



## California Academy of Sciences Green Roof Methods

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This investigation was conducted as part of the Landscape Architecture Foundation's 2024 *Case Study Investigation (CSI)* program. CSI matches faculty-student research teams with design practitioners to document the benefits of exemplary high-performing landscape projects. Teams develop methods to quantify environmental, social, and economic benefits and produce Case Study Briefs for LAF's *Landscape Performance Series*.

The full case study can be found at: <https://landscapeperformance.org/case-study-briefs/CA-academy-green-roof>

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## Environmental Benefits

- **Attracts at least 36 species of pollinators and insects. Over 70% of the living roof's plant species are native to California.**

### **Background:**

The 2.5-acre living roof atop the California Academy of Sciences was planted with an estimated 1.7 million individual plants native to the San Francisco Bay Area. The project's initial plant palette was selected based on several key factors including tolerance to harsh conditions such as low nutrient soil depth, low water requirements, and attractiveness to key pollinators. Initial plant species included herbaceous perennials: *Achillea millefolium*, *Heuchera micrantha*, *Satureja douglasii*, *Solidago californica*, *Stachys bullata*, *Trifolium wormskioldii*; Grasses: *Festuca rubra*, *Festuca idahoensis*, *Koeleria macrantha*; Emergent wetland species: *Juncus patens*, *Juncus xiphioides*, *Carex tumulicola*, *Sisyrinchium bellum*, *Carex pansa*; Succulents: *Dudleya farinosa*; and Wildflowers: *Dichelostemma capitatum*, *Plantago erecta*.<sup>1</sup> Since the project opened in 2005, museum staff and local volunteers have introduced additional species. These additional plantings include species that bloom at various times of year, providing nectar, pollen, and food sources for an array of regional pollinators and other wildlife. Museum staff have observed regular rooftop visits from species including: Lesser goldfinches, Black phoebes, Dark-eyed juncos, Annas hummingbirds, Killdeer, Red-tailed hawks, California bumble bees, and Green hairstreak butterflies.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Greenroofs.com. "California Academy of Sciences (CAS) Living Roof." Accessed August 2, 2024. <http://www.greenroofs.com/projects/california-academy-of-sciences-cas-living-roof/>.

<sup>2</sup> Green Grid Roofs. "Northern California Suggested Plants from the Living Roof Manual." Accessed August 1, 2024. <https://www.greengridroofs.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Northern-CA-Suggested-Plants-from-Living-Roof-Manual.pdf>.

