

Altadena Green All-Star Tree Lists

Altadena Green and our advisors have curated a list of great trees for Altadena. We're calling these the Altadena All-Stars. We've broken up the list into three size categories, **small, medium and large trees on the pages below**. The Altadena All-Stars are trees that have these important characteristics.

Altadena All-Star Trees are:

- Available from nurseries in our area in at least 15 gallon containers (a great size for tree planting)
- Biodiversity supporting species that are not listed in the CallIPC [invasive plant inventory](#) and provide important wildlife habitat
- Capable of thriving in our mediterranean climate with sometimes cool, wet winters and increasingly hot, dry summers

Small Altadena All-Star Trees - These trees under 30 feet tall and are perfect for patios, small yards, or planting closer to the home. Many of these trees are considered large multi-stemmed shrubs but can grow to tree sizes with time. Many of these small trees are great as hedges and privacy screens and some can be pruned and hedged to further serve that purpose.

Medium Altadena All-Star Trees - These trees are 30 - 50 feet tall and are great for focal points or for areas where you want to create structure, fall color and / or shade in your yard.

Large Altadena All-Star Trees - These trees are some of the largest in our area and are an important source of shade and beauty in our communities. We encourage everyone with available space to plant large trees. They add value to your home and create roosting and nesting habitat for birds like scrub jays, parrots, owls and hawks.

How to use this list: The Altadena All-Stars lists are meant to be a shortcut to learning and considering some tried and true trees for your landscape. It is not a complete list of compatible or high performing trees for our region but is a great start. Keep in mind the following:

1. Consider the amount of space you have for your tree/s and the minimum ground space requirements in the spreadsheet. Give your tree the space it needs to thrive! Consider the mature size of the tree and potential conflicts with other uses such as power lines, sewer and water lines, and vehicle clearance near roadways and driveways. [This is a great resource](#) from the LA County Community Forest Management Plan explaining space needs for your tree.
2. Consider water use and select trees that will be compatible with the shrubs and groundcovers that exist or that you are planning for that part of your garden. Some trees require reduced summer water after they are established. Creating zones of plants with similar water requirements will help ensure compatibility. A great resource for determining palettes of plants that work well together is the book Landscape Plants for California Gardens mentioned below. Great tips can also be found at the [Waterwise Garden Planner website](#).
3. All trees listed have a link to [SelecTree](#) where you can find much more useful information and great photos. California native trees have an additional link to [Calscape.org](#).

Choosing the Right Tree for Your Landscape, Yard, and Garden - Selecting new trees for your home is an investment in the future. Because choosing the right trees for your yard and garden can be a complex process, we highly recommend working with a certified arborist, registered consulting arborist, horticulturalist, landscape architect, or designer. These professionals can provide local up-to-date guidance. You can find local professionals through these organizations: [International Society of Arboriculture: treesaregood.com](#), [American Society of Consulting Arborists: www.asca-consultants.org/search/](#), [American Society of Landscape Architects: connect.asla.org](#), [Association of Professional Landscape Designers: apld.org](#)

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In addition to our tree lists, you can get started planning on your own by checking out these excellent tools for selecting trees and other plants tailored to our region: calscape.org, SelecTree.calpoly.edu, TheodorePayneFoundation.org, WaterwiseGardenPlanner.org and the [San Gabriel Mountains chapter of the California Native Plant Society](#). A longer list of trees was developed by expert arborists and urban foresters for the [Los Angeles County Urban Forest Management Plan](#). Note that this is a list of trees for use throughout the County and that Altadena is considered the Foothill Region specified in their tree list.

[Landscape Plants for California Gardens by Bob Perry](#)

This seminal book written by Landscape Architect Bob Perry has great information and wonderful photos of a huge number of trees and other plants suitable for our region. It goes beyond most texts to share palettes of trees and plants that work well together in the landscape. Bob Perry also shares detailed information on irrigation and plant water use that goes beyond most texts to share not just how much water plants need but if reduced water is needed in the summer (many plants from mediterranean climates do best with reduced water during the summer after they have established).

