

# White Yarrow

*Achillea millefolium*



The white flowers are a perfect landing pad for butterflies and moths!



Yarrow attracts ladybugs.



The Latin name *Achillea* comes from the Greek hero Achilles, who was known for his knowledge of medicinal plants. *Millefolium* means "thousands of leaves" referring to the many small leaves that Yarrow has.



The leaves look feathery and have an aromatic smell when crushed or rubbed.

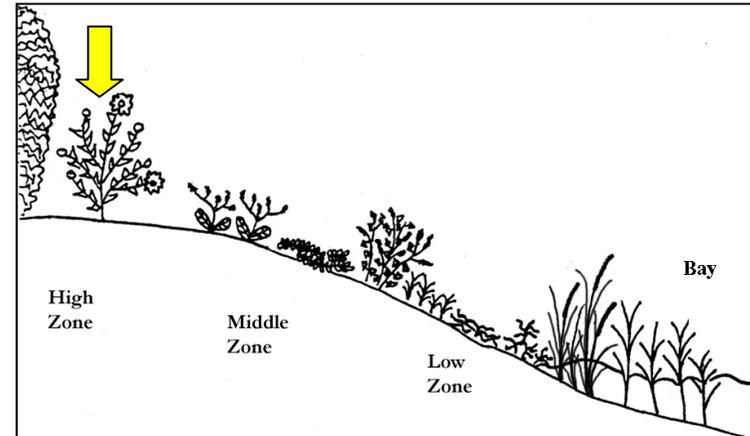
Did you know . . .

Yarrow has been used as medicine for a very long time. You can make a tea by boiling the entire plant in water. It is used for treating wounds, colds, and fevers.



# White Yarrow

*Achillea millefolium*



## ID tips:

- This is an upland plant and will be seen in areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh.
- This plant has fine feathery leaves that grow in a clump low to the ground.
- The flowers are small and white and clustered together. Yarrow is typically in bloom from May—June.

# California Sagebrush

*Artemisia californica*



California sagebrush provides good shelter for birds and other wildlife.



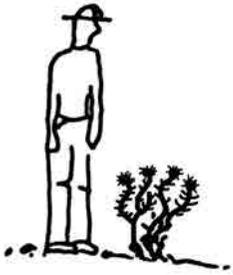
Sagebrush has a unique smell. Rub the leaves between your fingers and see for yourself! This plant is sometimes referred to as "cowboy cologne".



The needle-like leaves help the plant to conserve moisture. This is an important adaptation to the hot and dry summers in parts of California.

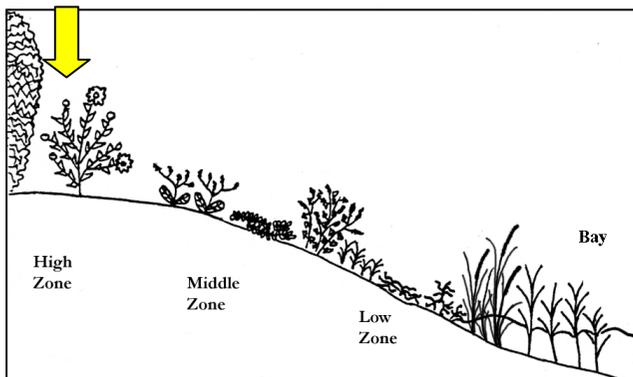
Did you know . . .

California sagebrush is **allelopathic**. That means that it secretes chemicals into the ground so that other plants can't grow around it.



# California Sagebrush

*Artemisia californica*



## ID tips:

- This is a bushy plant that will be found in the upland areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh.
- The fine needle-like leaves are grayish-green in color and have a unique smell when crushed or rubbed.
- The flowers are small and yellowish found at the top of long stalks. Sagebrush is typically in bloom from July-October.

# Mugwort

*Artemisia douglasiana*



Mugwort provides excellent cover for small animals and seeds for birds to eat.



The leaves of this plant have a unique smell when rubbed or crushed.

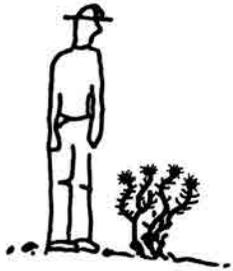


Mugwort grows **rhizomes**—stems that grow horizontally underground and then send new plant shoots up to the surface.

Did you know...

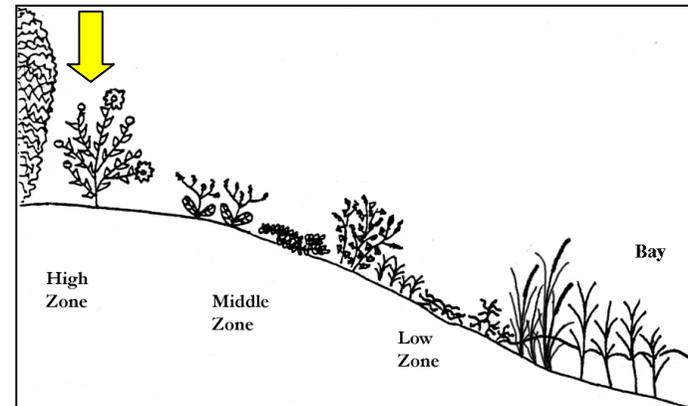
Mugwort has a history of medicinal and spiritual uses:

- It has been used in a tea to relieve digestive problems.
- It has been known to prevent and soothe poison oak rash if the leaves are rubbed on the exposed area immediately after contact.
- Mugwort has been widely used by Native American tribes in rituals, as a way to keep spirits away and to induce dreaming.



# Mugwort

*Artemisia douglasiana*



## ID tips:

- This plant grows in the upland areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh. It grows in dense clusters of upright stems that can grow to be 3 feet tall.
- The leaves are 1-2 inches long and generally have five points—two on each side and one at the tip. The leaves are dark green to grayish-green on the top side and silver-colored underneath. There are fine silver hairs on the stems and on the undersides of the leaves.
- The flowers are small and yellow and grow at the top of long stems. Mugwort typically blooms from June to October.