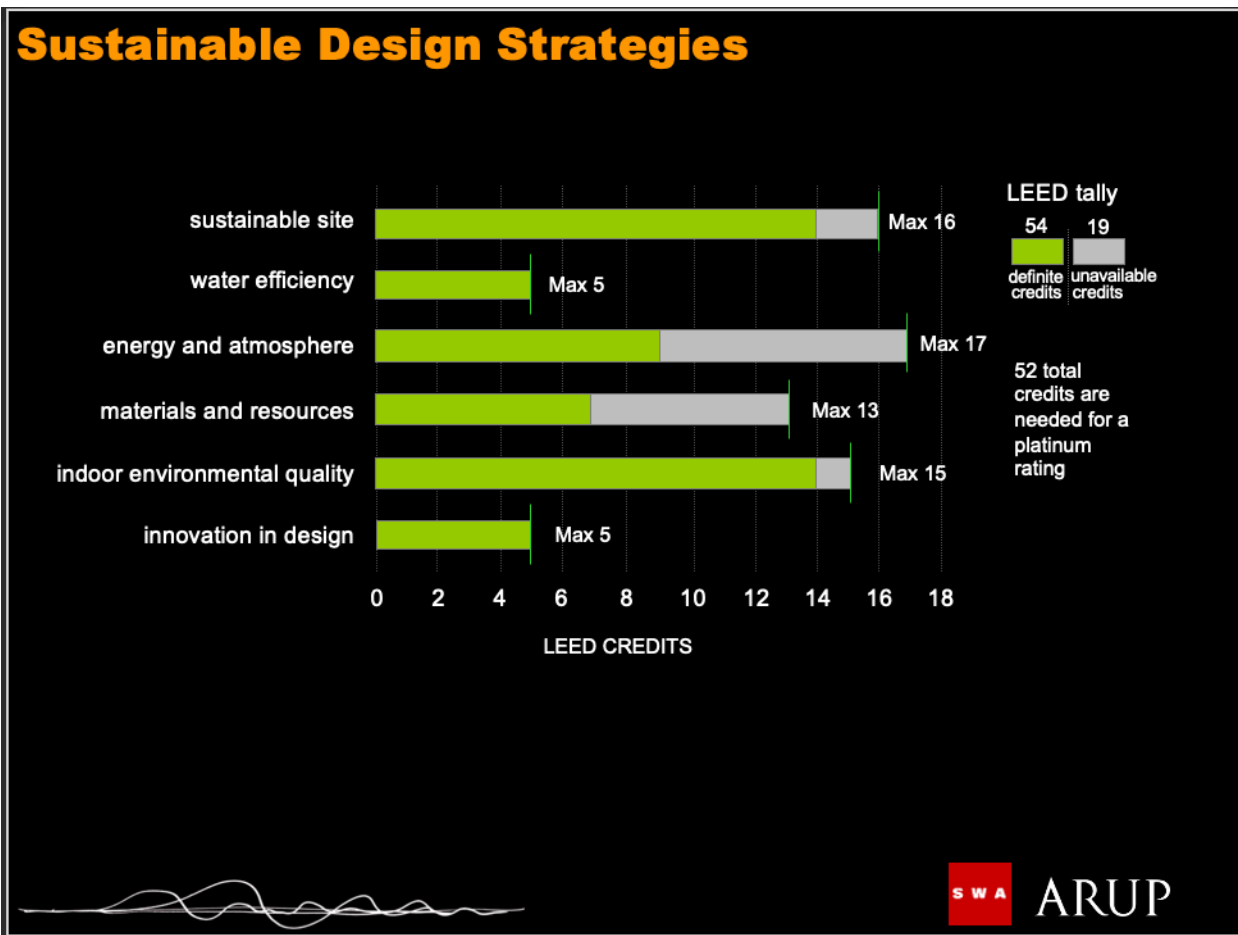


Figure 1: Presentation slide by SWA, 2006

The California Academy of Sciences building received an overall LEED Platinum rating, which at the time, required at least 52 out of 71 total credits across multiple performance categories. At the time this rating was awarded, projects were evaluated based on myriad criteria including “on-site protection or restoration of open habitat.” The living roof’s provision of native habitat helped the Academy earn credits in this category.



Figure 2: Paul Kephart from RANA Creek created a mock up to measure plant success

The design team constructed 1:1-scale mock-ups of the living roof's steep topography before installing plants on the site itself. The test plots were constructed adjacent to the Academy in order to ensure that select plant material would be able to thrive under the extreme microclimate conditions of San Francisco's Golden Gate Park.



Figure 3: RANA and other project team members gather near the mock up green roof.

**Method:**

Information related to the project’s use of native plants for supporting regional pollinators was gathered from web-based archives, and materials provided by the landscape architects. All data was published and cross-referenced with California Academy of Sciences staff. RANA conducted the mock-up studies and monitored the success rate of plant longevity along with which general pollinators were attracted. Over time, the California Academy of Sciences has updated their information on which species of pollinators have occupied the green roof.

**Calculations:**

Species	Common Name	Survival	70% cover (3 months)	Plant Height	Utilization
<b>Herbaceous perennials</b>					
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	yarrow	yes	yes	12"	flies/bees/lady bugs
<i>Armeria maritima</i> ssp. <i>californica</i>	sea thrift	yes	yes	6"	bees
<i>Fragaria chiloensis</i>	beach strawberry	yes	yes	3"	bees
<i>Heuchera micrantha</i>	alum root	yes	no	5"	hummers
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i> var. <i>lanceolata</i>	self heal	yes	yes	6"	bees/ladybugs
<i>Satureja douglasii</i>	yerba buena	yes	no	3"	unobserved
<i>Solidago californica</i>	goldenrod	yes	yes	16"	bees/ladybugs
<i>Stachys bullata</i>	hedge nettle	yes	yes	14"	hummers
<i>Trifolium wormskioldii</i>	cow clover	no	no		n/a
<b>Grasses</b>					
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	red fescue	yes	yes	14"	butterflies
<i>Festuca idahoensis</i>	Idahoe fescue	yes	yes	8"	unobserved
<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>	June grass	yes	no	8"	unobserved
<b>Emergent Wetland Species</b>					
<i>Junus patens</i>	spreading rush	yes	yes	12"	unobserved
<i>Juncus xiphioides</i>	iris leaved rush	yes	yes	12"	unobserved
<i>Carex tumulicola</i>	foothill sedge	yes	yes	8"	unobserved
<i>Sisyrinchium bellum</i>	blue eyed grass	yes	yes	6"	native bees
<i>Carex pansa</i>	sand sedge	yes	yes	6"	unobserved
<b>Succulents</b>					
<i>Sedum spathulifolium</i>	sedum	yes	no	3"	butterflies
<i>Dudleya farinosa</i>	dudleya	yes	yes	8"	unobserved
<b>Wildflowers</b>					
<i>Eschscholzia maritima</i>	poppy	yes	n/a	6"	bees/butterflies
<i>Lupinus bicolor</i>	lupine	yes	n/a	6"	unobserved
<i>Lasthenia californica</i>	gold fields	yes	n/a	4"	butterflies
<i>Layia platyglossa</i>	tidy tips	yes	n/a	4"	unobserved
<i>Dichelostemma capitatum</i>	blue dicks	no	no		n/a
<i>Plantago Erecta</i>	California Plantain	yes	yes	2"	butterflies

Figure 4: Table created by RANA. Observing plant success and pollinators.

Based on the table above, certain plants, such as *Trifolium wormskioldii* and *Dichelostemma capitatum*, did not have a high success rate. However, a majority of plants tested did flourish and also were able to provide resources for pollinators.