A Note About Native Plants

We have noted in the tree lists whether or not the tree is native to California (or the area called the “California Floristic Province”). This video does a great job defining California native plants and the [California Floristic Province](#). We at Altadena Green are especially partial to our local California native plants. Native plants often provide significant benefits over non-native plants including less watering, fertilizing, and pesticides. They support local wildlife by providing food and habitat for native animals and contribute to beautiful, resilient gardens that connect us to the region's sense of place and unique biodiversity. With a little care, California native plants thrive in local conditions for decades, saving time and resources while fostering ecological health in our yards and communities. Please consider emphasizing California native plants at your home! Much more information on California native plants can be found at the [Theodore Payne Foundation](#) and [California Native Plant Society](#) websites.

Choosing, Sourcing, Placing, Planting & Long-term Care

Always check the needed planting space, mature height and width of a tree before planting to ensure your trees have enough room to thrive without interfering with other plants, structures or utilities like plumbing or power lines. Proper siting, planting, and care is critical for tree health and a great starting point is this [Arbor Day Foundation Guide](#). ***When you purchase a tree, container size is important to consider. With larger trees container (24" box and up), you run the risk of tree roots being damaged or "root bound" from years of being in a container. Plant 5 or 15 gallon containers if possible. They will grow quickly once in the ground and you can save money while supporting the long term health of the tree.*** Most good nursery professionals can help you determine if tree roots are in good health. For more information on all of these topics see the International Society of Arboriculture's [Tree Owner Resources](#). You can find a directory of native plant nurseries at [Calscape](#). A longer list of nurseries can be found using the California Department of Food and Agriculture's [Directory of Licensed Nurseries](#).

Contributors to the Altadena All-Stars Tree lists include the following arborists and landscape designers and architects: [Drew Ready - Council for Watershed Health](#), [Maggie Lobl - Echo LA Studio](#), [Josh Link - Ecotone Studios](#), [Stephanie Landregan - Altadena Green Director](#), [Rebecca Latta - Rebecca Latta Consulting](#), [Rick Fisher - City of Los Angeles](#), [Ryan Allen - Dudek](#), [Sabine Hopner - Water's Edge Gardening](#), [Wynne Wilson - Terra Designs](#)

****This list is a product of Altadena Green for information only and provides no guarantee of tree performance or safety in the landscape.***

Altadena All-Stars Small Trees (10-30ft)