Native Hover Fly

# Marsh Coyote Bush

*Baccharis douglasii*



Painted Lady butterfly



This plant grows **rhizomes**—stems that grow horizontally underground and then send new plant shoots up to the surface.

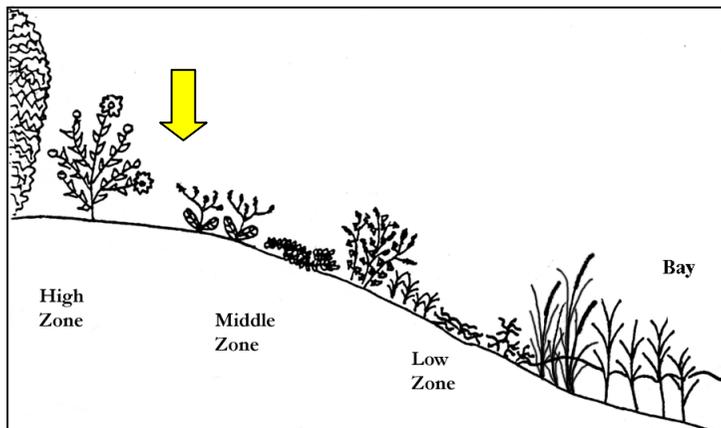
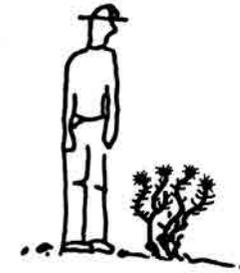


Did you know . . .

- *Baccharis* species provide nectar (sweet liquid secreted by flowers) for most of the predatory wasps, native skippers (small butterflies), and native flies.

# Marsh Coyote Bush

*Baccharis douglasii*



## ID tips:

- This plant grows in the **mid-high zone** of the marsh. It prefers moist soils and is salt tolerant.
- It has tall upright stems that grow in patches that can reach heights of 3-6 feet. The stems hold narrow pointed leaves that are somewhat sticky. The stems can also have a woody base.
- The flowers grow in clusters and are round, fluffy, and white. Marsh Coyote Bush is typically in bloom from late summer into the fall.

# Coyote Bush

*Baccharis pilularis*



Coyote Bush can grow 5-9 feet high. Because this is one of the taller, bushier shrubs along a coastal salt marsh, egrets and herons will sometimes use it to nest in.



Some people say that when Coyote Bush is covered in its fuzzy white flowers it looks as if a coyote has brushed against it. It also can be a good hiding place for a coyote!



The seeds have fine hairs attached to them which catch the wind and allow them to fly through the air. This helps the plant to spread its seeds.

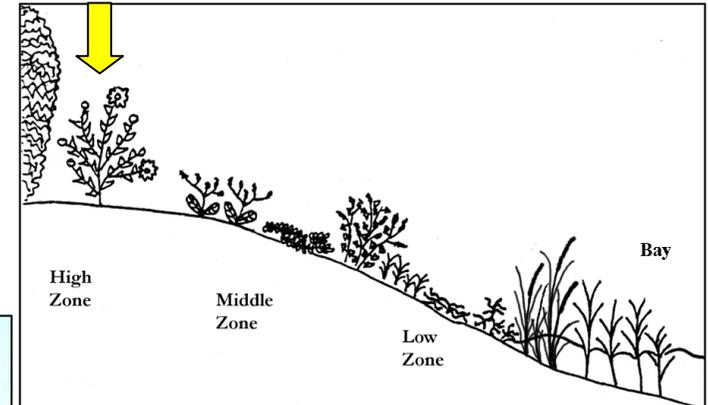
Did you know . . .

- Some indigenous tribes have used limbs of coyote bush for building houses and for making arrow shafts.
- Coast Miwok have heated the leaves and applied them to swellings. It has also been used as a tea for poison oak rash.
- Coyote bush can become sticky and a bit smelly on hot summer days. The oils don't taste good and there is a good chance it keeps animals from eating it.



# Coyote Bush

*Baccharis pilularis*



## ID tips:

- This is the tallest plant on the edge of the salt marsh. It can grow up to 6 feet tall and is found in the **high zone** of the marsh.
- It has small egg-shaped leaves that are waxy and have jagged edges.
- The flowers are white and fluffy and grow in clusters. Coyote Bush typically is in bloom from August to December.

# Blue Wild Rye

*Elymus glaucus*



These grasses form dense bunches with extensive roots that can help prevent erosion.



Grass flowers have evolved to pollinate by the wind or by themselves. They don't need showy flowers to attract pollinating insects or animals. In fact, you might only know a grass is flowering by how much you are sneezing!



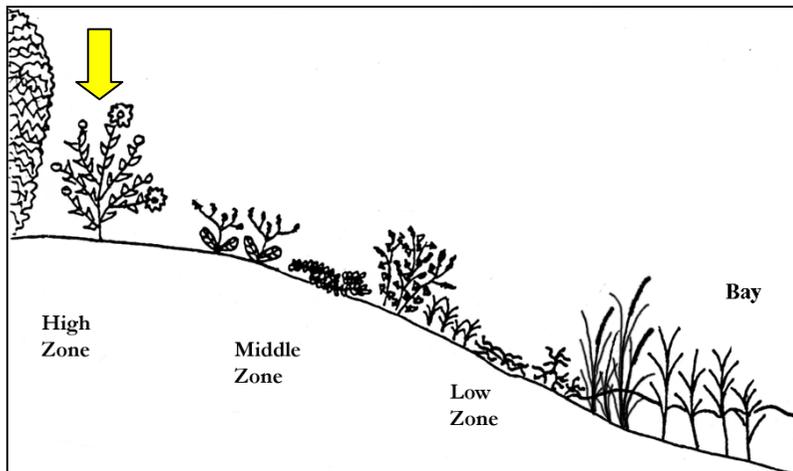
The leaves and seeds of Blue Wild Rye provide food for birds and waterfowl.

Did you know...

Blue wild rye is one of the most common bunchgrasses in California. It grows in a variety of habitats and elevations.

