



PLANTS

A resilient landscape is fire-wise, water wise and promotes biodiversity by using California native plants. These gardens use sustainable practices, plant selection, and maintenance to reduce the risk of fire in the defensible space zone. Resilient gardens save water, protect us from fire and promote biodiversity.

PLANT SELECTION	WATER & IRRIGATION	NATIVE PLANTS & COMMUNITIES	INVASIVE SPECIES	IMPORTANCE OF OAK WOODLAND	P MANA
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Importance of Oak Woodland

Oak trees (*Quercus spp.*) are recognized as significant historical, aesthetic, and ecological resources in California. There are 40 species of native oaks found throughout California on



photo by Jon Kanagy

approximately 20 million acres in widely different areas: the central valley, lower foothills, mixed coniferous zone and coastal mountains. Not only are oak woodlands

beautiful, they are surprisingly productive communities. More than 330 species of animals (and thousands of insect species!) use oak habitats for some part of the year. As with almost all natural habitats in California, oak woodlands currently face a number of threats and uncertainties. These include concerns about poor regeneration, competition from invasive species, native and introduced pests, habitat loss, changes in land use, threats from fire, and climate changes.

Oak Trees and Fire

Oaks are integral to California's native ecosystems, making the health and survival of our native oak species particularly important. Fortunately, oaks have evolved mechanisms to survive periodic burning, since fire is a natural element of oak ecosystems. With low- and even moderate-intensity fires that scorch all the leaves on native oaks, little or no long-term damage typically occurs. Even fully burned oaks often will re-sprout and recover over time.

When fires occur in the summer and fall, native oaks usually will

not produce a set of new leaves until the following spring. Following such fires the trees may appear dead, since all the leaves are brown and brittle and the trunks may be blackened. Many of these trees will survive.

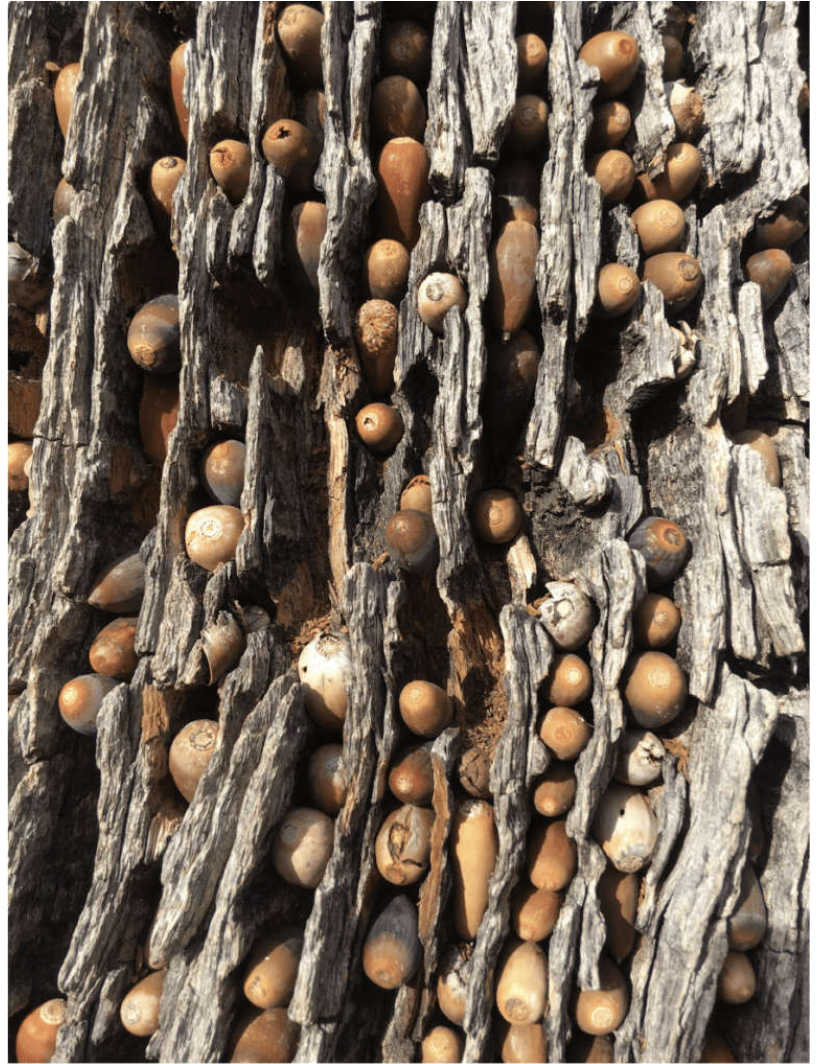


photo by Jon Kanagy

Some oak species are reported to be less prone to ignition than many common non-native trees including eucalyptus, pepper trees and some pines. The large full canopy of oak trees can catch and deflect embers.