Botanical Name	Common Name	Family	Native to California Floristic Provenance	Native Range	Maximum Height (ft.)	Canopy Width (ft.)	Foliage Type	Growth Habit	Min Planting Area (ft.)	Water Use (SelecTree)	Water Use (Perry)	Hedge/Screen	Notes
Adenostoma sparsifolium	Red Shanks	Rosaceae	Yes (See CalScape)	Southern California and Baja California	15	6-10	Evergreen	Rounded, Vase	2-4	Very Low	-		
Arctostaphylos 'Dr Hurd'	Dr. Hurd Manzanita	Ericaceae	Yes (See CalScape)	California	20	15-20	Evergreen	Rounded	2-4	Low	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)	Good for Hedge/Screen	A small, often multi-stemmed tree/shrub
Ceanothus 'Ray Hartman'	Ray Hartman Ceanothus	Rhamnaceae	Yes (See CalScape)	California	20	15-20	Evergreen	Rounded	2-4	Low	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)	Good for Hedge/Screen	A small, often multi-stemmed tree/shrub
Cercis occidentalis	Western Redbud	Fabaceae	Yes (See CalScape)	Western Sierra Nevada, Southern Penninsular Ranges	25	10-20	Deciduous	Rounded	2-4	Low	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)		A small, often multi-stemmed tree/shrub
Cercocarpus betuloides	Mountain Mahogany, Mountain Ironwood	Rosaceae	Yes (See CalScape)	Altadena, San Gabriel Mountains	20	10-15	Evergreen	Rounded, Vase	2-4	Very Low	Low/Very Low (reduced summer water)		A small, often multi-stemmed tree/shrub
Chilopsis linearis	Desert Willow	Bignoniaceae	Yes (See CalScape)	Southern California Desert Regions	30	15-20	Deciduous	Rounded	2-4	Low	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)		
Comarostaphylis diversifolia	Summer Holly	Ericaceae	Yes (See CalScape)	Catalina Island, Santa Monica Mountains	20	10-15	Evergreen	Rounded	2-4	Low	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)		A small, often multi-stemmed tree/shrub
Cordia boissieri	Texas olive	Boraginaceae	No	Texas, New Mexico, Mexico	30	10-15	Evergreen	Rounded	2-4	Low	Low/Very Low (reduced summer water)		
Cotinus coggygria	Smoke Tree	Anacardiaceae	No	Southern Europe to Central China	15	10-20	Deciduous	Rounded	2-4	Low	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)		
Feijoa sellowiana	Pineapple Guava	Myrtaceae	No	South America	25	18-25	Evergreen	Rounded	4-7	Low	-		A small, often multi-stemmed tree/shrub
Handroanthus heptaphyllus	Pink Trumpet Tree	Bignoniaceae	No	Central and South America	30	15-25	Deciduous	Rounded	4-7	Medium	Moderate		
Heteromeles arbutifolia	Toyon	Rosaceae	Yes (See CalScape)	Altadena, San Gabriel Mountains	25	15	Evergreen	Rounded, Vase	4-7	Low	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)	Good for Hedge/Screen	A small, often multi-stemmed tree/shrub
Juglans californica	Southern California Black Walnut	Juglandaceae	Yes (See CalScape)	Altadena, San Gabriel Mountains	30	15-30	Deciduous	Rounded	4-7	Low	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)		
Lagerstroemia indica	Crape Myrtle	Lythraceae	No	China	25	25	Deciduous	Rounded	2-4	Low	Moderate		
Malosma laurina	Luarel Sumac	Anacardiaceae	Yes (See CalScape)	Southern California and northern Baja California	20	10-20	Evergreen	Rounded	4-7	Low	Low/Very Low (reduced summer water)	Good for Hedge/Screen	A small, often multi-stemmed tree/shrub
Olea europaea 'Swan Hill'	Swan Hill Olive, 'Wilson' Olive, or 'Majestic Beauty' Olive (all fruitless)	Oleaceae	No	Mediterranean	30	30	Evergreen	Rounded	4-7	Low	Low/Very Low (reduced summer water)		
Prunus ilicifolia ssp. ilicifolia	Hollyleaf Cherry	Rosaceae	Yes (See CalScape)	Altadena, San Gabriel Mountains	30	20	Evergreen	Rounded, Upright	4-7	Very Low	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)	Good for Hedge/Screen	A small, often multi-stemmed tree/shrub
Rhus integrifolia	Lemonade Berry	Anacardiaceae	Yes (See CalScape)	California	20	5-15	Evergreen	Rounded	2-4	Low	Low/Very Low (reduced summer water)	Good for Hedge/Screen	A small, often multi-stemmed tree/shrub
Rhus ovata	Sugar Bush	Anacardiaceae	Yes (See CalScape)	Arizona, Southern California and Baja California	10	5-10	Evergreen	Rounded	2-4	Low	Low/Very Low (reduced summer water)	Good for Hedge/Screen	A small, often multi-stemmed tree/shrub
Sambucus mexicana	Blue Elderberry	Adoxaceae	Yes (See CalScape)	Western North America	20	10-20	Evergreen	Rounded	2-4	Medium	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)		A small, often multi-stemmed tree/shrub
Tecoma stans	Yellow Bells	Bignoniaceae	No	North America, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean	25	15-20	Partly Deciduous	Rounded, Upright	4-7	Medium	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)	Good for Hedge/Screen	A small, often multi-stemmed tree/shrub
Xylococcus bicolor	Mission Manzanita	Ericaceae	Yes (See CalScape)	Verdugo Mountains, Santa Catalina Island, South Coast California	20	15-20	Evergreen	Rounded, Upright	4-7	Low	-	Good for Hedge/Screen	A small, often multi-stemmed tree/shrub

