

8 Cork Oak

Cork oak (*Quercus suber*) in Bed G, native to southwestern Europe and northwestern Africa, provides cork for bottle stoppers, floors, and insulation. Ancient Greeks allowed only priests to cut down cork oaks. Cork bark can be harvested every 9 to 14 years. Cork production is a sustainable industry, supporting many people and providing homes for many plant and animal species.

9 Plant Families

Bed H showcases some major plant families of mediterranean climate regions.

Plants can be grouped into families of similar and presumably related genera and species.

Family	ORIGIN
Botanical name 'Cultivar'	
COMMON NAME	

How to Read Our Plant Identification Labels

Family: Family names are given to plants sharing certain broad features, such as number and arrangement of flower petals.

Origin: The mediterranean-climate region of which this plant is native.

Botanical Name: The two-part name unique to this plant recognized throughout the world.

Cultivar: A variety of this plant grown for its unique characteristics, such as flower color or growth habit (low growing or upright).

Common Name: The name the plant is commonly called. This can vary from country to country and region to region. Some plants have no common name, and many plants share the same common name.

One way botanists group plants into families uses flower structure, such as petals and their arrangement. Mathematical patterns play a leading role. Using plant parts, botanists have grouped plants into families throughout history. These have been largely upheld by research using DNA, RNA, and amino acid sequence of proteins.

10 Australian Region

Bed I primarily features Australian plants. Isolated longer than any other continent, Australia has many endemic (native only there) genera with over 700 eucalypts, including **Forrest's mallee tree** (*Eucalyptus forrestiana*). Shorter myrtles with small bottle brush flowerheads are **snowy myrtle** (*Calytrix alpestris*), **scarlet kunzia** (*Kunzia baxteri*) and **spearwood** (*Kunzia ericafolia*). **Creeping Banksia** (*Banksia repens*) is pollinated by a mouse-size marsupial, but many banksias are large trees pollinated by birds and arboreal marsupials. **Australian fuchsia** (*Correa pulchella*) attracts our hummingbirds. **Kangaroo paws** (*Anigozanthus spp.*) is named for the shape of its colorful flowers.

11 California Ethnobotany

Chumash people made a shelter called an "ap" framed with bent branches of willow thatched with tule rushes. An **arroyo willow tree** (*Salix lasiolepis*) is next to the road in Bed Q and **tules** (*Scirpus californicus*) are in the pond beyond.

Plant signs in Bed Q indicate their use in making tools, weapons, foods and beverages, musical instruments, toys, soap, and medicines.

12 Historic Fig Tree

The **edible fig** (*Ficus carica*) in Bed J is the most historic tree in the garden. It fruits annually.

A cutting of the 'Mother Fig' at the San Gabriel Mission was given to Father Jose Cavalier of the San Luis Obispo Mission in the late 1780's. It grew to be a large tree in the Mission Orchard until its removal in 1974 during construction of apartments. Many cuttings were made at that time and this one was presented to the Garden in 1997.

13 Mediterranean Ethnobotany

Leaves of the **bay laurel** (*Laurus nobilis*) in Bed B flavor soups and stews and have been used as an antiseptic and to repel weevils in flour. An **Olive** (*Olea europaea*) and **Pomegranate** (*Punica granatum*) are beyond the laurel. The olive tree was sacred to Athena. Olives are eaten green or black and pressed for the cooking oil now prized for health benefits. Wood is used for carvings. Sweet/sour seeds of pomegranate fruits are eaten and grenadine syrup is made from them for drinks.

In Greek mythology, Daphne (Greek for laurel) pleaded with her father, river god Peneus, to change her into a tree to avoid becoming Apollo's wife. Apollo still loved her as a tree, wore a wreath of laurel leaves, and laurel trees were planted at temples dedicated to him.

14 The Future Garden

The Master Plan for this Garden was completed in 1998. Five major areas will each contain vegetation grouped in plant communities found in the wild in one of the five mediterranean climate regions. Demonstrations landscapes will highlight the beauty and water-conserving quality of these often rare plants. Development of the remaining acres awaits further funding.

15 Firesafe Demonstration Landscape

Dry summers encourage large wildfires. Homes built near natural spaces need firesafe landscaping. Firesafe gardens use fire resistant plants and landscaping materials in zones near structures. Fire resistant plants can also be water efficient, low maintenance, and beautiful! This landscape features those plants.