# Blue Wild Rye

*Elymus glaucus*



## ID tips:

- This grass grows in the upland areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh. It grows in large bunches that can be 2 feet wide and over 2 feet tall.
- The leaf blades are bluish-green, wide, and up to 12 inches long.
- It is most easily identified when it sends up its flower or seed stalks. The seed heads are narrow and compact, and look a lot like wheat. Blue Wild Rye typically has seed stalks from June-July.

# California Buckwheat

*Eriogonum fasciculatum*



This plant is considered the most important native source of honey in California.

Buckwheat is **drought-tolerant**—meaning it can survive for long periods of time without water.



California Buckwheat is a valuable plant that provides food and nectar for many types of butterflies and bees.

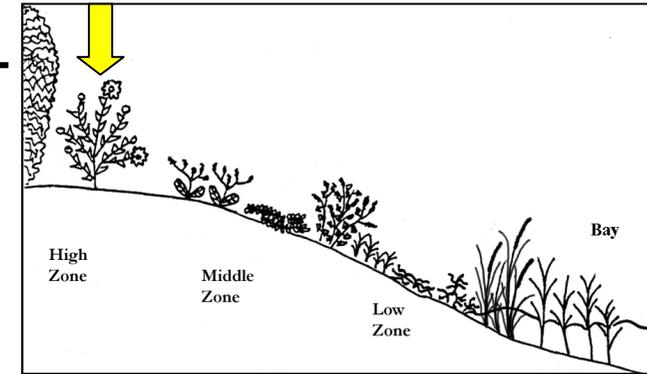


Did you know...

California Buckwheat has many medicinal uses! The leaves can be made into a tea to cure headache and stomach pain. The roots can be made into a tea to treat colds or they can be ground up to treat wounds. A tea made with dried flowers and roots has been used to prevent heart problems.

# California Buckwheat

*Eriogonum fasciculatum*



## ID tips:

- This plant grows in the upland areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh. It is a bush that can grow up to three feet tall and six feet wide.
- The leaves are small, narrow (almost look like needles) with edges that are rolled under. They are dark green on the top side and fuzzy whitish-green underneath. They grow in dense clusters along the woody stems.
- The flowers are small, pink and white, and grow in dense, round clusters at the tops of the stems. California Buckwheat typically blooms in late spring, bringing white flowers which turn pink in the summer and then rust-colored in the fall.

# Naked Buckwheat

*Eriogonum nudum*



This plant has no leaves along its tall stems, which is why it is called "naked" buckwheat.



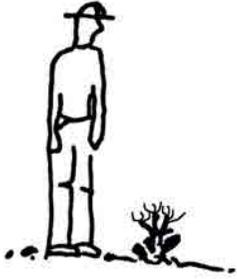
This plant is **drought-tolerant** which means it can survive for long periods of time without water.



Lange's Metalmark Butterfly

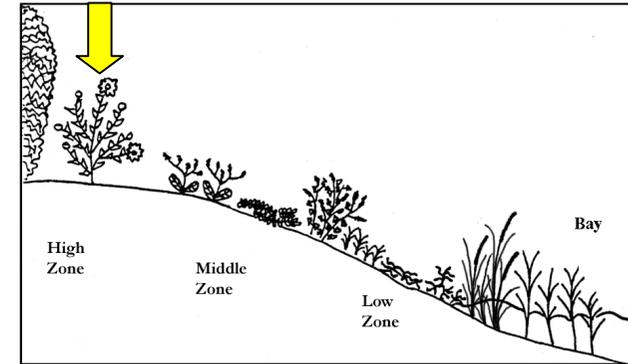


Did you know...  
Naked Buckwheat attracts butterflies and bees. The endangered Lange's Metalmark Butterfly depends on this plant's nectar for food throughout its life cycle—from larva to butterfly.



# Naked Buckwheat

*Eriogonum nudum*

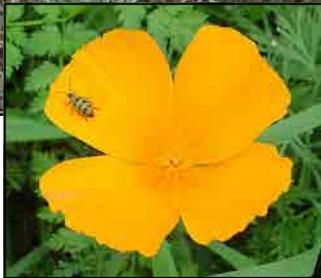
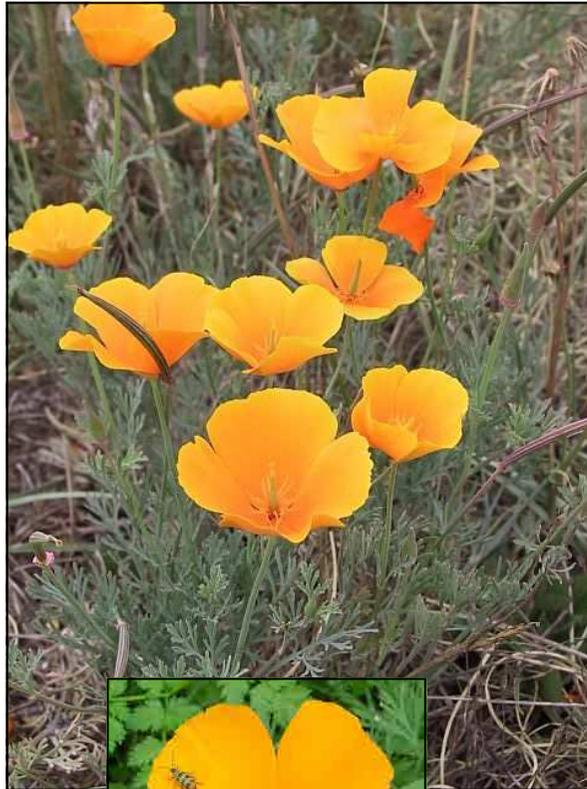


## ID tips:

- This plant grows in the upland areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh. It grows low to the ground but sends up tall flowering stalks that can be up to 6 feet tall.
- The leaves are flat, green, and **basal**, which means they grow close to the ground near the base of the plant. They are oval-shaped and can grow to be 2 inches long.
- The flowers are small, white or light pink, and grow at the tips of long stems in small round clusters. Each stem branches off at the top, sending two more stems outward with flower clusters at their tips. Naked Buckwheat typically blooms from May-December.

