



MT Waterwise Plants

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Let's redefine how we think of waterwise gardens and explore the wide variety of tough plants suited for our dry climate here in Helena. These xeric plants can have colorful flowers, varying foliage, and can help add interest to the landscape. They can attract pollinators, contribute to a healthy ecosystem, and brighten up your neighborhood, all while reducing water use. Create a beautiful landscape by using these seven principles of Xeriscaping:

- **Design:** It can be simple! Start with a site analysis, considering how the landscape will be used, existing plants and elements, light, wind, views, slopes, soil, drainage, and circulation. After completing this you can begin designating areas of the landscape for specific activities and different hydrozones (plant groups based on water requirements).
- **Reduce turf areas** or consider alternate grass species.
- **Plant Selection:** Carefully select plants that meet your site conditions and hardiness zone. Consider the light exposure, soil type and drainage, wind exposure and water requirements.
- **Soil Health:** We generally have soil that is either too high in clay or sand, and oftentimes rocky! Compost can be the answer to both problems, increasing organic matter and water holding capacity in sandy soils and improving structure and drainage in clay soils.
- **Mulch:** Mulching provides many benefits to a garden, including conserving water by reducing soil temperature and limiting wind exposure. Where possible organic mulches are preferred because of their ability to break down and improve the condition of the soil.
- **Irrigation:** There are many guidelines for irrigation, but ultimately each site will differ, and adjustments will need to be made to find what works for your gardens. All new plantings require water to become established, the larger the plant the longer the establishment period. A few irrigation tips: water early in the day, water deeply and less frequently (to establish deep, resilient root systems), utilize technology like rain sensors and seasonal adjust settings on your timer, and use emitters or soaker hoses instead of overhead spray where possible.
- **Maintenance:** By following the steps above you are creating a lower maintenance landscape. Continue to use natural fertilizers, reapply mulch as needed and fine tune your irrigation system regularly. And, of course, weed early and weed often to allow your new plants to establish without competition.

Perennials

- Solidago-Goldenrod
- Achillea-Yarrow
- Coreopsis-Tickseed
- Papaver-Poppy
- Ratibida-Prairie Coneflower
- Gaillardia-Blanket Flower
- Asclepias t.-Butterfly Weed
- Penstemon-Pineleaf, Rocky Mtn
- Echinacea-Coneflower
- Centaurea-Mountain Bluet
- Pulsatilla-Pasque Flower
- Lavandula-Lavender
- Liatris-Gay Feather
- Perovskia-Russian Sage
- Limonium-Sea Lavender
- Linum-Blue Flax
- Anaphalis-Pearly Everlasting
- Dalea-Prairie Clover
- Nepeta-Catmint
- Tradescantia-Spiderwort (SHADE)
- Aegopodium-Goutweed (SHADE)

Groundcovers

- *Aurinia-Basket of Gold*
- *Eriogonum-Sulfur Buckwheat*
- *Sedum/Sempervivum*
- *Cerastium-Snow in Summer*
- *Antennaria-Pussytoes*
- *Artemisia-Silver Sage, Silver Mound, Silver Brocade, Fringed Sage*
- *Thyme*
- *Veronica*
- *Junipers*

Grasses

- *Blue Grama*
- *Fescue-Sheep, Idaho*
- *Bluestem-Big, Little*
- *Prairie Dropseed*
- *Bluebunch Wheatgrass*

Shrubs

- *Rabbitbrush*
- *Caragana*
- *Roses-Rugosa, Red Leaf*
- *Viburnum-Wayfaring-tree*
- *Fernbush*
- *Mtn Mahogany*
- *Rhus-Sumac (Growlow, Skunkbush)*
- *Sea Buckthorn*
- *Sand Cherry-Pawnee Buttes*
- *Silver Buffaloberry*
- *Leadplant*
- *Snowberry*
- *Golden Currant*

Trees

- *Junipers*
- *Pine-Ponderosa, Austrian*
- *Hackberry*
- *Locust*
- *Tatarian Maple*

Annuals

- *Sunflower, Strawflowers, Gazania, Gaura, Portulaca, Dusty Miller, Lantana*