This concludes the Self-Guided Tour. Continue up this path to our Children's Garden, Oak Glen Pavilion and Eve's Garden Shop. Here, you can shop for plants and other garden treasures, join our Garden and receive our helpful monthly newsletter, and help us grow into our 150 acres!

Donations are also most gratefully welcome at the receptacle near the entrance bridge. You can also return this guide there if you wish.



Self-Guided Tour

Explore our 2-acre present garden, a small part of our 150-acre site. These plants come from the world's five mediterranean climate regions.

Your first stop is the Welcome sign next to the bridge. Use the map of the Garden inside to find your way!



Our Mission To Honor and Preserve Our Connection with Nature.

3450 Dairy Creek Rd.
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405
805-541-1400
www.slobg.org

California poppies
Photo: Ron Kindig

Revised 10/12/2012
Interpretation Committee

1 Welcome Sign

The Garden was established in 1989 for people of all ages to learn about plants in a beautiful setting. We focus on plants adapted to the dry summers of California and the world's other four mediterranean climate regions. We encourage use of these beautiful and water-thrifty plants at home.

Our Preview Garden was opened in 1997. A plan for the 150-acre Garden is being implemented as funds permit.

2 Five Mediterranean Climate Regions

Gold tiles on the map show mediterranean climates, first studied scientifically around the Mediterranean Sea. They occur between 30° and 45° in north and south latitudes with westerly winds from oceans in California, central Chile, the Capetown area of South Africa, parts of Western and South Australia, and lands around the Mediterranean Sea.

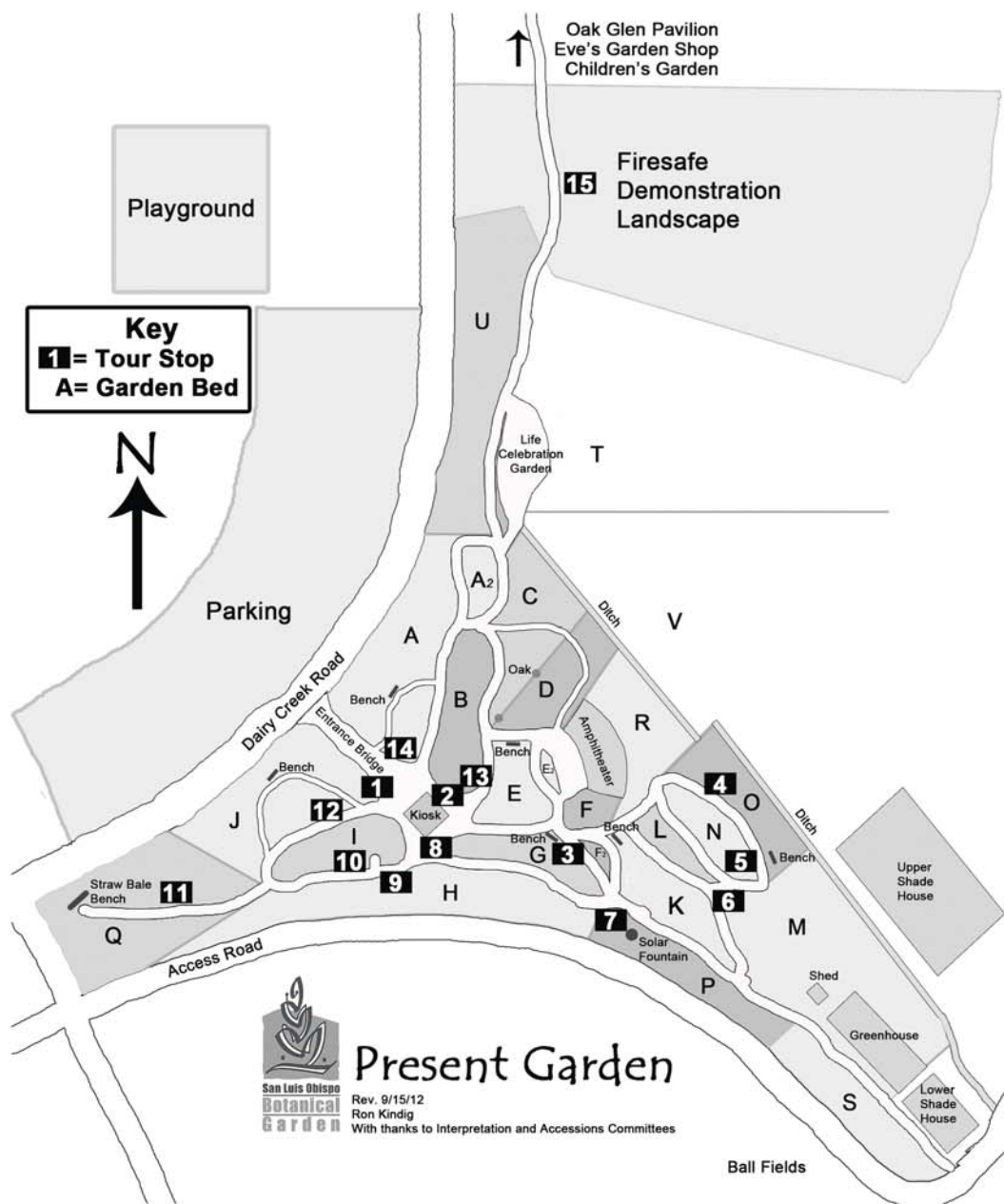
Sunny summers with no rain stress plants, but winters with mild temperatures and rain support growth and blooming. Plants have adapted to minimize water loss and store water for summer survival.