# California Poppy

*Eschscholzia californica*



California poppy is pollinated by beetles and European honey bees.



This plant attracts butterflies and **beneficial insects**—insects that help fight off the “bad bugs”, or the bugs that can cause damage to other insect and plant communities.

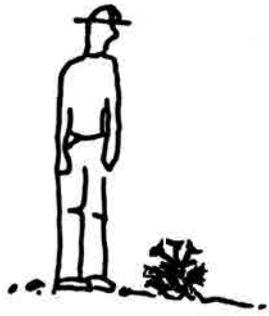
Birds eat the leaves and seeds.



This is the state flower of California!

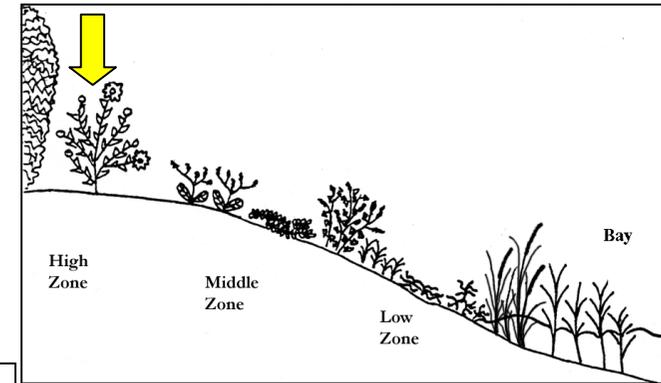
Did you know...

California poppy has been used as a medicine. When made into a tea it can act as a pain killer, treat insomnia, and get rid of lice. The seeds are used in cooking.



# California Poppy

*Eschscholzia californica*



## ID tips:

- This plant grows in the upland areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh. It can grow to be two feet tall and can spread through an area creating a field of orange flowers in the springtime.
- The leaves are bluish-green, grow from the base of the plant, and look like parsley.
- The flowers are yellow or orange, grow on long stems and have four silky smooth petals. The petals close at night or in cold and windy weather. California poppy typically blooms from February-September. The seed pods appear after a plant has flowered and they are thin and up to 3 inches long. The seed pods "pop" open when dry, spreading the seeds away from the plant. Do you think this could be why it is called a "poppy"?

# Western Goldenrod

*Euthamia occidentalis*



This plant can grow up to 3 feet tall and can spread quickly by **rhizomes**—underground stems that send up new green shoots.

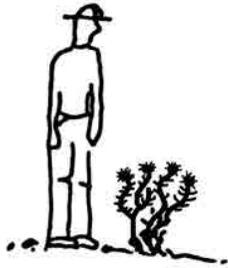


Western Goldenrod seeds are attached to fluffy white hairs that help it spread in the wind.



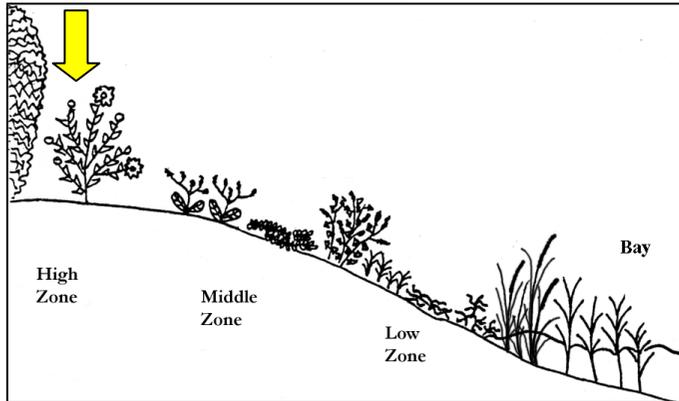
Did you know...

Western Goldenrod attracts pollinators and **beneficial insects**—insects that help fight off the “bad bugs”, or the bugs that can cause damage to other insect and plant communities.



# Western Goldenrod

*Euthamia occidentalis*



## ID tips:

- This plant grows in the upland areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh. It grows clusters of tall single-stalked shoots that can reach 3 feet in height.
- Its leaves are straight, narrow, and up to 4 inches long.
- The flowers are small, golden yellow and grow in dense clusters at the top of the shoot. Western Goldenrod typically blooms from July-November.

# Red Fescue

*Festuca rubra*



Red fescue can create a lot of leaf litter (fallen leaves) which can decompose and help enrich the soil.



White-crowned Sparrow

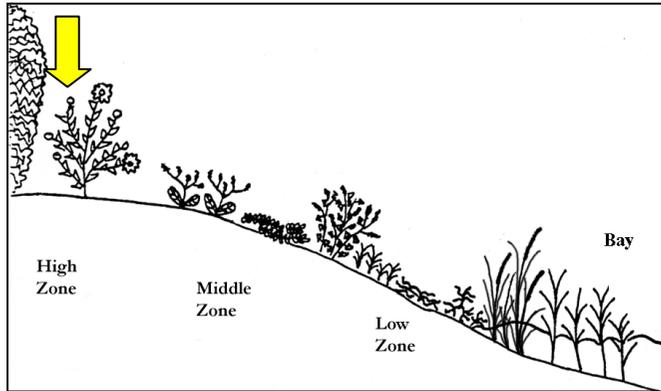


Did you know...

Un-mowed grasses are valuable seed sources for White-crowned, Golden-crowned, and Savannah Sparrows. They also provide cover for small mammals like voles, shrews, and mice.



California vole



# Red Fescue

*Festuca rubra*



## ID tips:

- This grass grows in the upland areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh. It grows in bunches that can be 2 feet wide and 2 feet tall.
- The leaf blades are straight, narrow and can be up to 16 inches long.
- It is most easily identified when it sends up its flower or seed stalks. These seed heads are reddish in color and have tight clusters of seeds, that open up as they mature. Red Fescue typically sends up its seed stalks between April and November.

