



Garden Design Basics

S. M. Schenk 2016

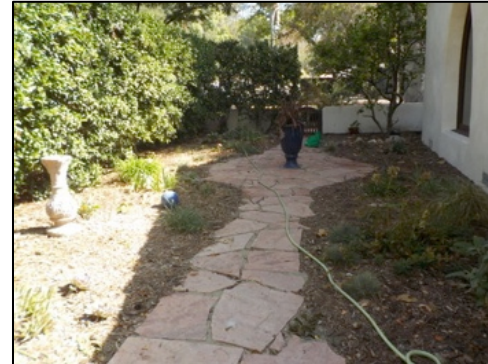
Evaluating the Site

- Decide on general purpose of the area
- Make a scale drawing of the existing area with its permanent features
- Locate irrigation and underground utilities (call 811 for utilities)



Evaluating the Site

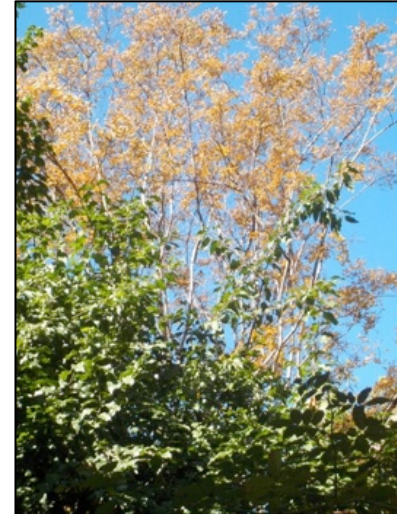
- Determine amount of light each area gets and when it gets it
- Decide what features you'd like to add
- Sketch in the proposed beds, sitting areas, and walkways



Choosing the plants

What are your general preferences?

- ◉ Color scheme
- ◉ Trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals
- ◉ Evergreen or deciduous
- ◉ Flowers, fruit, autumn color, fragrance, texture, attraction to wildlife, etc
- ◉ Amount of maintenance required



Choosing specific plants

What do you need to consider?

- The light requirement of the plant
- The water requirement of the plant
- The mature height and width of the plant
- The scale of the plant in relation to the size of the area



Placing plants in the design

- Be sure the location has the appropriate amount of light for the plant
- Put most taller plants in back of beds viewed from one side; in the middle of beds viewed from two sides
- Be sure there is enough room for plants to reach mature size without shearing
- Include annuals or short-lived perennials to fill space until shrubs grow in



Placing plants in the design

- Group plants with similar water needs
- Place plants with different shapes, sizes, and textures of leaves near each other for contrast
- Plant in groups and repeat colors to avoid the “one of everything” look and to give continuity
- The garden will have an overall style but each bed will be different in the amount of light, wind, and so on it gets, so the plants may differ. Just make sure each bed looks good and relates to others

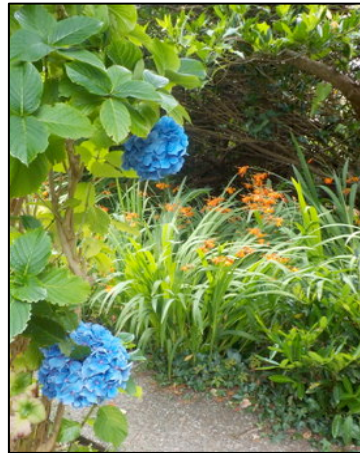
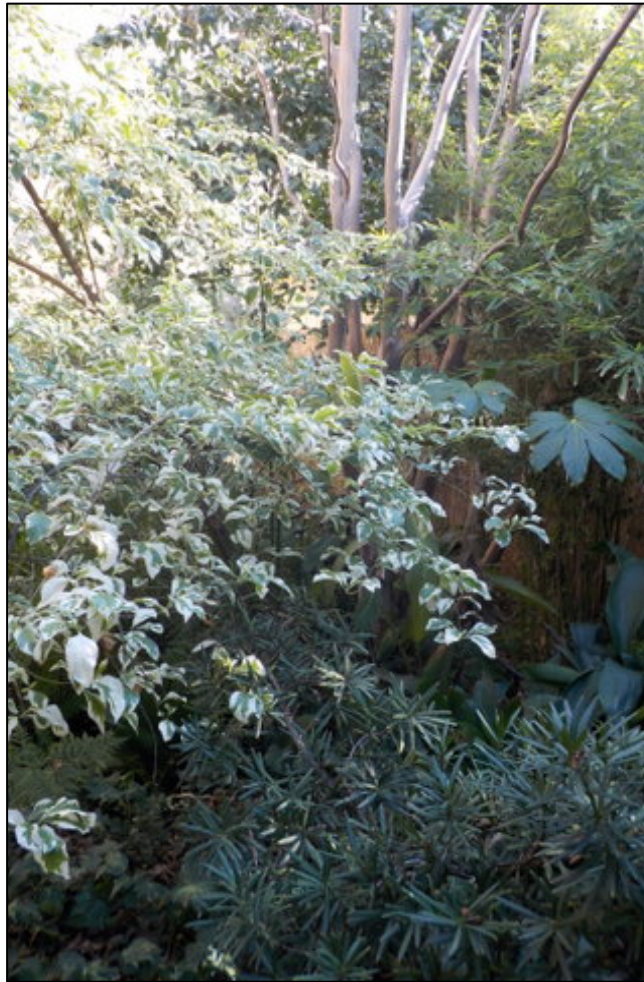