# Native Plant Species on the Living Roof

SEPTEMBER 2014

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Common Yarrow
<i>Acmispon glaber</i> (syn. <i>Lotus scoparius</i> )	Deerweed
<i>Ambrosia chamissonis</i>	Beach Bur
<i>Anaphalis margaritacea</i>	Pearly Everlasting
<i>Anthoxanthum occidentale</i> (syn. <i>Hierochloa occidentalis</i> )	California Sweet Grass
<i>Aquilegia formosa</i>	Western Colombine
<i>Arctostaphylos edmundsii</i> 'Big Sur'	Big Sur Manzanita
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Kinnikinnick
<i>Armeria maritima</i> ssp. <i>californica</i>	Sea Pink
<i>Artemisia californica</i>	California Sagebrush
<i>Artemisia douglasiana</i>	Mugwort
<i>Artemisia pycnocephala</i>	Beach Sagewort
<i>Asarum caudatum</i>	Wild Ginger
<i>Astragalus nuttallii</i>	Nuttall's Milkvetch
<i>Baccharis pilularis</i>	Coyote Bush
<i>Baccharis pilularis</i> 'Twin Peaks'	Coyote Bush
<i>Carex pansa</i>	Sand Dune Sedge
<i>Carex praegracilis</i>	Clustered Field Sedge
<i>Ceanothus maritimus</i>	Maritime Ceanothus
<i>Ceanothus thyrsiflorus</i> var. <i>griseus</i> (syn. <i>Ceanothus griseus</i> var. <i>horizontalis</i> )	Yankee Point Lilac
<i>Clinopodium douglasii</i> (syn. <i>Satureja douglasii</i> )	Yerba Buena
<i>Corethrogyne filaginifolia</i> (syn. <i>Lessingia filaginifolia</i> var. <i>filaginifolia</i> )	Common Sandaster
<i>Dudleya caespitosa</i>	Coast Dudleya
<i>Dudleya cymosa</i>	Canyon Liveforever
<i>Dudleya farinosa</i>	Powdery Liveforever

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Dudleya lanceolata</i>	Lanceleaf Liveforever
<i>Dudleya pulverulenta</i>	Chalk Dudleya
<i>Epilobium canum</i> ssp. <i>canum</i>	California Fuchsia
<i>Dudleya lanceolata</i>	Lanceleaf Liveforever
<i>Dudleya pulverulenta</i>	Chalk Dudleya
<i>Epilobium canum</i> ssp. <i>canum</i>	California Fuchsia
<i>Epilobium canum</i> ssp. <i>canum</i> 'Everetts Choice'	California Fuchsia
<i>Equisetum hyemale</i>	Scouringrush Horsetail
<i>Erigeron glaucus</i>	Seaside Daisy
<i>Eriogonum grande</i> var. <i>rubescens</i>	Redflower Buckwheat
<i>Eriogonum latifolium</i>	Coast Buckwheat
<i>Eriogonum parvifolium</i>	Seacliff Buckwheat
<i>Eriogonum umbellatum</i>	Sulphur Flower Buckwheat
<i>Eriophyllum staechadifolium</i>	Lizard Tail
<i>Eschscholzia californica</i>	California Poppy
<i>Eschscholzia californica</i> 'Maritima'	California Poppy
<i>Festuca brachyphylla</i> ssp. <i>breviculmis</i> 'Pt. Joe'	Point Joe Fescue
<i>Festuca californica</i>	California Fescue
<i>Festuca rubra</i> 'Patrick's Point'	Red Fescue
<i>Fragaria chiloensis</i>	Beach Strawberry
<i>Frangula californica</i> 'Eve Case' (syn. <i>Rhamnus californica</i> 'Eve Case')	California Coffeeberry
<i>Grindelia hirsutula</i>	Hairy Gumweed
<i>Grindelia stricta</i>	Gumweed
<i>Heuchera maxima</i>	Island Alumroot
<i>Heuchera micrantha</i>	Alumroot

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Iris douglasiana</i>	Douglas Iris
<i>Juncus balticus</i>	Baltic Rush
<i>Juncus patens</i>	Spreading Rush
<i>Juncus xiphioides</i>	Irishleaf Rush
<i>Lasthenia californica</i>	Goldfields
<i>Layia platyglossa</i>	Tidy Tips
<i>Leymus mollis</i>	American Dune Grass
<i>Lonicera hispidula</i>	Pink Honeysuckle
<i>Lupinus arboreus</i>	Yellow Bush Lupine
<i>Lupinus bicolor</i>	Miniature Lupine
<i>Lupinus nanus</i>	Sky Lupine
<i>Lupinus variicolor</i>	Manycolor Lupine
<i>Mimulus aurantiacus</i>	Sticky Monkeyflower
<i>Mimulus cardinalis</i>	Scarlet Monkeyflower
<i>Mimulus guttatus</i>	Seep Monkeyflower
<i>Monardella villosa</i>	Coyote Mint
<i>Morella californica</i> (syn. <i>Myrica californica</i> )	California Wax Myrtle
<i>Muhlenbergia rigens</i>	Deer Grass
<i>Nemophila menziesii</i>	Baby Blue Eyes
<i>Oenothera elata</i> ssp. <i>hookeri</i>	Yellow Evening Primrose
<i>Penstemon heterophyllus</i>	Foothill Penstemon
<i>Phacelia californica</i>	California Phacelia
<i>Plantago erecta</i>	California Plantain
<i>Polystichum munitum</i>	Western Sword Fern
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i> ssp. <i>lanceolata</i>	Selfheal