# Marsh Gumplant

*Grindelia stricta* var. *angustifolia*



The bushy gumplant provides a good nesting place for sparrows and a good hiding place for California Clapper Rails when the tide is high. It also has a nutritious seed for animals to eat.



From  
gummy  
bud to  
flower to  
seed.



Did you know . . .

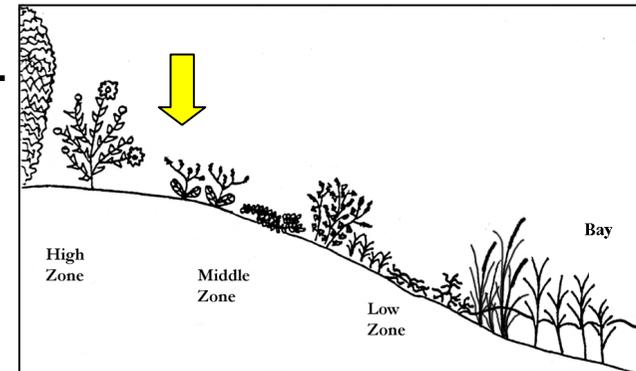
Gumplants produce a sticky white "gum" on their buds to help protect the buds from insects. The Ohlone people have used this gum as a medicine to heal skin irritations.

And if you crush a leaf between your fingers, some people say it smells like Juicy Fruit gum!



# Marsh Gumplant

*Grindelia stricta* var. *angustifolia*



## ID tips:

- This plant can be found in the **mid-high zone** of the salt marsh. It is a bush that can grow up to 3 feet tall and 3 feet wide.
- It has fleshy, strap-like leaves that grow up to 4 inches long. They connect to stems that can be green, light brown, maroon, or woody.
- The flowers are yellow and daisy-like and the buds are covered in a white sticky gum. Marsh gumplant typically blooms from August-October.

# Creeping Wild Rye

*Leymus triticoides*



It is highly drought tolerant—meaning it can live for long periods without water.



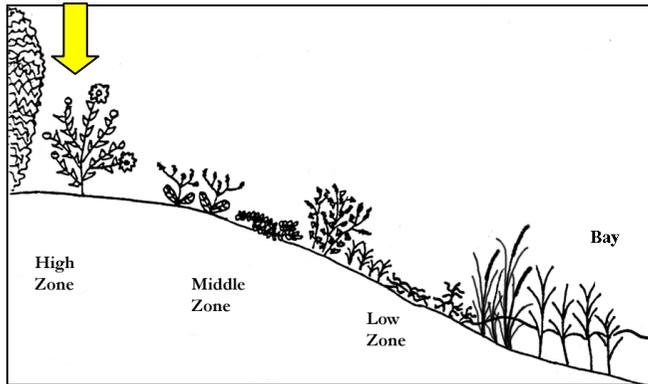
This grass grows rapidly and is **rhizomatous**—it spreads by growing underground stems that send up green shoots far away from the mother plant.



Creeping Wild Rye is an important nesting site and habitat for birds and small animals.

Did you know...

- Creeping Wild Rye has an extensive root system which helps hold the soil together and prevents erosion. These dense roots also help trap and filter soil and pollutants from storm runoff.
- The leaves have also been used in basket, rope, and paper making.



# Creeping Wild Rye

*Leymus triticoides*



## ID tips:

- This grass grows in the upland areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh. It grows to form a dense spreading, or "creeping" mat of grass that can be up to 3 feet tall.
- It's leaf blades are narrow, green or blue-green, and come off of the stem at an angle, which makes it look like they have been blown over to one side.
- It is most easily identified when it sends up its flower or seed stalks. The seed heads are narrow and can be up to 8 inches long with flat, dense seed clusters. Creeping Wild Rye typically has seed stalks from May-October.



# Miniature Lupine

*Lupinus bicolor*

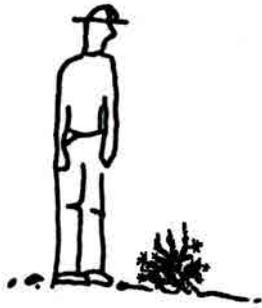
Lupines attract pollinating insects with their beautiful bright flowers.

When an insect lands on the flower, the bottom "lip" of the flower falls downward exposing the black pointed **stamen** (plant part that holds pollen), which brushes pollen against the insect.



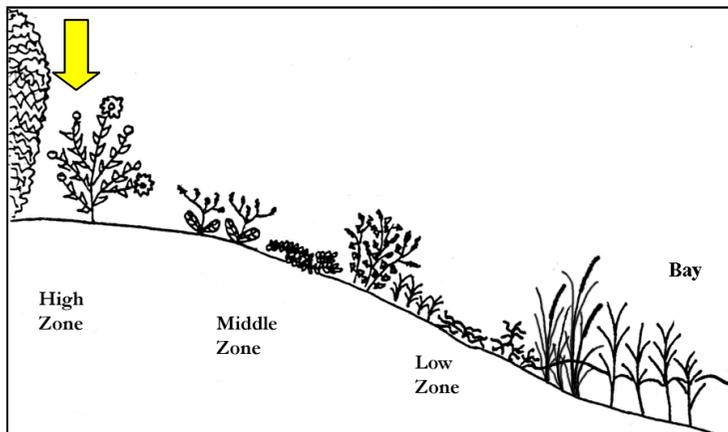
Did you know...

The name "Lupinus" comes from the Latin word "lupus," which means wolf. Wolves were once considered to be thieves, who would "steal" livestock and poultry from farmers. People believed that, like wolves, Lupine plants would "steal" nutrients from the soil. In fact, the opposite is true! Lupines help enrich the soil by adding nitrogen—an important nutrient for plant photosynthesis.



# Miniature Lupine

*Lupinus bicolor*



## ID tips:

- This plant grows in the upland areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh. It is a small, low-growing plant which grows to be about 16 inches tall.
- The leaves are **palmate**—meaning they look like the palm of your hand, with leaflets extending outwards like fingers. They are grayish-green and covered in fine hairs.
- The flowers are two colors—often bluish-purple and white—and they circle around and up the flower stem. Each flower has two “lips” - an upper and a lower section of the flower. Lupines typically bloom from April-July. The seed pods appear after the plants have bloomed. They are fuzzy and look like pea pods. When the seed pods dry up, they pop open and shoot the seeds out to help spread them!

