



Spring Planting Guide

Compiled by The Theodore Payne Foundation for Wildflowers and Native Plants, Inc.
10459 Tuxford Street, Sun Valley, CA 91352 Phone: (818) 768-1802 <http://www.theodorepayne.org>

This is the season we've been waiting for. Through those long hot summer days planning to fill each empty spot, the anticipation and excitement found in the possibilities of fall plant sales, and the anxious waiting through winter to see what would make it. It's time for the show! And you're probably in awe at every turn. This season's rains have been early and often and well timed to bring on one of the most anticipated shows in recent memory. Bask in the envy of your friends and neighbors, then bring them to the Foundation to start their own native plant gardens.

Seeds

► Your annual seeds should have been sown months ago. You can still sow California poppies and Clarkia and get a show, but you'll have to water. You can start a Yarrow meadow from seed just about any time. This is one of the easiest natives to sow and grow. Prepare your soil as you do for any wildflowers. Make sure all weed seeds are sprouted and removed. Level your soil. Yarrow seeds are so small that you won't need to do anything but broadcast them over the area where you'd like them to grow. Water and wait.

Plant

► You can plant riparian species and desert species from spring through summer. They will take the extra water you'll need to provide them through the warm season. Trees such as maples and alders, dogwoods and redbuds, redwoods and elderberries can all be planted now.

Water

► It's heating up now and the rains have probably stopped. You'll need to start watering judiciously. Deep soaks, especially for new plantings, are best to keep your garden healthy.

Prune

► You can prune and shape your Ceanothus, Arctostaphylos, Carpenteria, and other flowering shrubs once they've finished blooming. Don't prune anything that you'd like to produce fruit for seed collection. Hold off pruning deciduous shrubs and trees until next fall and winter when they are dormant again.

Grasses

► Grasses are mostly either "cool" or "warm" season growers. Seed germinates and the grasses begin to actively grow with sustained temperatures that best suit their needs. Warm season grasses will start growing about now, including Acnatherum species, Boutetoua species, Muhlenbergia rigens, Sporobolis airoides, and Pleuraphis jamesii. This is the time to divide summer grasses. Carefully dig up the clump and either shake or wash off the soil. Break the clump into smaller bunches, leaving a good root system with each bunch. Replant in the garden or place into small pots. Keep them watered. If you're growing Boutetouo species from seed, follow nature's lead. These warm season grasses grow in very hot desert areas. When the summer monsoons blow through, the combination of rain and hot temperatures is perfect for germination. Wait until a good heat spell sets in, sow your seed in a properly prepared space, and soak. Keep the area soaked until the seedlings sprout in a few days.