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> var. <i>pubescens</i>	Bracken Fern
<i>Ranunculus californicus</i>	California Buttercup
<i>Ribes speciosum</i>	Fuchsia-Flowered Gooseberry
<i>Rosa californica</i>	California Wild Rose
<i>Rubus ursinus</i>	California Blackberry
<i>Salvia mellifera</i>	Black Sage
<i>Salvia sonomensis</i>	Sonoma Sage
<i>Salvia spathacea</i>	Hummingbird Sage
<i>Scrophularia californica</i>	Bee Plant
<i>Sedum spathulifolium</i>	Stonecrop
<i>Sidalcea malvaeflora</i>	Checker Mallow
<i>Sisyrinchium bellum</i>	Blue-Eyed Grass
<i>Sisyrinchium bellum</i> 'Rocky Point'	Blue-Eyed Grass
<i>Sisyrinchium californicum</i>	Golden-Eyed Grass
<i>Solidago velutina</i> ssp. <i>californica</i>	California Goldenrod
<i>Stachys bullata</i>	California Hedge Nettle
<i>Stipa pulchra</i> (syn. <i>Nassella pulchra</i> )	Purple Needle Grass
<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i> 'Tilden Park'	Common Snowberry
<i>Symphyotrichum chilense</i> (syn. <i>Aster chilensis</i> )	Pacific Aster
<i>Woodwardia fimbriata</i>	Giant Chain Fern

Figure 5: Updated plant palette with native plants highlighted

95 total on plant palette in Figure 5; 70 of which are native = 73% of species native to California

### **Interview with Kendra Hauser California Academy of Sciences**

#### ***How does your living roof provide habitat?***

The California Academy of Sciences' living roof is 2.5 acres and composed of over 90 species of California native plants. We take an active role in selecting local native plants, introduce plant species that are important nectar, pollen, and seed sources for wildlife, and develop our plantings to incorporate plant species that will bloom at varying times of the year to maximize food sources. Emphasis is not only placed on providing food sources for local species, but also ensuring that wildlife has shelter for nesting and hiding from predators. To achieve this we select plants of varying heights, grass species, and incorporate rocks and branches on the roof. To encourage California native bees to nest on the roof, we created earth mounds and a bee house composed of logs.

#### ***What types of species regularly visit the living roof?***

We have had a variety of birds visit the roof, including the Lesser goldfinch, black phoebe, dark-eyed junco, and Anna's hummingbird. Two reoccurring bird visitors are the killdeer and red-tailed hawk. Red-tailed hawks have been nesting in a Monterey Cypress on our grounds for many years. Within two years of the roof being installed, the hawks began using the roof as a space for their fledglings to practice flight. Nearly every day in the summer we will see the hawks sunning on the domes or feeding on the roof! A variety of bees, butterflies, and moths also visit the roof. We are always excited and surprised to see new ground dwelling animals as inhabitants in our growing media and currently have spiders, beetles, grasshoppers, pill bugs, and earth worms on the roof!

Figure 6: Interview with an employee of the California Academy of Sciences.

This interview provides a descriptive narrative on the kind of pollinators that have been observed on or within close proximity to the living roof, such as Red tailed hawks. It is notable to mention birds such as Lesser goldfinch, Black phoebe, Dark-eyed juncos and Anna's hummingbirds have been known to occupy the roof along with beetles, butterflies, bees, moths, pill bugs, grasshoppers, earthworms, and spiders.<sup>3</sup>

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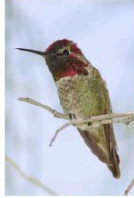
<sup>3</sup> Green Grid Roofs. "Northern California Suggested Plants from the Living Roof Manual." Accessed July 15, 2024. <https://www.greengridroofs.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/Northern-CA-Suggested-Plants-from-Living-roof-manual.pdf>



# California Academy of Sciences Living Roof Fauna



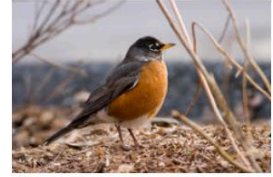
**Red-tailed Hawk**  
*Buteo jamaicensis* <sup>1</sup>



**Anna's Hummingbird**  
*Calypte anna* <sup>2</sup>



**Brewer's Blackbird**  
*Euphagus cyanocephalus* <sup>3</sup>



**American Robin**  
*Turdus migratorius* <sup>4</sup>



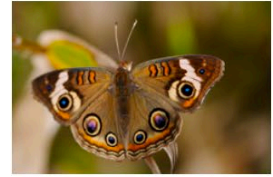
**European Starling**  
*Sturnus vulgaris* <sup>5</sup>



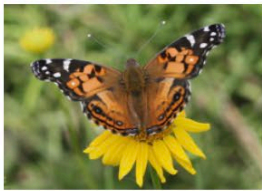
**California Slender Salamander**  
*Batrachoseps attenuatus* <sup>6</sup>