# Sticky Monkey Flower

*Mimulus aurantiacus*



Bumblebees  
pollinate Sticky  
Monkey Flowers.



The leaves are sticky, helping to prevent them from drying out.



The larvae of some moths and butterflies use Sticky Monkey Flower as a food source.



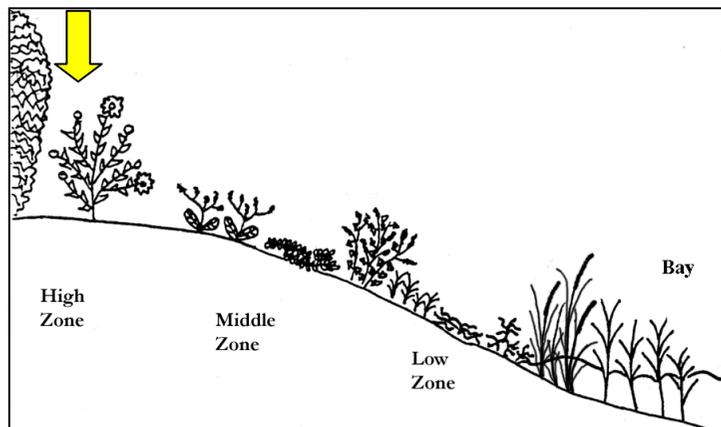
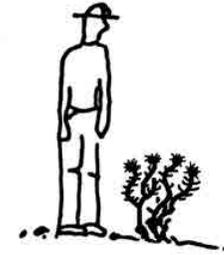
Hummingbirds and insects love these tube-like flowers that hold sweet nectar.

Did you know . . .

- The name *Mimulus* comes from the Latin word *mimus*, which means actor or mimic, because the flower looks like the mouthpiece of one of the grinning masks worn by classical actors.
- The juice from the leaves of the Sticky Monkey Flower has been used by Native Americans to help heal minor scrapes and burns.

# Sticky Monkey Flower

*Mimulus aurantiacus*



## ID tips:

- This plant grows in the upland areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh. It grows into a bush that can be up to 4 feet tall.
- The leaves are narrow, up to 2 inches long, and their edges are often rolled under. They can be sticky to the touch.
- The flowers are orange to light peach, tube-like at the base with five large lobes for petals. Sticky Monkey Flower typically blooms from mid-spring into mid-summer.

# Purple Needle Grass

*Nassella pulchra*



This grass was once one of the most common grasses in California's grasslands. Now many of the grasslands have been taken over by non-native annual grasses, that are used for cattle grazing.

The new seeds on this grass are purple-colored and look like long needles, which is where this plant gets its name.



The seeds of this grass were an important food source for many California Native American tribes. Songbirds also eat these seeds.

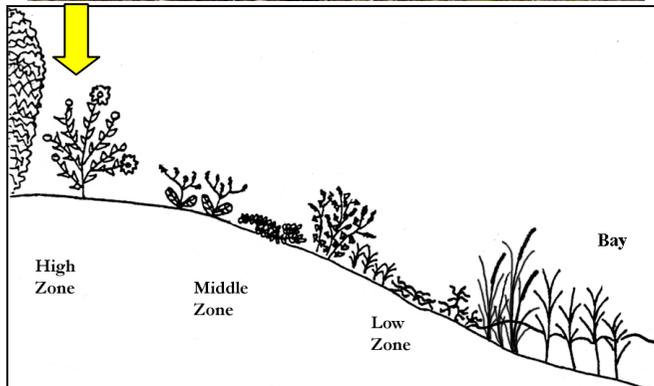


Did you know . . .

- The roots of this grass can grow 50 or 60 feet down into the ground - That's as tall as a five story building!
- Purple Needle Grass is the state grass of California.

# Purple Needle Grass

*Nassella pulchra*



## ID tips:

- This grass grows in the upland areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh. It grows in bunches that can be up to 2 feet wide and 3 feet tall.
- The leaf blades are narrow, dark green, up to 8 inches long, and mostly stand upright.
- It is most easily identified when it sends up its flower or seed stalks. The seeds are attached at the top of the stalk and are purple when they are young. Each seed is attached to a long, thin, sometimes wavy "needle" that can be up to 4 inches long. Purple Needle Grass typically shows its needles in the Spring.

# California Wild Rose

*Rosa californica*



Wild Rose provides many wildlife benefits. It attracts pollinators, provides good shelter for songbirds, and it produces fruits that are a valuable food source for birds and mammals.



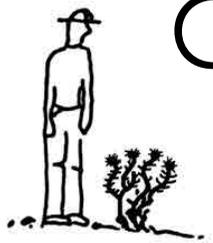
These are the fruit of the rose, also known as "rose hips".



Did you know...

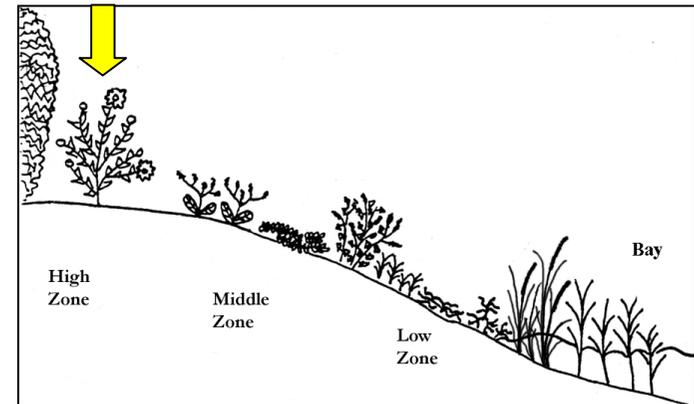
Wild Rose has many uses!

The flowers can be used to make tea, which can be used to reduce fevers. The "hips" or fruits of this plant are rich in Vitamin A and C. The hips can also be boiled and used for indigestion, sore throats, colds, and as a soothing wash for scabs and sores.



