

# California Native Penstemons

California Native Penstemons – commonly called “Beard Tongues” due to the tiny hairs that line the throat of each flower – are some of the most beautiful flowers for the drought-tolerant garden. Excluding numerous hybrids and selections, there are over 50 native Penstemon species and sub-species. Historically, Native American tribes have used Penstemons to aid in a variety of illnesses and diseases. In more recent years, designers and gardeners have developed a strong passion for these wonderful, and in most cases, easy to grow beauties that attract hummingbirds when blooming.

Native Penstemons are considered incredibly drought tolerant once established. All prefer full sun, but species tolerant of desert heat are quite happy in filtered to part sun. Native Penstemons perform best in sandy, well-drained soils, though *P. palmeri* will tolerate clay soil if little to no irrigation is applied.

Native Penstemons have brightly colored flowers that vary from shades of blue and purple to vivid reds and orange-reds. Foliage colors can be gray, gray-green, blue-gray and deep green.

## Penstemon spectabilis

The leaf shapes and textures vary among species; some are boat shaped with serrated margins, while others have long, narrow, delicate or small round leaves. All bloom profusely in the spring and early summer months. Some, such as *Penstemon heterophyllus* ‘Margarita BOP,’ bloom profusely for 4-6 months with irrigation. During the spring months you can see *P. spectabilis* blooming on some freeway hill sides - a beautiful show!

**REQUIREMENTS:** Full to part sun. Most require little to no supplemental watering after established. *P. heterophyllus* ‘Margarita BOP’ prefers low to moderate water to perform well in the summer months. All are virtually pest/disease free. In warm, wet weather some may develop mildew in partially shaded areas.

### Penstemons currently grown at El Nativo Growers, Inc.:

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| <i>Penstemon centranthifolius</i> .....              | 1-3'H x 1-2'W, Sun, Scarlet, Evergreen                       |
| <i>Penstemon eatonii</i> .....                       | 2-3'H x 2-3'W, Sun, Red, Evergreen                           |
| <i>Penstemon heterophyllus</i> .....                 | 1-2'H x 1-2'W, Sun/Part Sun, Bluish-Purple, Evergreen        |
| <i>Penstemon heterophyllus</i> 'Margarita BOP' ..... | 1-2'H x 1-2'W, Sun/Part Sun, Blue-Purple, Evergreen          |
| <b>Penstemon labrosus</b> .....                      | <b>2-3'H x 6-10"W, Sun/Part Sun, Scarlet, Winter-Dormant</b> |
| <i>Penstemon palmeri</i> .....                       | 2-4'H x 1-3'W, Sun, Pink, Evergreen                          |
| <i>Penstemon psuedospectabilis</i> .....             | 3-4'H x 2-4'W, Sun, Hot Pink, Evergreen                      |
| <b>Penstemon rydbergii</b> .....                     | <b>6-8"H x 4-6"W, Sun/Part Sun, Lavender, Evergreen</b>      |
| <i>Penstemon spectabilis</i> .....                   | 2-3'H x 3'W, Sun/Partial Sun, Pink-Purple, Evergreen         |

If you have any questions or would like to place an order, please call (626) 969- 8449.