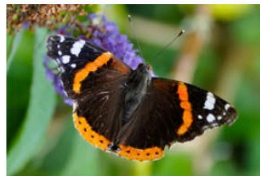
**Honey Bee**  
*Apis mellifera* <sup>7</sup>



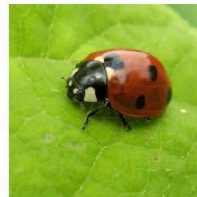
**Common Buckeye**  
*Junonia coenia* <sup>8</sup>



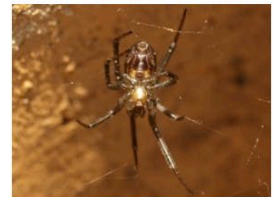
**American Lady**  
*Vanessa virginiensis* <sup>9</sup>



**Red Admiral**  
*Vanessa atalanta* <sup>10</sup>



**Seven-spotted Ladybird**  
*Coccinella septempunctata* <sup>11</sup>



**False Black Widow**  
*Steatoda grossa* <sup>12</sup>



**Leopard Slug**  
*Limax maximus* <sup>13</sup>



**Woodlouse Spider**  
*Dysdera crocata* <sup>14</sup>



**Painted Ladybird**  
*Mulsantina picta* <sup>15</sup>



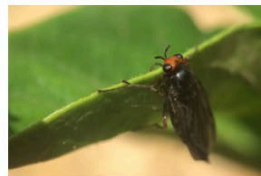
**Chrysolina bankii**  
*Chrysolina bankii* <sup>16</sup>



**Lawn Shrimp**  
*Arcitalitrus sylvaticus* <sup>17</sup>



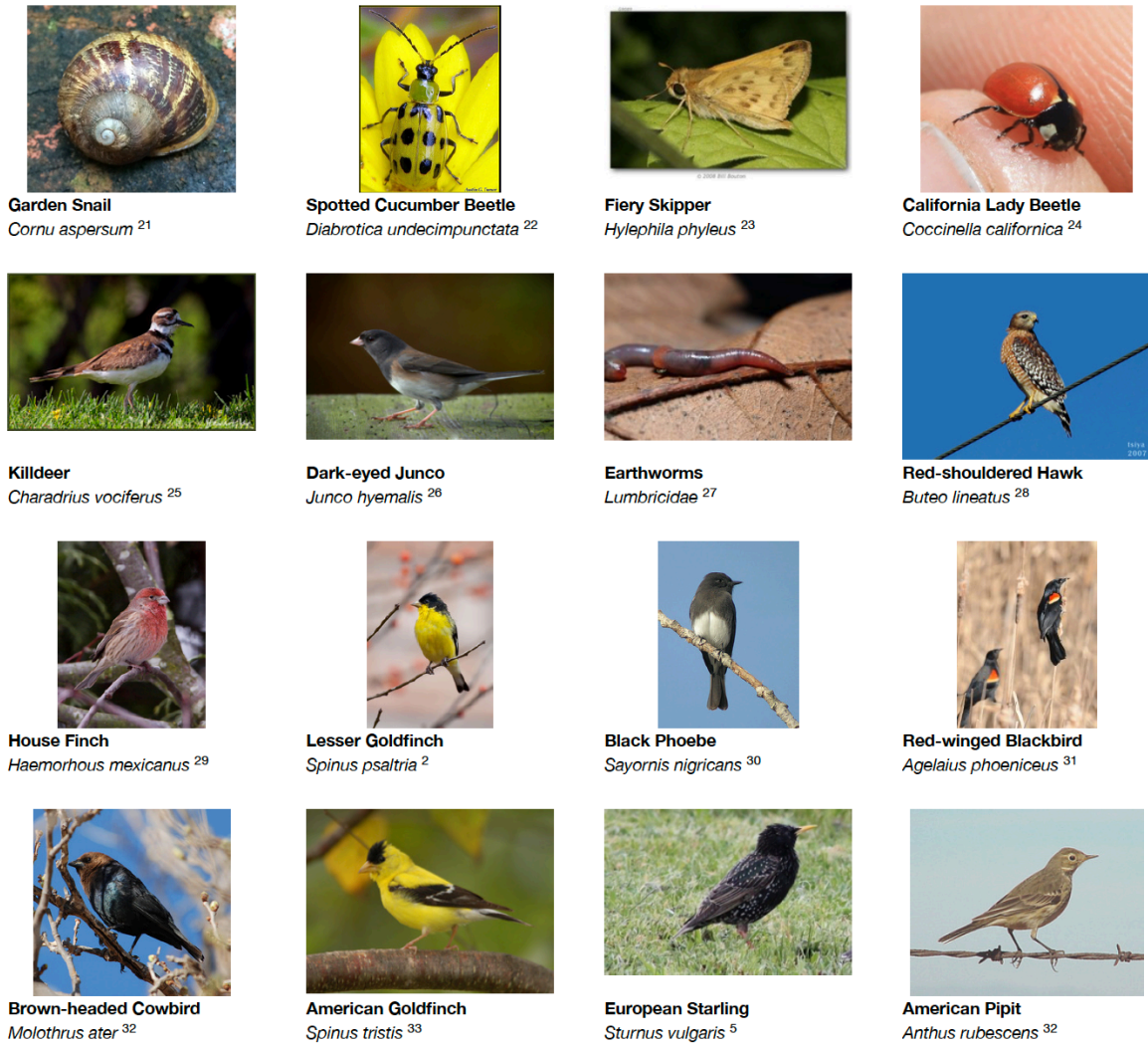
**California Pipevine Swallowtail**  
*Battus philenor hirsuta* <sup>18</sup>