# California Wild Rose

*Rosa californica*



## ID tips:

- This plant grows in the upland areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh. It can grow 3-8 feet tall forming a tall spreading thicket or bush.
- The leaves are oval and toothed on the edges, usually in a formation of 5 to 7 leaves—one at the tip of the stem and 4 to 6 lined up along the stem (two to three leaflets on either side).
- The flowers are generally flat and open, light pink, with five petals. They are about 1-2 inches wide. California Wild Rose typically blooms from May-August.

# Pickleweed

*Sarcocornia pacifica*



Pickleweed has flowers that are tiny and often difficult to see. They are whitish-yellow and bloom from April to November, as seen in the above picture.



Pickleweed likes to grow with other pickleweed and create pickleweed fields in the low zone of the marsh.

Did you know . . .  
Another common name for this plant is Glasswort or Glassroot because it has been used to make glass! When burned, the plants leave behind soda ash, which is an important ingredient in glass-making.



The fleshy segmented stems are edible for humans as well as the Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse and California Vole.

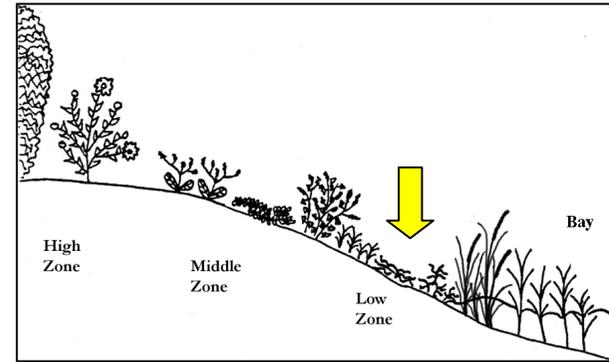


Pickleweed absorbs salty water from the Bay and pushes the salts into the tips of the plant. The plant turns red when there is a build up of salts. Eventually this part of the plant will dry up and break off so the rest of the plant can live.



# Pickleweed

*Sarcocornia pacifica*



## ID tips:

- This plant grows in the **low zone** of the salt marsh. It is a low-growing ground cover that tends to blanket the shoreline.
- This is a succulent plant, which means that it holds water in its leaves and stems. Pickleweed grows segmented stems that stand upright and sometimes are branched. The stems are typically green, but can also be red or brown, depending on the season. They begin to turn red in the late summer and then turn brown in winter.
- Pickleweed flowers are tiny and often difficult to see. They are whitish-yellow and bloom from April to November.

# California Bee Plant

*Scrophularia californica*

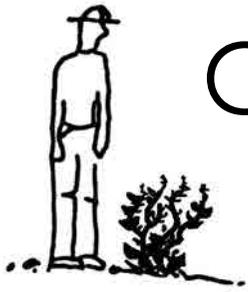


Hummingbirds, bees, butterflies and other insects collect nectar from the flowers. The seeds are a food source for seed eating birds and mammals..



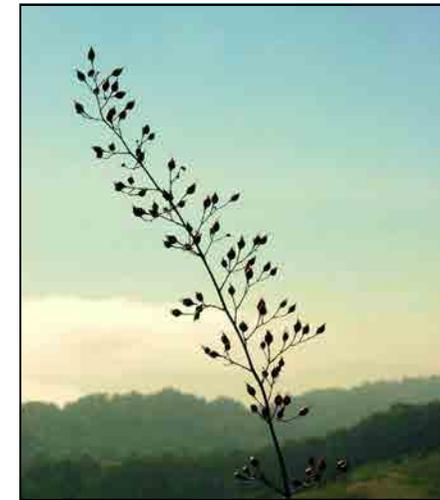
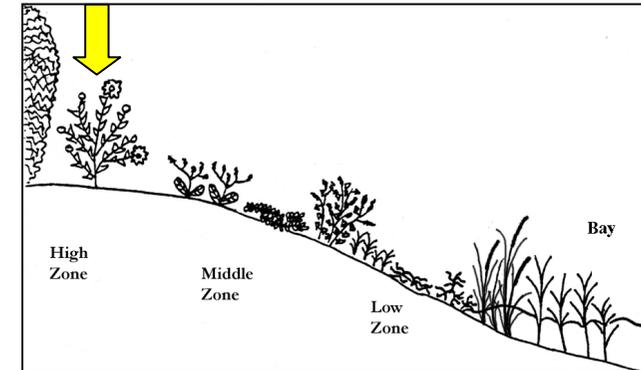
Did you know...

Checkerspot butterflies, including the federally threatened Bay Checkerspot, use California Bee Plant as a food source and a defense strategy—By eating this plant the larva become poisonous and the adult butterflies become **unpalatable** (don't taste good) to their predators.



# California Bee Plant

*Scrophularia californica*



## ID tips:

- This plant grows in the upland areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh. It can grow to be a bush that is 3 feet wide and 5 feet tall.
- It's leaves are arrow-shaped and vary in size—the biggest leaves grow closer to the base of the plant and the smallest leaves at the tips of the stems. The stems are square.
- The flowers are very small, dark red to maroon, and form in clusters up tall stalks that shoot up above the plant. California Bee Plant typically blooms from March-May.

# Blue-eyed Grass

*Sisyrinchium bellum*



Song sparrows, house finches and other songbirds eat the seeds of this plant.

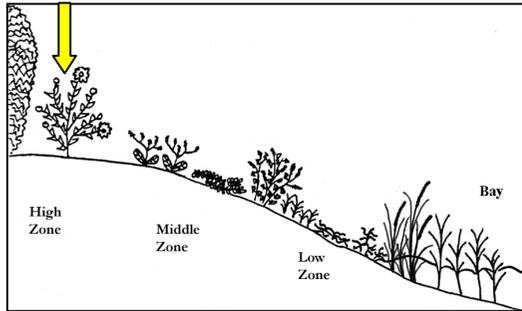
These beautiful flowers provide nectar for pollinators like bees and butterflies.



