in this bunchgrass stay green most of the year. Roots extend down 20' and can tap the soil moisture in a drought so effectively that large, old plants can out-compete any nearby young plants. These plants can live 200 years and maybe many hundreds more. Eventually, they space themselves relatively far apart so that all can survive droughts. Each year, mature plants produce a few seeds, shaped like a torpedo. Each seed has a long, threadlike awn attached, so the seed resembles a needle and thread. It grows well in dry, clay soils, on hillsides, and in forest openings. It thrives in deep, well-drained soils. It has graceful, shiny flower stalks to 30" in spring. Fire retardant, drought tolerant, good in mass plantings, and for restoration uses. Deer resistant.

Poa secunda: Pine Bluegrass is a very attractive, medium low-growing, tufted perennial bunchgrass with soft lower foliage. Shallow-rooted and summer dormant. Tolerates full sun, partial shade, and dry to moist soils.

Line illustrations from *The Jepson Manual: Higher Plants of California*



Native Perennial Grasses, Sedges, and Rushes by Family

Cyperaceae – Sedge Family

- Carex barbarae* Basket Sedge, White Root Sedge, Barbar's Sedge
- Carex praegracilis* ... Slender Sedge, Field Sedge, Black Creeper, Clustered Sedge

Juncaceae – Rush Family

- Juncus patens* "Carmen's Grey" California Gray Rush

Poaceae – Grass Family

- Aristida ternipes* variety *hamulosa* Three-awn
- Bouteloua gracilis* Blue Grama, Grandma's Eyelashes
- Bromus carinatus* California Brome
- Calamagrostis foliosa* Leafy Reed Grass
- Danthonia californica* California Oatgrass
- Deschampsia cespitosa* Tufted Hairgrass
- Elymus glaucus* Blue Wildrye
- Festuca californica* California Fescue
- Festuca idahoensis* Idaho Fescue
- Festuca rubra* Red Fescue
- Hordeum brachyantherum* Meadow Barley, California Barley
- Koeleria macrantha* June Grass
- Leymus triticoides* Creeping Wildrye, Beardless Wildrye
- Melica californica* California Oniongrass
- Muhlenbergia rigens* Deergrass
- Nassella cernua* Nodding Needlegrass
- Nassella lepida* Foothill Needlegrass
- Nassella pulchra* Purple Needlegrass
- Poa secunda* Pine Bluegrass

Sources of Information and Suppliers of California Native Grasses

- California Native Grasslands Assn.
www.cnga.org
- Peaceful Valley Farm & Garden Supply
Grass Valley • 530-272-4769
www.groworganic.com
- Hedgerow Farms
Winters • 530-662-6847
www.hedgerowfarms.com
- Cornflower Farms
Elk Grove • 916-689-1015
www.cornflowerfarms.com
- Las Pilitas Nursery
www.laspilitas.com
Over 5,000 pages of information
- California Invasive Plant Council
www.cal-ipc.org