3 Chilean Region

The graceful **mayten** (*Maytenus boaria*) with feathery foliage in Bed G is a drought-tolerant evergreen from canyons in central Chile's coastal ranges. Shrubs near it belong to the Myrtle family, including **Chilean guava** (*Ugni molinae*), cultivated for its fruit to be eaten fresh or made into jelly. **Calandrinia** (*Calandrinia spectabilis*), from hot dry-summer mountains, holds pink blooms from spring into fall well above its water-storing succulent leaves.

4 Mediterranean Region

Ethnobotany studies relationships between people and plants. Bed O contains plants from the Mediterranean region, one area where agriculture originated and a source of many food plants. These include **artichoke** (*Cynara scolymus*), **fig** (*Ficus carica*), and **rosemary** (*Rosmarinus officinalis*). Other plants help create



beautiful landscapes, such as the **purple smoke tree** (*Cotinus coggygria* 'Purpureus'), **oleander** (*Nerium oleander*) and **spurge** (*Euphorbia rigida*).

5 South Africa Region

Plants in Bed N are mainly leaf succulents, storing water in leaves to outlast summer drought. Other succulents store water in stems or roots.

Aloes vary from under 2' to 60' tall. **Cape aloe** (*Aloe ferox*) reaches 20' with a rosette of thorn-edged leaves on a stalk and a candelabrum of orange to red flowers. **Short leaf aloe** (*Aloe brevifolia*) has basal leaf rosettes each 6" tall and to 12" wide, with unbranched stalks of red-orange flowers. Rosettes bud laterally to form clusters. Some aloes provide food, fibers, and medicine.

6 California Region

The **California buckeye tree** (*Aesculus californica*) in Bed M is summer deciduous, dropping its large leaves to reduce water loss. Chumash and Salinan people crushed and tossed its toxic fruit into ponds to temporarily stun fish for easy sustainable harvest. Many other California plants in Beds M, K, and L have small or needle-like leaves with hard coatings to minimize water loss. Examples are **California lilacs** (*Ceanothus spp.*), **Monterey pine** (*Pinus radiata*), **monkey flowers** (*Mimulus spp.*) and **manzanitas** (*Arctostaphylos spp.*). Manzanita leaves parallel the sun's rays to reduce heating.

7 Solar Energy Fountain

Cover the solar energy collector with the large leaf here. Water stops flowing in the fountain. This demonstrates the sun's energy. Children learn that plants get energy from the sun, and people get energy by eating plants or meat from animals that ate plants.

California plants in Bed K reduce water loss with small leaves and white to light green colors which reflect solar heat away. See **buckwheat** (*Eriogonum spp.*), **manzanita** (*Arctostaphylos spp.*), and **chalk lettuce** (*Dudleya pulverulenta*). Chalk lettuce also stores water in its succulent leaves.