Re Oak California

California's oaks are the powerhouses of our ecosystems, but disease and habitat destruction have put oak populations in serious decline. Now, Californians are coming together to restore this vital natural resource. With a few simple actions, you too can be part of the solution. Consider planting an oak (or a collection of oaks) on your property with locally appropriate oak species. Often, the local Resource Conservation District or local chapter of the California Native Plant Society have volunteer projects to plant acorns

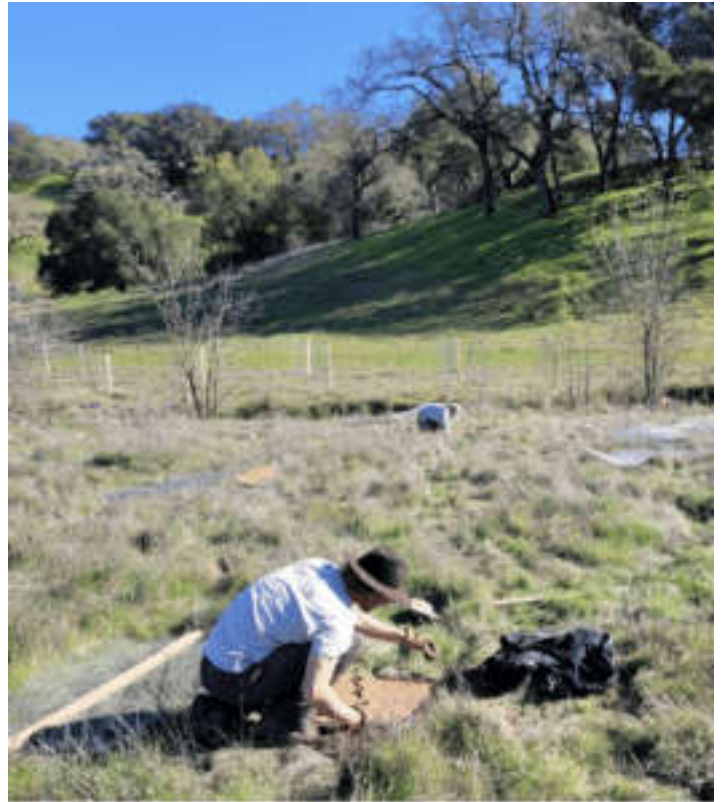


photo by Jon Kanagy

and care for seedling oaks. Find your local Resource Conservation District [here](#), and your local chapter of the California Native Plant Society [here](#).

Oak Tree Ordinances

Many jurisdictions in California, including Sonoma County, have Oak Tree Ordinances, and may have other protections for trees and their related plant communities. Check with your local municipality for information about protected trees, and permitting that may be required before removal, pruning, grading, or excavation with the root zone.



Resources

California Native Plant Society – [ReOak, Restoring California's native oak trees](#)

California Native Plant Society – [Fire Recovery Guide](#)

California Association of Resource Conservation Districts – [Find Your Local RCD](#)

University of California Cooperative Extension – [Urban Oak Care](#)

University of California Cooperative Extension – [Protecting Homes from Wildfire in Oak Woodlands](#)

University of California Cooperative Extension – [The Cultural Values of Oaks](#)

We appreciate the contributors to this section:

[California Flora Nursery](#)

[alscape.org](#)

Sources:

[C Master Gardener Program of Sonoma County, California Natives](#)

[arin Chapter, California Native Plant Society Plant Replacement List](#)

[California Flora Nursery](#)

[alscape](#) a native plant database from the California Native Plant Society



Sonoma Ecology Center works to address challenges related to water supply and quality, open space, rural character, biodiversity, energy, climate change, and a better quality of life for all residents.

<https://sonomaecologycenter.org/>



The UC Master Gardener Program of Sonoma County has been extending educational outreach and providing technical assistance to home gardeners since 1981.

<https://sonomamg.ucanr.edu/>



The mission of the Habitat Corridor Project is to create and promote California native plant restoration gardens in the urban environment.

<http://habitatcorridorproject.org/>



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<https://www.firesafesonoma.org/>



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