**Sugarcane soldier fly**  
*Inopus rubriceps* <sup>19</sup>



**Porcellionides floria**  
*Porcellionides floria* <sup>20</sup>



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Built with iNaturalist Guides (<https://www.inaturalist.org/guides>)

Figure 7: A Grid composed of fauna found on the living roof, built with iNaturalist Guides.

**Sources:**

<https://www.greengridroofs.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Northern-CA-Suggested-Plants-from-Living-Roof-Manual.pdf>

<https://www.inaturalist.org/guides/3755?view=grid>

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/fauna-of-the-cas-living-roof>

### ***Limitations:***

Data has been updated since 2008 when the living roof was initially planted. Over time, plant species have been added to the roof both intentionally by Academy staff and inadvertently through naturally occurring seed dispersal. Today, many of the plants within the living roof include exotic species which were not part of the original plan, but were introduced by wind, birds, or other natural seed dispersal processes.

Pollinator data used for this calculation is published on the Academy's website. However, these data have not been regularly updated and may not represent the most current conditions.

iNaturalist is an open-source platform that can be updated with observations by any user. Not all observations are confirmed or corroborated by subject experts.

### ***Environmental Benefits***

- **Generates an average of 213,000 kWh per year of solar energy, which offsets museum electricity costs by 10% and prevents an estimated 405,00 lbs of greenhouse gas emissions annually.**

### ***Background:***

The planted portion of the California Academy of Science's living roof is ringed by a canopy structure that is home to 60,000 photovoltaic cells, which produce 213, 000 kilowatt-hours of renewable energy per year, representing 5 to 10% of the buildings operational electricity demand.<sup>4</sup> By producing this energy on-site with renewables instead of purchasing it from a local utility provider, the Academy is able to prevent as much as 405,00 annual pounds of greenhouse gas emissions.

### ***Method:***

The research team used resources provided by the California Academy of Sciences.

### ***Calculations:***

Data Published by California Academy of Sciences

### ***Sources:***

<https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/promise-solar-energy-low-carbon-energy-strategy-21st-century#:~:text=Solar%20power%20produces%20no%20emissions,%2Dgrave%22%20than%20fossil%20fuels>

### ***Limitations:***

The research team could not obtain information for each individual month of electricity use by the museum.

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<sup>4</sup> California Academy of Sciences. "Efficient Building Design." California Academy of Sciences. Accessed July 10, 2024. <https://www.calacademy.org/efficient-building-design>.

All data obtained for this calculation was published in LEED documentation or in public presentations.

### ***Environmental Benefits***

- **Reduces overall average surface temperatures by up to 18° F as compared to similar green spaces nearby.**

### **Background:**

Plants in the living roof were selected to represent a native California landscape, The plants also provide a cooling effect. Of course, altitude has an impact on how the thermal comfort of people visiting or working on the green roof; however, it is likely that the types of plants and overall topography have an effect on temperatures. The mounds provide also shade and create small microclimates of their own.

### **Method:**

The research team used a thermal imaging device (FLIR ONE® Edge Pro) connected to a smart phone to record a series of surface temperature measurements from various locations on the Academy's living roof. Measurements were taken during the warmest part the day across a variety of solar exposure conditions, slopes, and vegetation profiles. This same procedure was conducted at two nearby locations within Golden Gate Park – each less than 500 meters from the Academy building. The additional sites were selected for comparison with the Academy's living roof because of their similar plant palettes, solar exposure levels, irrigation schedules, and maintenance regimes. Measurements were taken at all three sites within a three-hour time period during the warmest part of the day. Measurements were collected twice to find the midrange surface temperature differential between each site.

Additionally, the research team referenced LEED Certification documents, which indicate that the California Academy roof temperature is approximately 40 degrees cooler than those recorded on the ground plane below.