Blue-eyed Grass is not actually a grass! It is a relative of the Iris—a flowering bulb.



Did you know...  
The roots of this plant have been used to make a tea which can help reduce fevers and soothe stomach pain.



# Blue-eyed Grass

*Sisyrinchium bellum*



## ID tips:

- This plant grows in the upland areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh. It grows in clusters that can grow to be one foot tall and 1 1/2 feet wide.
- The leaf blades are light green and grass-like, although they are a little bit stiffer than ordinary grass. In the dry summer months the leaves turn yellow and brown and eventually die back.
- The flowers are 1/2 inch wide and purple with a yellow center. There are six petals, each with a little point on the tip of them. Blue-eyed Grass typically blooms from March-June.

# Pacific Cordgrass

*Spartina foliosa*



Did you know...

There is a non-native cordgrass that is currently threatening the SF Bay's wetlands. It is native to the East Coast and grows faster, denser, and further into the mudflats than the native cordgrass. This means it can clog waterways, and impact low marsh habitats and the wildlife that depend on



Pacific Cordgrass grows in the mud where it is flooded by the tides.

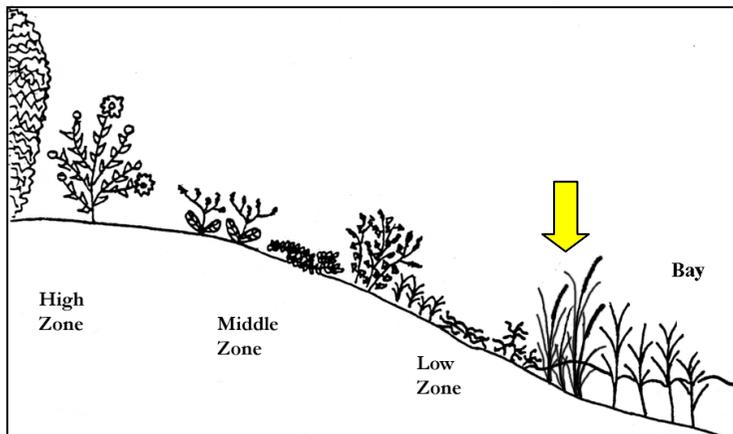


The California Clapper Rail is an endangered species that depends on native Cordgrass for shelter and nesting.



# Pacific Cordgrass

*Spartina foliosa*



## ID tips:

- This grass grows in the **low zone** of the salt marsh, and at high tide it is often submerged underwater with just the tips of the grass visible above the water. It grows in strips at the edge of the marsh.
- The leaf blades can be 1/2 inch wide and 1 1/2 feet long.
- The flower and seed stalks can grow to be four feet tall with dense, cylindrical clusters of seeds that can be 1/2 inch wide and 10 inches long. The stems of these stalks are white-green in color. Pacific Cordgrass typically has seed stalks from June-September.

# California Aster

*Symphotrichum chilense*



Asters are late bloomers, blooming as late as November. In upland areas many plants are finished flowering by the fall. This late flowering period is important for insects who still need nectar late in the season.

Did you know . . .

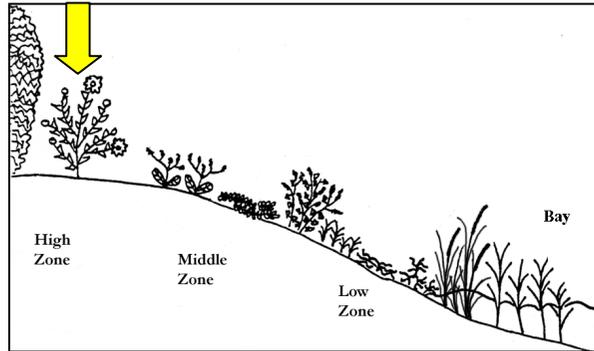
California aster is an important plant for the larvae of the Field Crescent and the Northern Checkerspot butterflies.



Field Crescent



Northern Checkerspot



# California Aster

*Symphotrichum chilense*



## ID tips:

- This plant can be found in the upland areas above the high tide line, in the **high zone** of the marsh. It grows to be about 1 foot tall and spreads out to form a low-growing bush.
- It has dark green, narrow, and pointed leaves with fine hairs on the surface.
- It has daisy-like flowers that are light purple in color with yellow centers. California Aster is typically in bloom in the late summer and into the fall.

# Seaside Arrowgrass

*Triglochin maritima*



Seaside Arrowgrass can be found in the lowest zones of the marsh. At high tides it can be submerged underwater for several hours.

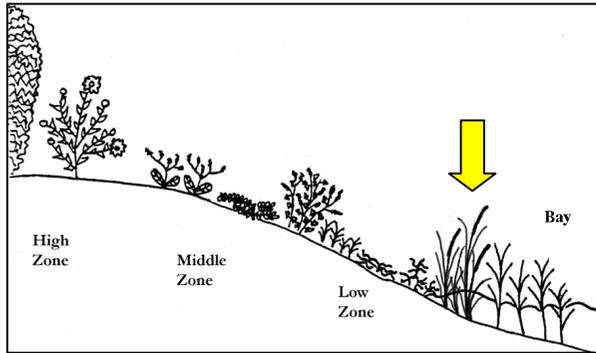


The seeds of this plant are a valuable food source for many birds.



Did you know . . .

- The green parts of the leaves are toxic—they have compounds in them that are capable of producing cyanide.
- The seeds can be eaten if lightly roasted and ground into a powder. The roasted seed is also used as a coffee substitute.
- The ashes of the plant are rich in potassium and can be used in making soap.



# Seaside Arrowgrass

*Triglochin maritima*



## ID tips:

- This plant grows in the **low zone** of the salt marsh. It grows in dense bunches that can grow up to 3 feet tall.
- The leaf blades are narrow and round, with an indentation running up one side of the blade. The blades can grow up to 2 feet long.
- The flower and seed stalks can be 1-3 feet tall with dense clusters of round seeds running up the length of the stalk. The stalks are green at first and then turn brown as they mature. Seaside Arrowgrass typically has seed stalks from summer to fall.