

## Tough Landscape Plants

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Are you trying to raise plants in your landscape or on your acreage and not having much luck? You are not alone. Your landscape plants have a lot of obstacles against them. Drought, rabbits, deer, the list goes on and on. Here is a list of plants that are drought tolerant once they are established and less likely to be eaten by our wildlife friends.



Butterfly Milkweed



Spreading Cotoneaster



Gayfeather



Potentilla

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	PLANT TYPE	FLOWER COLOR	BLOOM TIME	HEIGHT	LOCATION
Barberry, Japanese	<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>	Shrub	Yellow	May	4-6 feet	Sun
Beebalm	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Perennial	Lavender	June-August	24 inches	Sun to part shade
Black-eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia fulgida</i>	Biennial or short lived perennial	Yellow, brown center	July-August	24 inches	Sun
Blanket Flower	<i>Gaillardia aristata</i>	Perennial	Red with yellow	June-August	18 inches	Sun
Boltonia	<i>Boltonia asteroides</i>	Perennial	White	August-October	48 inches	Sun to part shade
Butterfly Milkweed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	Perennial	Orange	July	24 inches	Sun
Coneflower Purple	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Perennial	Purple	July-August	36 inches	Sun
Coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	Perennial	Yellow	June-August	24 inches	Sun
Cotoneaster, Spreading	<i>Cotoneaster divaricatu</i>	Shrub	Rose	May	5-6 feet	Sun to part shade
Dogwood, Redosier	<i>Cornus sericea</i>	Shrub	White	May	8-10 feet	Sun to part shade
Gayfeather, Rough	<i>Liatris aspera</i>	Perennial	Deep purple	August-Sept.	36 inches	Sun
Gayfeather	<i>Liatris spicata</i>	Perennial	Purple	August-Sept.	18-24 in.	Sun
Honeylocust	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>	Tree	Greenish yellow	May	40-50 feet	Sun
Lilac, Common	<i>Syringa vulgaris</i>	Shrub	White, Pink, Purple	May	8-15 feet	Sun
Potentilla	<i>Potentilla fruticosa</i>	Shrub	Yellow	June-October	2-4 feet	Sun
Sedum, Tall	<i>Sedum telephium</i>	Perennial	Rose to salmon	August-October	18 inches	Sun
Spiraea, Bridal wreath	<i>Spiraea prunifolia</i>	Shrub	White	May	6-10 feet	Sun
Spruce, Colorado Blue	<i>Picea pungens</i>	Tree			40-60 feet	Sun
Sumac, Staghorn	<i>Rhus typhina</i>	Shrub	Greenish yellow	July-August	15-20 feet	Sun
Wormwood	<i>Artemisia absinthium</i>	Perennial	Gray	July-August	24-36 in.	Sun
Yucca	<i>Yucca filamentosa</i>	Perennial	Creamy white	June-August	36 inches	Sun



Tall sedum



Bridal Wreath Spiraea

Photo: Soni Cochran, UNL Extension in Lancaster County

## 2008 Year of the Rudbeckia

Rudbeckia is an all-American treasure. Widely known as black-eyed Susan, this native to North America can be found growing as a wildflower in fields and along roadsides throughout the country. These reliable plants shine in the garden with an abundance of brightly colored flowers reflecting the brilliant yellows and oranges of the summer sun. Rudbeckias are easy to grow, adapt to a wide range of garden conditions, have few insect or disease problems and require only minimal care for a spectacular show of cheerful color during the summer and fall.



Rudbeckia flower garden.

There are 25 species of Rudbeckia including perennials, biennials and annuals. All are native to North America and are generally found growing in the East and Midwest, though they have now naturalized throughout most of the United States and can be seen in fields and gardens from Canada to Mexico.

A member of the Aster family, the Rudbeckia's daisy-like flowers come in single, semi-double and fully-double forms in a range of colors from lemon-yellow to gold, chestnut, mahogany and bronze, as well

as multi-colored blooms. Most species are in bloom from mid-summer through fall.

### How to Grow

Rudbeckias are easy to grow, low-maintenance flowers ideal for beginning gardeners, yet their wide range of sizes, colors, shapes and forms appeal to the most experienced horticulturist. They are easy to start from seed, which is readily available from retail, mail order and internet seed sources.

The plants grow best in full sun in average, well-drained soil, but will tolerate light shade and dry conditions. In areas of

heat and high humidity, powdery mildew can be a problem. Minimize the occurrence and spread of the disease by planting in an area with good air circulation and maintaining adequate spacing between plants.

### Planting

Rudbeckias are easy to start directly in the garden, generally when daytime temperatures are around 60 degrees F. Perennial varieties can be sown in fall or early spring. Scatter seeds then gently press them into the soil or cover very lightly with soil. Water regularly so the seedbed stays moist. As seedlings grow, thin to 6 to 8 inches apart.

### Garden Uses

Rudbeckias are versatile plants that add bright sunny color to perennial beds, mixed borders and containers. They can be used alone in mass plantings, as a border or along a fence. Ideal for attracting wildlife; bees and butterflies are drawn to their colorful flowers while the ripe coneheads provide seed during the fall and winter to feed hungry birds, especially finches and chickadees.

Source: National Garden Bureau



## Garden Guide

THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH  
By Mary Jane Frogge, UNL Extension Associate

Lawns maintained at the correct height are less likely to have disease and weed infestation. Kentucky bluegrass and tall fescue should be mowed at approximately three inches in height. Mow frequently, removing no more than one third of the blade at each cutting.

Make successive plantings of beans and sweet corn to extend the harvest season.

Harvest rhubarb by cutting or by grasping the stalk and pulling up and gently to one side.

Grass clippings can be used as a mulch in flower beds and vegetable gardens if allowed to dry well before use. Never use clippings from a lawn that has been treated with a herbicide.

Cabbage loopers and imported cabbage worms are green worms. They eat large holes in the leaves of plants in the cabbage family. For control, caterpillars can be picked off by hand or sprayed with Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*), a natural, non-toxic preparation available by various trade names.

Plan a landscaping project on paper first. Do not over plant. Be sure you know the mature size of each plant and allow for growth.

Grow your own dried flowers. Raise statice, globe amaranth, straw flowers and other everlasting to provide flowers for this year's arrangements.

Plant gladioli bulbs in late May.

Set out marigold, petunia, ageratum and fibrous begonia transplants. All are good border plants.

To grow annuals in containers on the patio, use a light weight soil mixture. Keep the plants well watered, because the soil dries out fast. Apply a water soluble fertilizer according to package directions every two weeks.

Watering roses with soaker hoses or drip irrigation will reduce the spread of black spot disease.

Plant ground covers under shade trees that do not allow enough sunlight to grow grass. Vinca minor or English ivy are ground cover plants that grow well in shade.

Mulch around newly planted trees and shrubs. This practice reduces weeds, controls fluctuations in soil temperature, retains moisture, prevents damage from lawn mowers and looks attractive.

When you visit botanical gardens and arboreta, take your camera and notepad with you. Plan now for changes you will make in your landscape.

For maximum landscape interest in a small, vertical space, try annual vines. They can disguise ugly walls and fences. When trellised, they can create shade and privacy while hiding undesirable views. Try morning glory, nasturtium vine and scarlet runner bean.