

Trees, Shrubs, and Perennials for Arid, Alkaline Regions, Hardy in Zones 5-6

TREES & SHRUBS

Serviceberry - *Amelanchier alnifolia*

Multi-stemmed shrub or small tree; 10-12 ft tall, 20 feet wide
Small white flowers, blueberrylike berries, fall color
Low water, but may require watering during dry spells
Suckers readily

Blue Mist Spirea – *Caryopteris x clandonensis*

Late summer blue color; attracts butterflies and bees
2-3 ft tall, 3 ft wide; deciduous
Requires occasional deep soaking, but is generally adaptable to dry conditions

***Catalpa* species**

Moderate to fast growing to 40-70 ft, 20-40 ft wide
Well adapted to extremes of heat and cold; leafs out late in spring
Low to moderate water; benefits from deep watering during prolonged drought
Large, white flowers early summer, bean-shaped seed capsules – somewhat messy

Hackberry – *Celtis occidentalis*

Broad, oval shape to 50-60 ft., spread to 40-50 ft., small orange-red fruit
Once established needs little supplemental water
Prone to Hackberry nipplegall on leaves but does no harm to tree

Green Ash – *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* (seedless male clones best)

50-60 ft. tall, 30-40 ft. wide
Tolerates moist to dry conditions – slower growing in dry conditions
Susceptible to leaf curl, ash aphid, scale; susceptible to borers if drought stressed

***Juniperus* species**

Evergreen foliage, small berry-like cones
Little to moderate water; well-drained soil

Beauty Bush – *Kolkwitzia amabilis*

Deciduous shrub 6-10 ft., spreads 4-8 ft.; finely branched, multiple upright stems, early summer flowers
Gray-green leaves to 3 in. long sometimes turn reddish in fall
Moderate drought tolerance, best with occasional deep soaking

Golden Raintree – *Koelreuteria paniculata*

Smaller accent tree to 20-30 ft., spread 25-35 ft.
Midsummer flowers, lantern-shaped seedpods
Once established, will do well on low to moderate quantities of water

Pinus species

P. aristata (bristlecone pine), *P. ponderosa* (Ponderosa pine), *P. mugo* (mugo pine), *P. nigra* (Austrian pine)

Most tolerate alkaline soil as long as well-drained; does well with little water once established

Potentilla, Cinquefoil – *Potentilla fruticosa*

1-4 ft. high, 2-4 ft. wide

Good drought tolerance; performs best with additional moisture beyond natural precipitation

White to yellow to orange flowers throughout summer

Western Sand Cherry – *Prunus besseyi*

Spreading, open, airy, upright branches forming rounded or vasselike shape

3-6 ft. tall and wide

Small white flowers early summer, red fall color

Three Leaf Sumac – *Rhus trilobata*

Deciduous shrub to 3-6 ft., spreading 3-6 ft., fall color

Plants sucker from roots – good for erosion control on difficult sites

One of the most drought tolerant sumacs, but grows better with additional moisture

***Spiraea* species**

Deciduous shrubs to 6-8 ft, spreading 5-10 ft.; smaller varieties available

Adapts to dry conditions but best flowering with extra water

Common Lilac – *Syringa vulgaris*

Deciduous shrub to 8-20 ft. with spread to 6-15 ft.

Fragrant purple flowers in spring

Performs best with additional water but drought tolerant once established

Viburnum, Wayfaring Tree – *Viburnum lantana*

Deciduous shrub to 10-15 ft. tall, 10-15 ft. wide

Spring flowers, fall color, berrylike fruit

Low to moderate water

PERENNIALS**Hummingbird Mint - *Agastache cana***

Showy perennial to 2-3 ft, spreads 1.5-2 ft

Low to medium water, well-drained

Also *A. foeniculum*, *A. barberi*, *A. cana*

Yarrow – *Achillea* species

Herbaceous perennial from 2 inches to 4 ft., spreads 6 inches-3 ft.; tend to spread

Long bloom period, foliage aromatic

Well-drained soil; moist to start and dry once established

Basket-of-gold – *Aurinia saxatile*

Perennial to 6-18 inches tall, 6-12 inch spread

Low to moderate water, well-drained soil

Bluebell - *Campanula rotundifolia*

Herbaceous perennial to 6-24 inches: sprawls, self seeds, blue bell-like flowers
Low to medium water

Red Valerian, Jupiter's Beard, Fox Brush – *Centranthus ruber*

Bushy clump to 2-3 ft tall 18-24 inches wide
Reddish pink to crimson flowers late spring and again in mid to late summer; attracts butterflies
Low to moderate water

Blanketflower – *Gaillardia aristata*

Vigorous, easy perennial, 2-3 ft. high and wide
Blooms all summer, good cut flower
Reseeds but usually not true to type

***Iris* hybrids**

Well-drained soil; tolerates considerable drying and exposure
Blooms late spring, early summer; many colors

Catmint – *Nepeta x faassenii* (sterile hybrid)

Herbaceous perennial to 18 inches high, 30 inches wide
Good groundcover, lavender-blue flowers
Other varieties invasive: *N. cataria* (catnip), *N. mussinii* (catmint), *N.f.* 'Blue Wonder', *N.f.* 'Six Hills Giant'

Russian Sage – *Perovskia atriplicifolia*

Shrubby perennial to 3-5 ft. high and 3-4 ft. wide
Sage-like aroma, silvery gray leaves, lavender-blue flowers attract bees and butterflies
Takes any soil as long as drainage is good; extremely resistant to drought and heat.

Prairie Coneflower, Mexican Hat – *Ratibida columnifera*

Herbaceous perennial 18-24 inches tall, 12-18 inches wide; Sunflower family
Well-drained, very little water; tolerates poor soil

Garden Sage – *Salvia officinalis*

Herbaceous shrublike perennial 18-24 inches tall, 12-18 inch spread
Colorful, long-lasting flowers
Handles drought well once established

Lavender Cotton - *Santolina chamaecyparissus*

Subshrub, ground cover, 12-18 inches tall, spreading 12-18 inches
Tolerates heat, wind, alkaline soil

GRASSES

Blue Fescue – *Festuca ovina glauca*

Fine-textured, compact blue clumps
Tolerates dry conditions, looks better with some irrigation

Blue Oat Grass, Blue Avena Grass – *Helictotrichon sempervirens*

Ornamental perennial grass to 2-4 ft. tall in bloom, 3 ft. spread
Well-drained soil, indifferent to pH, requires moderate water

Maiden Hair Grass - *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Gracillimus'

Perennial ornamental grass to 6-8 ft. tall, spreading 3-6 ft.
Most drought tolerant variety

Indian Ricegrass – *Oryzopsis hymenoides*

Ornamental bunch grass, 1-2 ft. high, spreads 2-3 ft.
Needs well-drained soil, tolerates drought and heat

Fountain Grass – *Pennisetum alopecuroides*

Ornamental grass to 2-3 ft. high, spreading 2-3 ft.
Low to moderate water, tolerates wind and heat