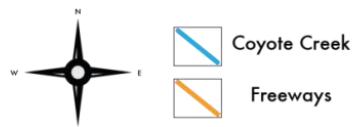
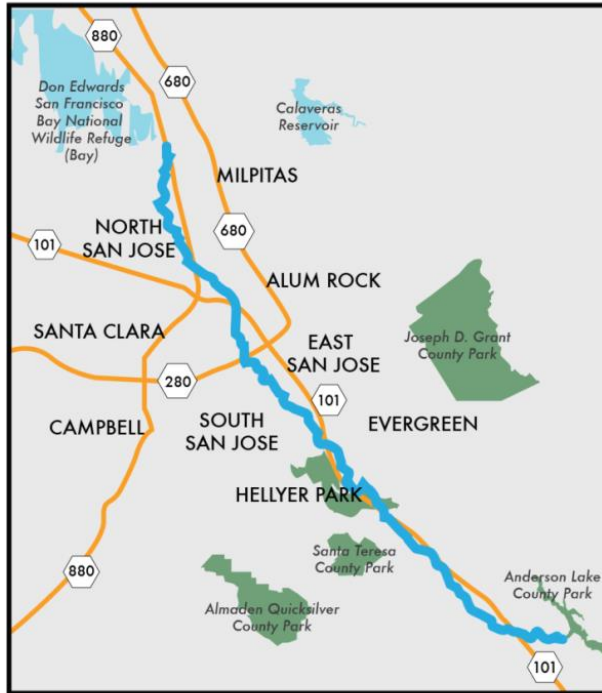


## About Coyote Creek

The Coyote Creek watershed is the largest in Santa Clara County, collecting water from 322 square miles and 16 creeks in the valley between the Guadalupe River and the Diablo Mountains. The creek extends for over 30 miles from Morgan Hill to Milpitas and empties into the San Francisco Bay.

COYOTE CREEK MAP



Created by the Santa Clara Creeks Coalition and generously funded by the San Jose Parks Foundation.

Visit [sccreeks.org](http://sccreeks.org) to download other brochures highlighting selected plants and wildlife along Coyote Creek.

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## History of Coyote Creek

Historically, the landscape around Coyote Creek was dominated by sycamore woodlands, riparian scrub, and oak woodlands. The creek flowed seasonally, exposing gravel beds during dry periods.

Agricultural development in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century led to drainage ditches and channelizing the creek, increasing the flow of the creek, transforming open woodlands into a denser riparian habitat, and reducing the width of vegetation supported by periodic flooding.

Amid housing and business developments, Coyote Creek is affected by trash and pollution, yet sustains a variety of life. The creek follows most of its original route, giving it high potential for restoration.

### Bringing Back the Steelhead

Coyote Creek was once spawning ground for steelhead, an anadromous form of rainbow trout that is born in freshwater and spends part of its life in the ocean.

Steelhead need gravel beds and cool, clean water in order to spawn. Dams blocking migration routes and loss of spawning habitat have threatened populations in California.

Restoring steelhead to Coyote Creek is one of the missions of the Santa Clara County Creeks Coalition.



Steelhead, *Oncorhynchus mykiss*

### 10. Coast Live Oak *Quercus agrifolia*

This evergreen oak is common in Coast Ranges of California. It has tough cupped (continued on back) leaves with spiny margins, dark green on top and light green on the bottom with small tufts of golden hairs where the leaf veins intersect. Its acorns are an important source of food for wildlife, and were a dietary staple for several Native American tribes.



### 11. Coast Redwood *Sequoia sempervirens*

The iconic coast redwood is the tallest tree species in the world: the tallest known redwood is nearly 380 feet tall. This evergreen conifer grows along the California coast from Monterey north. Coast redwoods have shallow, spreading root systems and need abundant moisture, which they get from rain and fog drip. Coast redwoods are able to sprout from their stumps, sometimes forming “fairy rings” around the stump of an original tree.



### 12. Coast Silk Tassel *Garrya elliptica*

This evergreen shrub grows along the California coast. The leaves are arranged opposite the stem and have wavy margins. The silk tassel is named for its dangling chains of white flowers that bloom in late winter and early spring.