Maintenance

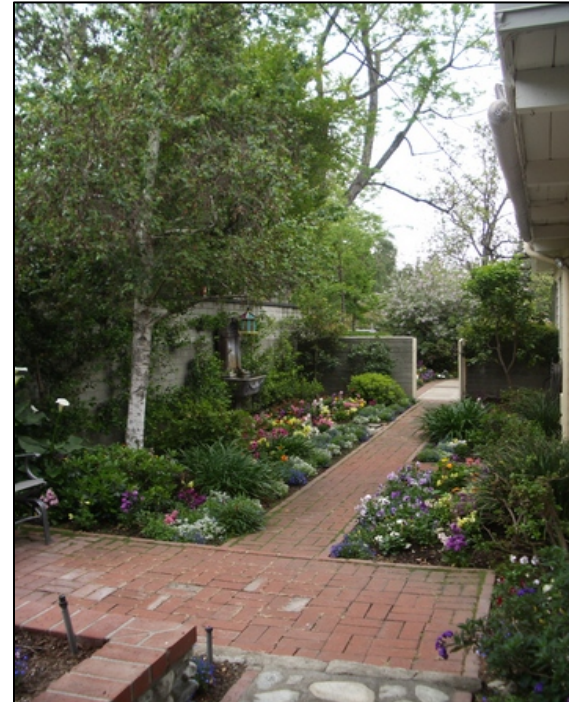
- ◉ Find out what each plant needs and create a table giving info for the plants
- ◉ Mulch; weed regularly. When plants cover the area, fewer weeds will grow
- ◉ Only shear formal hedges; prune other shrubs back to branching points to keep natural shape. Leaving room for the mature size of a plant means you have to prune very little
- ◉ Cut leaves do not grow back—remove dead or unwanted leaves entirely. For some grasses, cut whole plant down to a couple of inches to renew



