You can replace your unused lawn and still have an attractive yard of lush green plantings. Try a mix of evergreen grasses and shrubs that flower throughout the year. They will not only reward you with pops of color and visual interest, but provide essential food and habitat for pollinators such as birds, bees and butterflies. Allow your grasses and shrubs to mingle and create a natural meadow look, or if you prefer a more formal look, plant them in distinct groupings.

Indian Summer Alstroemeria Alstroemeria 'Indian Summer'

Alstroemeria 'Indian Summer', perennial, 3-4 feet tall and spreading by rhizomes, with dark purplish green, narrowly oval to lance-shaped leaves on upright stems topped with clusters of coppery orange and yellow flowers from early summer to late fall or almost year round. Inticancha* series hybrid. Sun to light shade, afternoon shade inland, most well-drained soils.

Sunset: 5-9,14-24



(photo pending)



Point St. George Aster Aster chilensis 'Pt. St. George'

Aster chilensis 'Point St. George' (Point St. George Aster), perennial, 4-6 inches tall and spreading rapidly by rhizomes, with narrowly oval to lance-shaped, lightly hairy, green leaves and lavender or white, late-summer daisy flowers with yellow centers. Can be weedy. Species is 1-3 feet tall and native to many habitats from British Columbia to central California, especially along the coast. Sun to part shade, most soils. Accepts periodic flooding. May be offered as Symphyotrichum.

Sunset: N/A

Golden Abundance Barberry Berberis x 'Golden Abundance'

Berberis 'Golden Abundance' (Golden Abundance Mahonia), evergreen shrub, upright to 6-8 feet tall and spreading by rhizomes to 8-10 feet wide, with compound, glossy green leaves with spiny margins. Large sprays of bright yellow flowers in spring are followed by deep blue-purple berries. Natural hybrid involving B. aquifolium, B. piperiana, and B. amplectens, three species native to western North America. Cool sun to light shade, good drainage. May be offered as Mahonia.

Sunset: 2B-12,14-24







Cape Rush
Chondropetalum tectorum 'El Campo'

Chondropetalum tectorum 'El Campo', perennial, 2-3 feet tall and 3-4 feet wide, with stiff, narrow, dark green, reedlike stems, small, brownish, papery bracts at nodes along the stems, and clusters of tiny, dark brown flowers at stem ends in late summer. Selection of a species native to Western and Eastern Cape provinces, South Africa, near the coast and often in marshes or seeps. Sun to light shade, most soils. including periodically flooded. May be offered as Elegia.

Sunset: N/A

Cassa Blue Flax Lily Dianella caerulea 'Cassa Blue'

Dianella caerulea 'Cassa Blue' (Cassa Blue Flax Lily), perennial from rhizomes, clump forming, 18 inches tall and 2-3 feet wide, with strap-shaped, blue-gray-green leaves and delicate, branched sprays of small, star-shaped, dark blue flowers with yellow stamens in late winter and spring. Flowers are followed by, small, lilac-blue berries. Garden origin, discovered in New South Wales, possibly a hybrid with D. longifolia. D. caerulea is native to southeastern Australia from Queensland to Tasmania. Sun to shade or part shade, most soils, including poorly drained. Can be cut back hard in winter to renew.

Sunset: 8-9,14-24



(photo pending)



Silver Falls Dichondra Dichondra argenta 'Silver Falls'

Dichondra argentea 'Silver Falls' (Silver Falls Dichondra), perennial, fast growing, dense mat 2-3 inches tall and spreading 3-6 feet wide, with small, heart-shaped to nearly round, silvery pale green leaves and tiny, inconspicuous, greenish white flowers in late spring. Species is native to high deserts from southeastern Arizona to western Texas and northern Mexico. Cascades over rocks and walls. Spreads slowly by rooting stems. Cool sun to part shade or afternoon shade, well-drained soils

Sunset: 8-10,12-24



California Fescue Festuca californica

Festuca californica and cultivars (California Fescue), cool-season bunchgrass, 2 feet tall and wide, with narrow, green to bluish green leaves and airy sprays of purple-tinged flowers on 4-to 5-foot stems in summer. Native to open, brushy or wooded slopes in central and northwestern California and southwestern Oregon. 'Serpentine Blue', a selection from northern California, has intensely blue leaves. 'River House Blues' is said to be especially well suited to southern California. Cool sun to part shade, good to excellent drainage. Best in cool-summer climates.

Sunset: 4-9,14-24



California Coffeeberry Frangula california 'Leatherleaf'

Frangula californica (Coffeeberry) evergreen shrub, 6-10 feet tall and wide, with leathery, dark green leaves, pale green beneath, insignificant and greenish yellow flowers in late spring to early summer followed by showy, red fruits that age to black. Native to dry, sandy or rocky slopes from southwestern Oregon to northern Baja California and east to western New Mexico. Sun to shade, most well-drained soils. May be offered as Rhamnus.

Sunset: 3a-10,14-24

Island Bush Snapdragon Galvezia (Gambelia) speciosa

Galvezia speciosa, Island bush snapdragon, evergreen vining shrub, 3-4 feet tall and 5-6 feet wide, with soft, semi-succulent, pale green leaves and bright red, tubular or trumpet-shaped flowers from spring to early fall. Native to the Channel Islands in southern California and Guadalupe Island in Baja California. Sun to part shade or afternoon shade, most well-drained soils. Good choice for dry shade and seaside. Cut back in late winter to renew. May be offered as Gambelia.