# Trees and Shrubs of Coyote Creek

Coyote Outdoor Classroom  
791 William Street, San Jose



Want to help clean up your local creek? Get involved with volunteer opportunities and other events with the Santa Clara County Creeks Coalition, Keep Coyote Creek Beautiful, and the South Bay Clean Creeks Coalition.



[sccreeks.org](http://sccreeks.org)



# Trees & Shrubs of Coyote Creek

The Coyote Outdoor Classroom features a California native garden planted by the Santa Clara County Water District. Here you can see plants native to the area and other parts of the state. This brochure highlights some of these plants.

The dominant plant community around Coyote Creek was historically sycamore-alluvial woodland, with open canopies and unvegetated gravel beds. Most of this has been transformed into riparian forest because of alterations to the water flow and the channelization of Coyote Creek.

## Tour Map



### 1. California Buckeye *Aesculus californica*

This tree has palmately compound leaves of five leaflets meeting at a single point. It bears long clusters of fragrant white flowers in the spring. The California buckeye is drought-deciduous, losing its leaves in the summer. In the fall, these trees bear large fruits, which are an important food source for many animals.



### 2. California Lilacs *Ceanothus* ssp.

Dozens species of ceanothus are native to California, and many varieties of this popular landscaping plant can be seen in this garden. These evergreen shrubs have tough leaves, often with three main veins, and produce dense clusters of fragrant white to blue flowers.



### 3. Toyon *Heteromeles arbutifolia*

Also known as Christmas berry and California holly, this large, evergreen shrub is common on slopes and canyons in the Coast Ranges and Sierra foothills. It has long leaves with serrate margins. It produces clusters of white flowers that bloom in the summer and turn into bright red berries in the



winter. Toyon berries are eaten by many species of birds.

### 4. Coffeeberry *Rhamnus californica*

This evergreen shrub is found in various habitats and plant communities throughout California. It has bluish-green leaves and reddish stems, and produces inconspicuous whitish greenish flowers. Its berries ripen from red to black and are eaten by many birds and small mammals.



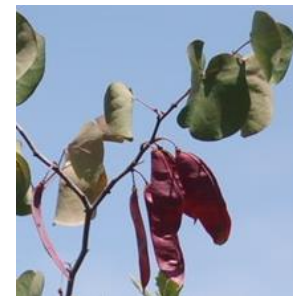
### 5. Pacific Madrone *Arbutus menziesii*

This evergreen tree is found along the California coast and parts of the Sierra Nevada. Its smooth, reddish-orange bark flakes away in thin layers and can look similar to manzanita bark, but madrones have large oval leaves and can grow much taller. These trees produce white urn-shaped flowers and reddish-orange berries that birds love to eat.



### 6. Western Redbud *Cercis occidentalis*

A member of the pea family, the western redbud is a small tree with distinctive heart-shaped leaves. It is winter-deciduous, losing its leaves in the winter. It flowers in late winter and early spring, producing small pink flowers on its bare branches. It makes large, brownish beanpods that are typical of the pea family.



### 7. California blackberry *Rubus ursinus*

This deciduous shrub or vine is a native blackberry found in many plant communities throughout California. The edible berries are black when ripe. It may be confused with the non-native Himalayan blackberry; however the California blackberry has fine prickles on the stems and tends to have leaflets of three, while the Himalayan has thorny spines and usually leaflets of five.



### 8. California Grape *Vitis californica*

This deciduous vine grows in riparian areas along streams and seeps, climbing up other plants or growing on the ground, providing shelter and food for many birds and animals. It makes small bluish grapes that are edible for humans as well.



### 9. Valley Oak *Quercus lobata*

This winter-deciduous oak tree is found in foothill woodlands, and is common in the interior Coast Ranges, Central Valley, and Sierra Nevada foothills of California. It has deeply lobed leaves and bears long acorns in the fall. Its extensive root system draws water from deep underground, allowing it to survive through hot dry summers. Its long acorns feed a variety of birds and wildlife.