Contrast and texture



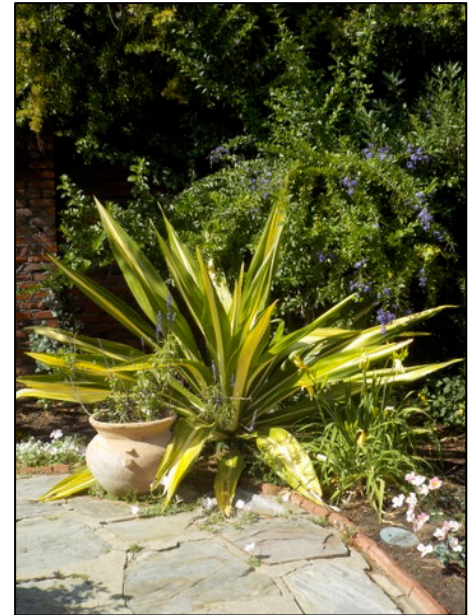
Placement



Repetition

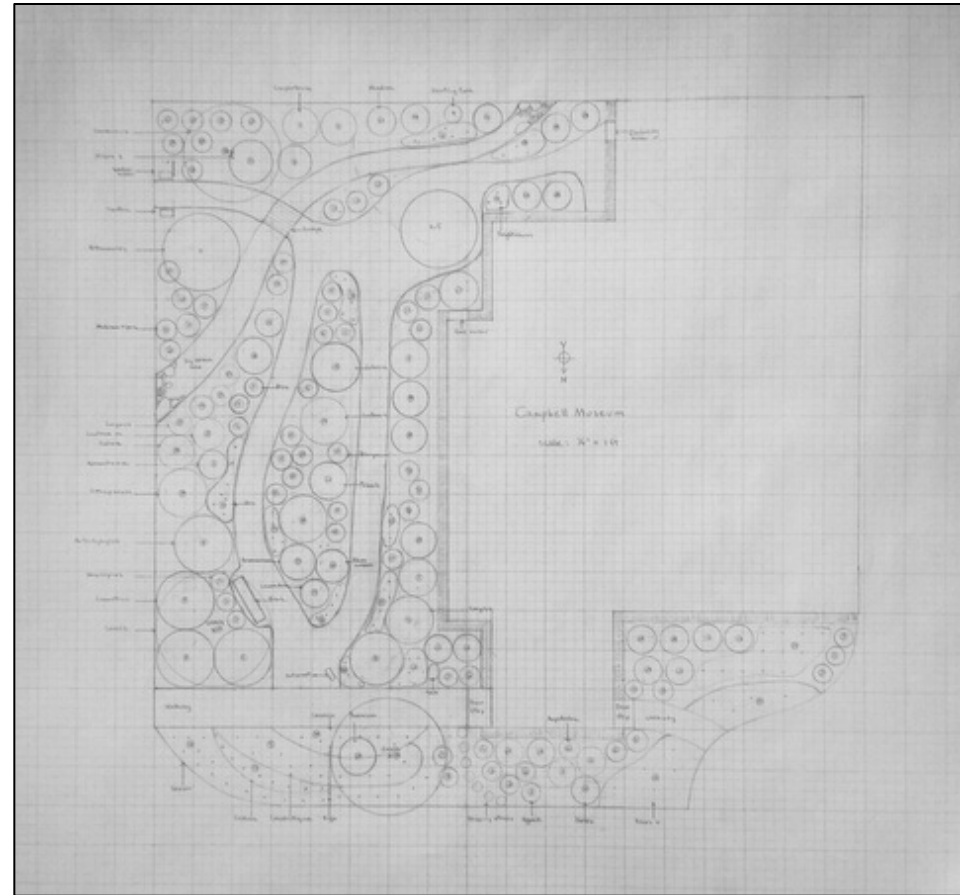


Focal points



Example

Garden
principally on
east side of
building

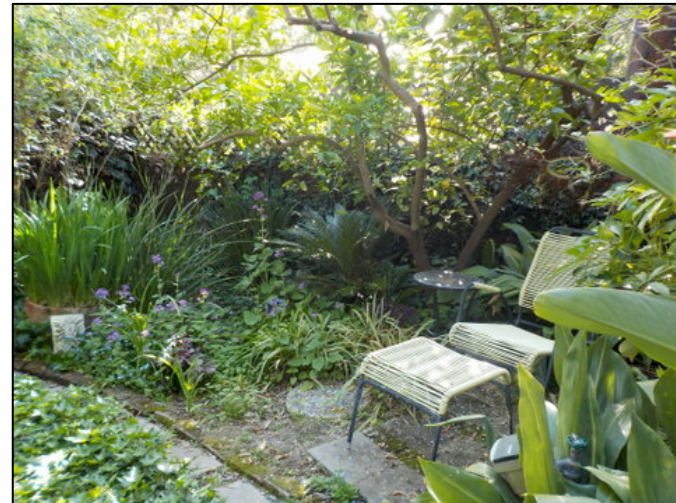


Example plant list

Campbell Museum plant list

Name	Variety	Common name	Height (ft)	Width (ft)	Number	Size	Comments	Maintenance (prune plants only if really needed)
<i>Adenostema fasciculatum</i>	var. prostratum	Chamise	2	4	1	1 gal (or 5)		Prune late summer (will sucker at cuts)
<i>Aesclepias speciosa</i>		Showy milkweed	2	spreads	3	1 gal	Stems die in fall; will grow back in spring; Monarch butterfly larval food plant	Remove dead stalks in spring
<i>Agave attenuata</i>	Nova if available	Foxtail agave			9	1 gal	Rosettes to 2ft, die after flowering; forms large clump; see note below	Divide and replant as needed
<i>Aloe striata</i>		Coral aloe	1	2	10	1 gal	Does not form clumps; flowers to 3 ft	Remove dead flower stalks when they look bad
<i>Arctostaphylos</i>	Sonoma; Paradise; Harmony; Sunset	Manzanita	3	6	2	1 gal (or 5)	Prune to keep 3 ft tall or less	Cut back a bit in summer if needed
<i>Aspidistra elatior</i>		Cast iron plant	2	3	8	1 gal	Slow to spread	Remove brown or damaged leaves when seen
<i>Carpenteria californica</i>		Carpenteria	6	4	5	1 gal (or 5)		Prune rarely in winter to maintain size
<i>Ceanothus</i>	Yankee Point, Mills Glory or Heart's Desire	California lilac	3	8	3	1 gal (or 5)	Yankee Point is wider than the others	Cut back a bit in summer if needed
<i>Ceratostigma plumbaginoides</i>		Dwarf plumbago	1	2	11	1 gal	Autumn color; deciduous	Cut old stems to ground when new leaves show
<i>Cercis occidentalis</i>		Western redbud	12	15	2	15 gal	Choose multi-trunked tree	Prune after flowering but only rarely
<i>Corylus cornuta</i>		Western hazelnut	8	8	1	1 gal	Deciduous	Prune in winter
<i>Dietes butcheriana</i>		Wide-leaved dietes	3	3	7	1 gal		Cut dead leaves from base; do not shear plant
<i>Festuca glauca</i>	Elijah Blue	Blue fescue	1	1	20	1 gal		Pull off dead leaves anytime; cut plant to 2" in Feb
<i>Galvezia speciosa</i>	Firecracker	Island snapdragon	3	5	1	1 gal		Remove dead material in late summer
<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>		Toyon	10	10	1	5 gal	Slow grower; prune to manage size	Prune in spring
<i>Iris hybrid</i>	Pacific coast iris: a purple one	Pacific coast iris	2	2	17	1 gal		Remove brown or damaged leaves when seen
<i>Lantana camara</i>	Miss Huff (sterile)	Lantana	3	5	1	1 gal	or another red and yellow one	Prune anytime; can cut back by 1/3 in winter
<i>Lantana montevedensis</i>		Trailing lantana	2	8	1	1 gal	Will need pruning to keep in bounds	Prune anytime; can cut back by 1/3 in winter
<i>Lavandula angustifolia</i>	Hidcote Blue	English lavender	2	2	2	1 gal		Prune lightly after flowering; cut back 1/3 early spring