**Calculations:**

**1:00pm**



Figure 8: San Francisco Botanical Garden lawn area with temperature measurement locations

**Midrange Surface Temperature = 97 degrees Fahrenheit**

2:00pm



Figure 9: The Children's Garden at the San Francisco Botanical Garden with temperature measurement locations

**Midrange Surface Temperature = 98 degrees Fahrenheit**

3:00pm

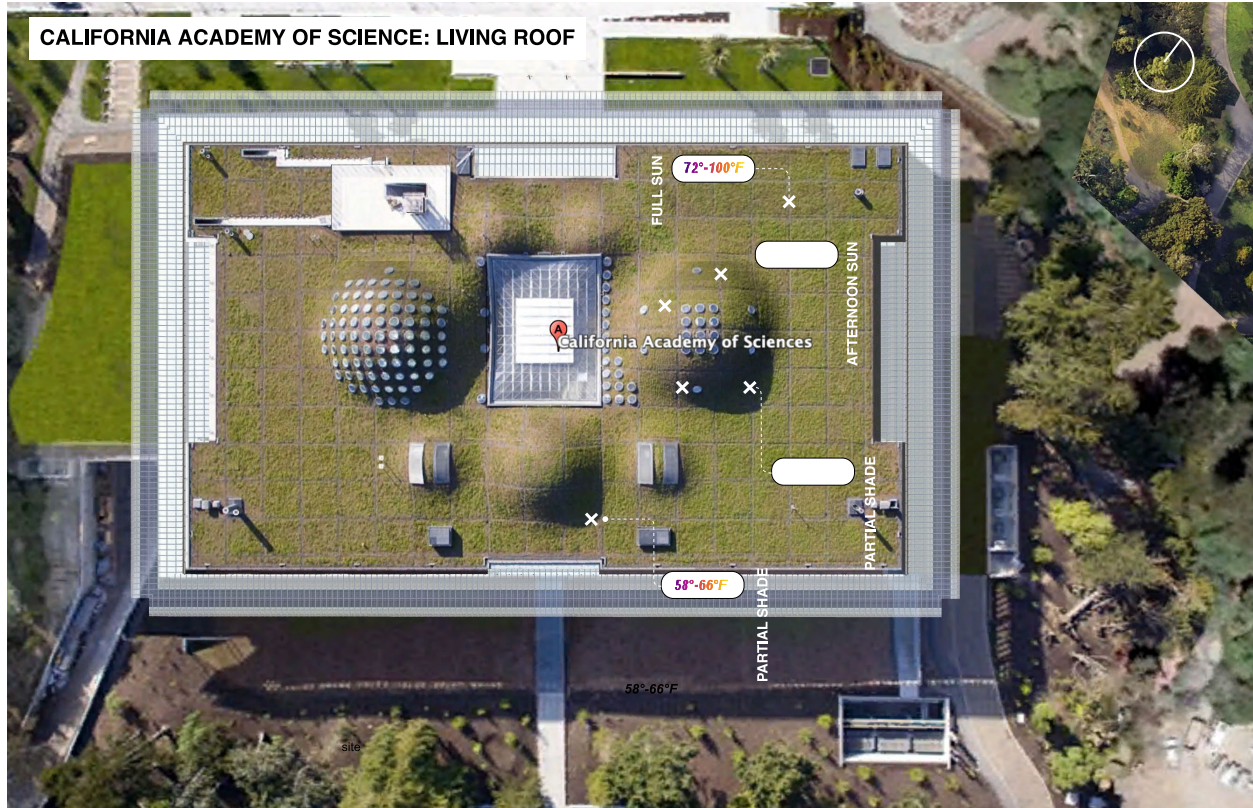


Figure 10: California Academy of Sciences living roof with temperature measurement locations

**Midrange Temperature = 79 degrees Fahrenheit**

**Midrange = Lowest Temperature + Highest Temperature / 2**

Based on these calculations, the average difference between the living roof and the other two sites is 18 degrees Fahrenheit. It is also important to note that the lowest temperature recorded across all three sites (58 degrees Fahrenheit) was the shadiest area of the green roof.

**Sources:**

[https://gispoint.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/paper\\_gis\\_open/DLA\\_2024/537752057.pdf](https://gispoint.de/fileadmin/user_upload/paper_gis_open/DLA_2024/537752057.pdf)

**Limitations:**

Neither ambient air temperature nor windspeed were included as a variables in this research.

Surface temperature data was only collected during June and July. The data was only collected during two site visits. Also it is important to note we did not record information about relative moisture, dew point, or plant turgidity. During observation, we noticed some areas had recently been watered. This may have impacted surface temperature.

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## Social Benefits

**Attracted approximately 540,700 visitors in 2023, which made up almost half of the approximately 1.1 million total visitors to the museum.**

### ***Background:***

Data from the California Academy of Sciences about visitor numbers shows that a total of 49% of guests who come to visit the museum access the rooftop. Additionally, 13% of guests purchase a ticket for the sole purpose of seeing the architecture. A total of 1,103, 499 guests visited the museum in 2023. 540,715 guests have visited the living roof deck or taken private tours of the roof. There were 21 events that were held on the rooftop that involved tours and educational programs.

### ***Method:***

The research team used averages taken from daily visitorship counts. Metrics were collected by California Academy of Sciences and shared with the research team.

***Calculations:*** Averages and events calculated by California Academy of Sciences.

### ***Sources:***

Data received from California Academy of Sciences

### ***Limitations:***

Daily visitorship data is limited to raw numbers of individual ticket-holders. Other potentially useful information, such as visitor demographics, where they are visiting from, or student status were not provided.



