



# Foothills

## Nature Notes

CITY OF PALO ALTO • COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT • OPEN SPACE, PARKS AND GOLF DIVISION

### Trees of the Foothills

Ten species of native trees, excluding shrubs which occasionally attain tree size, are known to occur in Foothills Park and Pearson-Arastradero Preserve. They may be readily identified with the aid of the brief description below. The trees are listed in approximate order of relative abundance. Introduced species are not included in this list. (Drawings not to scale).

**Coast Live Oak** (*Quercus agrifolia*) California Live Oak. Most common tree in preserves; 30-75 feet tall; massive trunk with broadly rounded crown; leaves stiff, margins curled, with spines; evergreen. It is usually found in open groves or upper slopes.

**California Laurel** (*Umbellularia californica*) Bay. Common in gulches, ravines and north-facing or lower slopes; 20-75 feet tall; often much branched or multiple based; long, narrow, shiny, aromatic leaves; olive-like fruit in the fall.

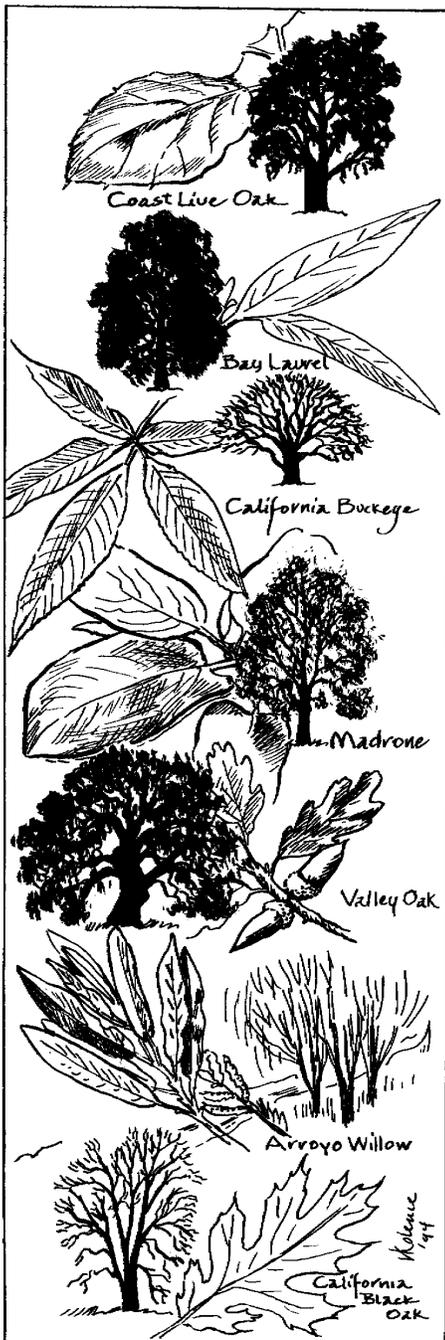
**California Buckeye** (*Aesculus californica*). Common in bay forests and edges of oak woodland; 15-40 feet tall; smooth gray bark; leaves divided into five leaflets; summer deciduous; conspicuous spikes of whitish blossoms in spring; pear-shaped fruit in the fall.

**Madrone** (*Arbutus menziesii*) Madrone. Fairly common on north-facing slopes; 20-100 feet tall; smooth, often-peeling, reddish-brown bark on new limbs; thick, shiny leaves 3-6 inches long. The white flower clusters turn into orange berries in the fall.

**Valley Oak** (*Quercus lobata*) California White Oak. Occasionally grows in woodlands with Coast Live Oak; 40-125 feet tall; leaves deeply lobed, soft, without spines, deciduous.

**Arroyo Willow** (*Salix lasiolepis*). Occasionally found along dry stream beds; small tree to 30 feet tall; long narrow leaves, dark green above, lighter below; deciduous; woolly catkins precede leaves in spring.

**California Black Oak** (*Quercus kelloggii*) Kellog's Oak. A few individuals are found in the upper reaches of Foothills Park; dark bark;



deciduous; 30-80 feet tall; leaves 4-8 inches long, deeply lobed, with spines.

**Blue Oak** (*Quercus douglasii*). Light gray bark with thin checked scales; foliage with slightly bluish cast; leaves slightly and irregularly lobed; 20-60 feet tall.

**Big Leaf Maple** (*Acer macrophyllum*). In canyons along creeks; 30-100 feet tall; broad crown in open narrow in shade; leaves deeply lobed, 8-14 inches long; many samaras (winged fruits) produced in the fall.

**Canyon Live Oak** (*Quercus chrysolepis*) Maul, Gold Cup. These are rare in the foothills. Only a few scattered individuals are known; 25-50 feet tall; evergreen; thick leaves are quite variable in shape, and both the underside of young leaves and acorn caps have yellowish fuzz.

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