Sunset: 14-24







Douglas Iris Iris douglasiana

Iris douglasiana (Douglas Iris), perennial from rhizomes, with strap-shaped, glossy green leaves and light blue-violet to dark purple or sometimes white flowers with purple, blue, or gold veining in late winter or early spring. Native to coastal bluffs and grasslands from central western Oregon to southern California. Hybridizes readily in the wild. Many cultivars. Sun to part shade, good drainage.

Sunset: 4-9,14-24

Alpine Poker Kniphofia thompsonii

Kniphofia thomsonii (Alpine Poker), perennial, 1-2 feet tall and 2-3 feet wide, rosette of narrow, upright, grasslike, blue-green leaves and widely spaced, downwardly curved, tubular, orange flowers on 4- to 5-foot stems in summer or almost year round in mild-winter climates. Native to mid- to high elevations in mountains of central and eastern Africa. Sun to part shade, well-drained soils.

Sunset: 6-9,14-24



(photo pending)



(photo pending)

Dwarf Yellow Poker Plant Kniphofia x 'Dwarf Yellow'

Kniphofia 'Dwarf Yellow' (Dwarf Yellow Poker Plant), perennial, 18 inches tall and 1-2 feet wide, rosette of narrow, grasslike, green leaves and closely spaced, bright yellow, tubular flowers on 2- to 3-foot stems in spring and summer. Spreads by rhizomes. Likely a hybrid involving cultivars of K. uvaria, which is native to South Africa. Sun to part shade, well-drained soils.

Sunset: 2-9,14-24





Pine Muhly Muhlenbergia dubia

Muhlenbergia dubia (Pine Muhly), warm-season bunchgrass, 1-2 feet tall and 2 feet wide, with fine-textured, bright green leaves and tall plumes of purple-tinged, creamy white flowers in late summer and fall. Self-sows but not aggressively. Native to desert mountains from Arizona to southwestern Texas and northern Mexico. Sun to light shade, fast drainage, good air circulation.

Sunset: 3b,7-24

Lindheimer's Muhly Muhlenbergia lindheimeri 'Autumn Glow'

Muhlenbergia lindheimeri 'Autumn Glow', Lindheimer muhly, warm-season bunchgrass, upright to 3-4 feet tall and wide, with fine-textured, medium green to bluish gray leaves and 5- to 6-foot stems with pale yellow, late-summer flowers that age to tan. Self-sows but not aggressively. Species is native to Texas and northern Mexico and has creamy white flowers that age to silvery gray. Sun to light shade, most soils, good air circulation. Accepts periodic flooding.

Sunset: 6-24



(photo pending)



(photo pending)

Dwarf Karo Pittosporum crassifolium

Pittosporum crassifolium 'Compactum' (Dwarf Karo), evergreen shrub, 2-4 feet tall and 4-6 feet wide, with small, oval, olive green leaves, gray-green beneath, and clusters of small, lightly fragrant, maroon flowers in spring. Compact selection of a species native to coastal North Island, New Zealand. Sun to part shade near the coast, part shade inland, well-drained soils. Good seaside plant. May be offered as P. crassifolium 'Nana'.

Sunset: 9,14-17,19-24



Friendship Sage Salvia 'Amistad'

Salvia 'Armistad' (Friendship Sage), perennial or subshrub, 3-5 feet tall and 4-6 feet wide, with aromatic, oval to almost triangular, glossy, bright green leaves and tall spikes of dark purple, tubular flowers with nearly black bracts from early spring to fall. Selection of S. guaranitica, native from Brazil to northern Argentina, or possibly a hybrid with S. gesneriiflora, from the mountains of northeastern Mexico. Cool sun to light shade or afternoon shade, well-drained soils.

Sunset: N/A



Blue Moor Grass Sesleria caerulea

Sesleria caerulea (Blue Moor Grass), cool-season bunchgrass, 6-8 inches tall and 1-2 feet wide, with fine-textured, narrow, bluish green leaves, dark green beneath, both colors visible on the upright and slightly twisted leaves. Dark purplish spring flowers age to silvery gray. Native to rocky soils in grasslands of northern Europe. Cool sun to light shade or afternoon shade, most well-drained soils. Best near the coast.

Sunset: 2b-10,14-24





(photo pending)

Greenlee Moor Grass Sesleria x 'Greenlee Hybrid'

Sesleria 'Greenlee Hybrid' (Greenlee Moor Grass), cool-season bunchgrass, 1 foot tall and wide, with fine-textured, narrow, bluish green leaves, dark green beneath, and silvery purplish flowers well above the leaves in spring. Garden origin, believed to be a hybrid between S. caerulea and S. autumnalis. Cool sun to light shade or afternoon shade, most well-drained soils.

Sunset: 3b-10,14-24





Lilac Verbena Verbena lilacina 'De La Mina'

Verbena lilacina 'De la Mina' (Purple Cedros Island Verbena), perennial or subshrub, 2-3 feet tall and 3-4 feet wide, with deeply dissected, bright green leaves and small, round clusters of tiny, lightly fragrant, lavender to purple, star-shaped flowers in spring and summer. Species is native to coastal Baja California. 'De la Mina' is a selection from Cedros Island. Cool sun to light shade or afternoon shade, most well-drained soils. May be offered as Glandularia.

Sunset: 12-24