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## Inconclusive Benefits

**Stores an estimated 0.0452 kilograms of carbon dioxide equivalent (kgCO<sub>2</sub>e) per square meter in the living roof's plant material.**

### **Method:**

An inventory of plant types was used to estimate how much carbon may be sequestered by the living roof. Individual plant types included grasses, herbaceous plants, and small woody shrubs. We used direct observation along with input from California Academy of Sciences staff to identify the relative percent cover associated with each plant type and compared against original plant palettes. The living roof was found to include 60% grasses, 30% herbaceous plants, and 10% small woody shrubs. Based on the total biomass of each plant type, we estimated the plants' total carbon sequestration capacity.

*We used published data sourced from peer-reviewed journal publications to estimate the carbon sequestration potential for the green roof. The calculations for carbon capture are not specific for the plants used in the green roof. Extensive research and time would be required to conduct site specific measuring and monitoring of the soil carbon sequestration for the site.*

### **Calculations:**

Steps to determine carbon content in biomass present on roof ( $C_{roof}$ )

$$C_{roof} = C_{biomass,soil} + C_{biomass,plants} \quad (1)$$

Where,

$$C_{biomass,soil} = C_{soil\ carbon\ pool} * area_{roof} \quad (2)$$

$C_{soil\ carbon\ pool}$  is sourced from Table 2 in (Silver, Ryals, and Eviner 2010). For the purposes of this calculation, it is assumed that the soil carbon pool within the green roof is equivalent to the soil carbon pool in the grazed rangeland soil with a depth of 0-10cm.  $C_{soil\ carbon\ pool}$  is measured in Mg C/ha [Megagrams of carbon per hectare of land].

And

$C_{biomass,plants}$  is total carbon content within the plants present on the green roof. This is calculated as a sum of the carbon content of each plant species present on the green roof as shown in equation 3.

$$C_{biomass,plants} = \sum_{i=1}^k C_{plant\ species,i} * M_{plant\ species,i} \quad (3)$$

$C_{plant\ species,i}$  is the carbon content for species  $i$  (this value is taken from Table 1 (Ma et al. 2018)).<sup>5</sup> This is measured as a mass percentage (i.e. kg of carbon / kg of plant).

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<sup>5</sup> Ma, Suhi, Feng He, Di Tian. 2018. "Variations and Determined of Carbon Content in Plants: A Global Synthesis." *Biogeosciences* 15(3): 693-702. <https://doi.org/10.5194/bg-15-693-2018>

$M_{\text{plant species}, i}$  is the total mass of plant species  $i$  on the green roof as calculated per equation 4. This is measured in kg of plant.

$$M_{\text{plant species}, i} = M_i * PD_i * \text{area}_{\text{roof}, i} \quad (4)$$

$M_i$  is the total biomass per plant for species  $i$  measured in kg per plant (from Table 1 (Körner and Renhardt 1987))<sup>6</sup>

$PD_i$  is the plant density for species  $i$  measured in # of plants per area

$\text{Area}_{\text{roof}, i}$  is the roof area covered by plant species  $i$

**Grass: 0.00208 kg per plant x 20 plant per area x 1.5 total area x 4047 (acre to square meters) =**

252 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e

***Poa laxa (grass)***

**Herbaceous: .00393 kg per plant x 15 plant per area x .75 total area x 4047 = 179 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e**

***Achilleum millefolium (herbaceous)***

**Woody: 0.00868 kg per plant x 3 plant per area x .25 total area x 4047 = 26 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e**

***Chrysanthemum leucanthemum (woody)***

Total carbon content = 457 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e / 2.5 area of living roof / 4047 = .0452 KgCO<sub>2</sub>e

**Sources:**

[https://zemdirbyste-agriculture.lt/99\(1\)tomas/99\\_1\\_tomas\\_str3.pdf](https://zemdirbyste-agriculture.lt/99(1)tomas/99_1_tomas_str3.pdf)

<https://www.carboncycle.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Silver-et-al.-2010-REM.pdf>

<https://bg.copernicus.org/articles/15/693/2018/bg-15-693-2018.pdf>

[https://zemdirbyste-agriculture.lt/99\(1\)tomas/99\\_1\\_tomas\\_str3.pdf](https://zemdirbyste-agriculture.lt/99(1)tomas/99_1_tomas_str3.pdf)

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326134431\\_CO2\\_Payoff\\_of\\_Extensive\\_Green\\_Roofs\\_with\\_Different\\_Vegetation\\_Species](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326134431_CO2_Payoff_of_Extensive_Green_Roofs_with_Different_Vegetation_Species)

**Limitations:**

This calculation is limited by not accounting the soils variable depth, which can alter its total carbon uptake potential. The soil is also a component that should be considered since it is largely composed of local compost, and may represent a larger carbon sink than this calculation suggests.

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<sup>6</sup> Körner, Ch and U. Renhardt. 1987. "Dry Matter Partitioning and Root Length/Leaf Area Ratios in Herbaceous Perennial Plants with Diverse Altitudinal Distribution." *Oecologia* 74 (3): 411-18.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00378938>

Also, this calculation does consider at 'embodied carbon' as a research element. Embodied carbon analysis can also provide an insight on overall carbon emissions since most the materials used were eco-conscious, locally sourced, and/or recycled materials.

The calculation was not site specific when it comes to the measurement of biomass, it used peer-reviewed science journals to make these generalizations of biomass.

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