Altadena All-Stars Medium Trees (30-50ft)													
Botanical Name	Common Name	Family	Native to California (Floristic Provenance)	Native Range	Maximum Height (ft.)	Canopy Width (ft.)	Foliage Type	Growth Habit	Min Planting Area (ft.)	Water Use (WUCOLS)	Water Use (Selectree)	Water Use (Perry)	Notes/Recommendations
Aesculus californica	California Buckeye	Sapindaceae	Yes (See Calscape)	Northwestern Los Angeles County	30	20-30	Deciduous	Rounded	4 - 7	Low	Low	Low/Very Low (reduced summer water)	Great seasonal change with white bark and big chestnut colored seed pods. Flowers all at once with creamy white flowers when the leaves are off the plant. Use with caution, all parts toxic. Wants to be low and wide, difficult parkway tree. Loses leaves in summer dormancy.
Afrocarpus falcatus	African Fern Pine	Podocarpaceae	No	Southern Africa	50	25-40	Evergreen	Rounded	4 - 7	Moderate	Medium	Moderate	Best with supplemental irrigation (1X/month deep soak in summer after established).
Arbutus 'Marina'	Marina Madrone, Marina Strawberry Tree	Ericaceae	No	Mediterranean (Horticultural Selection)	40	30	Evergreen	Rounded, Vase	4 - 7	Moderate	Medium	Moderate	Likely a hybrid of <i>Arbutus unedo</i> and <i>Arbutus andrachne</i> , both native to the Mediterranean basin. (San Marcos Growers) Best with supplemental irrigation (1X/month deep soak in summer after established). Sensitive to Phytophthora rot in the nursery.
Arbutus unedo	Strawberry Tree, Strawberry Madrone	Ericaceae	No	Mediterranean Basin	35	20-35	Evergreen	Rounded, Vase	4 - 7	Low	Medium	Moderate	
Bauhinia variegata	Purple Orchid Tree	Fabaceae	No	India and China	35	35	Deciduous	Rounded	4 - 7	Medium	Medium	Moderate	
Corymbia papuana	Ghost Gum	Myrtaceae	No	Northern Australia	50	25-35	Evergreen	Rounded	4 - 7		-		
Ebenopsis ebano	Texas ebony	Fagaceae	No	Texas and Northern Mexico	40	30-40	Evergreen	Rounded	2 - 4	Very Low	Very Low	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)	
Geijera parviflora	Australian Willow	Rutaceae	No	Australia	50	20	Evergreen	Rounded	4 - 7	Medium	Medium	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)	
Jacaranda mimosifolia	Jacaranda	Bignoniaceae	No	Brazil, Bolivia	50	15-30	Deciduous	Rounded	4 - 7	Medium	Medium	Moderate	
Laurus nobilis	Sweet Bay	Lauraceae	No	Mediterranean Basin	40	15-30	Evergreen	Conical, Rounded	4 - 7	Low	Medium	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)	Prone to scale insect.
Laurus 'Saratoga'	Saratoga Laurel	Lauraceae	No	Mediterranean (Horticultural Selection)	40	15-30	Evergreen	Conical, Rounded	4 - 7	Low	Medium	?	Likely a hybrid of <i>Laurus nobilis</i> and <i>Laurus azorica</i> , both native to the Mediterranean basin. (San Marcos Growers)
Lophostemon confertus	Brisbane box	Myrtaceae	No	Australia	50	10-30	Evergreen	Rounded	4 - 7	Medium	Medium	Moderate	Fits nicely in small spaces
Lyonothamnus floribundus subsp. asplenifolius	Santa Cruz Island Ironwood	Rosaceae	Yes (see Calscape)	Santa Cruz Island, Santa Rosa Island, San Clemente Island	40	15-20	Evergreen	Conical, Rounded	4 - 7	Low	Low	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)	Best utilized in protected canyons, north/east facing slopes, north/east side of buildings/walls with supplemental irrigation (1X/month deep soak in summer after established).
Pinus torreyana	Torrey Pine	Pinaceae	Yes (See Calscape)	San Diego County Santa Rosa Island	50	20-25	Evergreen	Conical, Vase	Greater than 7	Moderate	Low/Very Low (reduced summer water)	Best with supplemental irrigation (1X/month deep soak in summer after established).	Sterile hybrid between <i>Pistacia atlantica</i> and <i>Pistacia integerrima</i> . Best with supplemental irrigation (1X/month deep soak in summer after established).
Pistacia 'Red Push'	Red Push Pistache	Anacardiaceae	No	Mediterranean/Asia (Horticultural Selection)	40	20-40	Deciduous	Rounded	4 - 7	Moderate	Medium	Moderate	
Platanus mexicana	Mexican sycamore	Platanaceae	No	Southern Mexico, Guatemala	50	30	Deciduous	Rounded	Greater than 7	Medium	-		
Prosopis glandulosa 'Maverick'	Maverick Thornless Texas Honey Mesquite	Fabaceae	No	Southwestern United States	35	25-30	Deciduous	Rounded	4 - 7	Very Low	Very Low	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)	
Quercus fusiformis	Escarpment Live Oak	Fagaceae	No	Texas, Mexico	50	20-40	Evergreen	Rounded	Greater than 7	Moderate	Medium	-	
Quercus tomentella	Island Oak	Fagaceae	Yes (See Calscape)	Channel Islands	50	25-40	Evergreen	Rounded	4 - 7	Low	Low	-	