<i>Leymus condensatus</i>	Canyon Prince	Giant ryegrass	3	3	5	1 gal	Clumps spread slowly; see note below	Remove dead material in late summer
<i>Lotus scoparius</i>		Deerweed	2	2	3	1 gal	Replace with yellow Mimulus if Lotus not available	Remove dead material in late summer
<i>Mahonia aquifolium</i>		Oregon grape	6	4	1	1 gal		Remove dead material in late summer
<i>Mahonia repens</i>		Creeping mahonia	2	3	23	1 gal		Remove dead material in late summer
<i>Nandina domestica</i>		Heavenly bamboo	6	3	13	1 gal (or 5)		Do not shear (see below); remove dead flower stalks
<i>Pelargonium hartorum</i>	an orange one	Zonal-leaved geranium	2	2	3	1 gal	Flowers most of year if dead-headed	Remove dead flowers; cut back in spring by 1/3
<i>Phlomis fruticosa</i>		Jerusalem sage	4	4	2	1 gal		Prune rarely; can be cut back hard in late winter
<i>Pharum</i>	Black Adder	New Zealand flax	4	3	1	1 gal		Do not shear; remove entire dead or damaged leaves
<i>Pittosporum tabira</i>	Variegata	Japanese mock orange	5	5	4	1 gal	Slow; easily pruned to keep in bounds	Prune rarely; do so after flowering
<i>Polystichum munitum</i>	(if not available, use <i>Nephrolepis cordifolia</i>)	Sword fern	3	3	24	1 gal	Both <i>Polystichum</i> and <i>Nephrolepis</i> are rated Moderate in WUCOLS	Remove dead material; pull up runners as needed
<i>Ribes aureum</i>		Golden currant	5	5	1	1 gal	Deciduous	Prune very little after fruit are gone
<i>Ribes speciosum</i>		Fuchsia-flowered gooseberry	5	5	1	1 gal	Deciduous	Prune very little after fruit are gone
<i>Ribes viburnifolium</i>		Perfume currant	2	6	9	1 gal		Prune tips regularly to encourage dense growth
<i>Rosemarinus officinalis</i>	Ken Taylor	Rosemary	3	4	1	1 gal	Will not send out new growth from woody portions of stems	Prune spring or summer; head back to control size
<i>Salvia apiana</i>		White sage	3	4	1	1 gal		Remove dead material in late summer
<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>		Blue elderberry	12	12	1	5 gal	Deciduous	Prune in winter
<i>Sedum spathulifolium</i>	Cape Blanco	Stonecrop	0.5	1	20	4-6"	Spreads to form groundcover; set at angle so water drains off crown	Remove dead flower stalks
<i>Senecio repens</i>		Blue chalk fingers	1	2	16	6"	<i>S. mandraliscae</i> (Blue Chalksticks) is also blue but larger	Remove dead flower stalks

Examples



More



More



Where to look for help

- Some plants are easily available at local nurseries but some may only be available further afield or online
- Information about California natives can be found at www.laspilitas.com
- A picture guide to some of our local natives can be found at www.claremontgardenclub.org
- “Landscape Plants for California Gardens” by Bob Perry: a terrific resource for choosing appropriate plants. Available online at <http://landdesignpublishing.com/docs/LPCG%20Sections%201-3.pdf>
- Info about sensory gardens can be found at <http://www.sensorytrust.org.uk/index.html>