Altadena All-Stars Large Trees (>50ft)

Botanical Name	Common Name	Family	Native to California (Floristic Provenance)	Native Range	Maximum Height (ft.)	Canopy Width (ft.)	Foliage Type	Growth Habit	Min Planting Area (ft.)	Water Use (WUCOLS/ Selectree)	Water Use (Perry)	Notes/Recommendations
Cedrus deodara	Deodar Cedar	Pinaceae	No	Eastern Afghanistan, Northern Pakistan, Northern India	60	20-30	Evergreen	Conical	Greater than 7	Moderate	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)	Best with supplemental irrigation (1X/month deep soak in summer after established).
Dalbergia sissoo	Indian rosewood	Fabaceae	No	Indian subcontinent	60	30-40	Partly Deciduous	Rounded	Greater than 7	Medium	-	
Handroanthus impetiginosus	Pink Trumpet	Bignoniaceae	No	Brazil, Northern Mexico and Argentina	60	35	Deciduous	Rounded	Greater than 7	Moderate	Moderate	
Pinus canariensis	Canary Island Pine	Pinaceae	No	Canary Islands	80	20-35	Evergreen	Columnar, Conical	4 - 7	Moderate	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)	Best with supplemental irrigation (1X/month deep soak in summer after established).
Pinus eldarica	Mondell Pine, Afghan Pine	Pinaceae	No	Middle East	80	15-25	Evergreen	Conical	4 - 7	Low	-	
Platanus racemosa	California Sycamore	Platanaceae	Yes (See Calscape)	Altadena, San Gabriel Mountains	80	20-50	Deciduous	Rounded	Greater than 7	High	High/Moderate (reduced summer water)	
Quercus agrifolia	Coast Live Oak	Fagaceae	Yes (See Calscape)	Altadena, San Gabriel Mountains	70	30-70	Evergreen	Rounded	Greater than 7	Low	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)	
Quercus chrysolepis	Canyon Live Oak	Fagaceae	Yes (See Calscape)	Altadena, San Gabriel Mountains	70	30	Evergreen	Rounded	Greater than 7	Low	High/Moderate (reduced summer water)	
Quercus douglasii	Blue Oak	Fagaceae	Yes (See Calscape)	Northwestern Los Angeles County	70	40-50	Evergreen	Rounded	Greater than 7	Low	Very Low	Low/Very Low (reduced summer water)
Quercus engelmannii	Engelmann Oak, Mesa Oak, Pasadena Oak	Fagaceae	Yes (See Calscape)	Altadena, San Gabriel Mountains	70	75-80	Partly Deciduous	Rounded	Greater than 7	Low	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)	
Quercus kelloggii	Black Oak	Fagaceae	Yes (See Calscape)	San Gabriel Mountains	70	30-50	Deciduous	Rounded	Greater than 7	Moderate	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)	Best with supplemental irrigation (1X/month deep soak in summer after established).
Quercus rugosa	Netleaf Oak	Fagaceae	No	Southeastern Arizona, Southwestern New Mexico, Mexico, Central America	60	20-40	Evergreen	Columnar, Rounded	Greater than 7	Low	Low	-
Quercus suber	Cork Oak	Fagaceae	No	Mediterranean Basin	70	70	Evergreen	Rounded	Greater than 7	Low	Moderate/Low (reduced summer water)	
Quercus virginiana	Southern live oak	Fagaceae	No	Southern United States	80	60-75	Evergreen	Rounded	Greater than 7	Medium	Moderate	
Quercus wislizeni	Interior Live Oak	Fagaceae	Yes (See Calscape)	Altadena, San Gabriel Mountains	70	40-75	Evergreen	Rounded, Vase	Greater than 7	Very Low	-	
Tipuana tipu	Tipu	Fabaceae	No	Bolivia and Southern Brazil	60	60	Partly Deciduous	Rounded	Greater than 7	Low	Moderate	
Umbellularia californica	California Bay Laurel	Lauraceae	Yes (See Calscape)	Altadena, San Gabriel Mountains	80	25-30	Evergreen	Rounded	Greater than 7	Moderate	High/Moderate (reduced summer water)	Best with supplemental irrigation (1X/month deep soak in summer after established).