

CORDILLERA NATURE CLUB MEMBER'S FAVORITE LANDSCAPE PLANTS 2009 EDITION

This collection of plant favorites is from members of the Cordillera Nature Club. Based on their experience with the conditions on the ranch for tolerating deer and drought as well as other environmental conditions, they have found these plants to do well in their landscapes. (5 is the best possible score) It should be noted that no plant is totally drought or deer proof. In extreme conditions many may need some loving care or assistance to survive. This list however represents those that the Nature Club members have had the best success with over the years in this environment. If you would like to know more about a specific plants use, please contact the Cordillera Nature Club to learn more and we will try to link you to the neighbor who has put forward their favorites.

Plant Group	Name (origin)	Description	Drought Tolerant	Deer Resistant	Required Maintenance	User Comments
TREES						
Trees	Live Oak (Native)	Almost Evergreen tree that actually sheds the old leaves each spring, but the new leaves are there, so never barren.	5	5	None (NOTE: if pruned or wounded make sure to follow all Oak Wilt precautions to prevent spread of this fungus)	Needs good drainage. The 7 we planted were over 5" diameter & don't know if deer scrape trunks on small ones. All 7 are now huge!
Trees	Cedar Elm (Native)	Deciduous tree with small leaves and a very rough interesting bark pattern. Can grow to over 30 feet tall.	5	5	None	Trunks under 4" diameter need protection. Susceptible to mistletoe. We planted 11 & 10 look great. One has a lot of mistletoe.
Trees	Texas Mountain Laurel (native)	Evergreen with blue - purple, fragrant spring bloom that grows in hanging clusters. Dense foliage. Under the flowers form grey seed pods. Tree can grow to 12 ft.	4.75	4.5	Occasionally gets web worms, usually on new growth, and needs to be sprayed with BT.	(occasional buck scrapes in fall)

Trees	Yaupon Holly Tree (native)	Evergreen	5	4.5	Usually none. (occasional buck scrapes in fall may require a helping hand)	Most tolerant shrub/small tree we have. Grows in all sun/shade, soil and moisture conditions. Can grow to 20 ft. Fragrant blooms in spring then red berries birds love, especially mockingbirds.
Trees	Crape Myrtle (Asia)	Deciduous with summer blooms that can last for months, can grow to 15 to 20 feet tall.	4.5	5	Fertilizing would probably be helpful!	Regarding deer resistance it should be noted that a friend's did not fare so well!
Trees	Loquat (China)	Evergreen with a sweetly fragrant flower followed by a yellow or orange shaded fruit. Can grow to 20 to 30 feet.	3.5	3	The root system is very shallow, so be very careful if tilling the soil around the base of the tree.	Deer will go after lower leaves so it needs to be protected when small and reachable by the deer.
Trees	Possum Haw (Native)	Deciduous with winter berries on the female trees, can grow to 15 to 30 feet tall.	4.5	4	Small versions may need some caging or protection from deer in some instances.	Opossums, raccoons, other mammals, songbirds, and game birds eat the fruit.
Trees	Redbud (Native)	Deciduous with bright pink flowers in the early spring. Trees can grow to 15 to 20 feet.	4	4	Will need to water occasionally during drought times. Small versions may need some caging or protection from deer in some instances.	One of my favorite cultivars is the Forest Pansy Redbud.
SHRUBS						

Shrubs	Golden Thryallis or Gold Shower (Mexico)	Round 4-5' high shrub with small green/rust leaves and yellow blossoms	3	4.5	It gets very minimal irrigation water	Deer have never touched it.
Shrubs	Rock Cotoneaster (China)	Evergreen has very fragrant blooms spring then red berries. 3-4 ft. tall.	5	5	None	Very tolerant of sun, shade and all soil conditions.
Shrubs	Agarita (native)	Evergreen 4 ft. Native shrub looks like small holly. Fragrant spring blooms & red berries birds love.	5	5	None	Tolerant of sun, shade, needs good drainage.
Shrubs	Texas Sages, Green cloud and Silverado varieties (native)	Evergreen. GC abt. 8 ft. Silverado abt. 6 ft. As the variety names suggest the plants vary from a light green to a silver green leaf color.	5	4.5	None but may need a little helping hand if occasional buck scrapes in fall	Grows well in full sun or partial shade. Needs good drainage soil. Pinkish-purple flowers spring to fall that butterflies, hummingbirds and bees love.
Shrubs	Chrysactinia Mexicana or Damianita (Native)	Evergreen small shrub has small yellow flowers all spring and summer. Grows to as a mound shaped bush 2 feet wide by 1.5 feet high.	5	5	Very little. Prune in late January if necessary.	Can always count on beautiful yellow flowers all spring and summer. Grows in full sun and needs very little water.
Shrubs	Rosemary (Mediterranean area)	Evergreen small shrub that is available in a trailing and a bushy version. Produces a small pale blue bloom spring through fall with a pungent aroma.	4.5	5	None required, you may want to prune periodically to control the desired shape. You can also use this plant for its herbal benefits.	Avoid overwatering, needs to be in a place with good drainage. Does best in full sun. Bees and Butterflies love this plant.

Shrubs	Nandina or Heavenly Bamboo (India / East Asia)	Medium size shrub with red berries. Can grow to over 6 feet tall in the right conditions. Also available in dwarf varieties.	4	4	No maintenance, but when small must protect from deer with some deterrent. Sometimes viewed as an Invasive Species	Does well in sun to part shade. The berries are beautiful to look at and are also an attractant to many birds. Is not actually a part of the bamboo or grass family.
Shrubs	Philodendron (S.E. Asia & Tropical America)	Large green leaf variety which can develop amazing flowers. There are many varieties, so be sure to look for one to plant outdoors. Some are also excellent climbers.	3	5	During severe extended freezes, will need some protection.	Grows best in full shade with protection from cold north winds. Needs a rich humus soil mixture. (NOTE: Remember the plant is poisonous to eat, so take care with the little ones)
Shrubs	Wax Myrtle or Southern Bayberry (Native)	Semi-evergreen, large shrub or small tree, can grow to over 20 feet. Has a small bluish berry that is very fragrant.	3.5	5	No maintenance, except occasional pruning to control shape and size.	This does well in partial sun with loose soil that has good moisture retention. The berries attract many wild birds. (NOTE: due to the waxy leaves this plant is very flammable, so take care in placement)
Shrubs	Salvia Greggii (native)	Evergreen. 2-3 ft. Comes in many colors. Blooms spring to 1 st freeze. Even blooms during mild winters.	5	4.9	To encourage blooming cut back ½ height early spring. May need to protect as deer “trim” small plants during winter.	Does best in full sun, but will bloom in partial shade. Butterflies and hummingbirds love it.

Shrubs	Loropetalum (China)	Small evergreen colorful shrub has a mixture of maroon and light green leaves and produces a pink bloom. Grows to about 3 feet tall.	4	5	No maintenance needed.	Does well in sun to partial shade in a well drained soil with good mulch.
Shrubs	Viburnum (Native)	Evergreen shrub with spring flowers. Grows to 8 feet tall. There are a number of different varieties that offer different shaped leaves as well as different flowering and berry options.	3	5	Occasional pruning to control the shape or size.	Grows best in partial sun or shade
FLOWERING PERENNIALS						
Flowering Perennials	Blue Plumbago (South Africa)	Deciduous. 2-3 ft. Bright blue flowers as soon as weather gets hot lasting until 1 st freeze.	5	5	Cut back about ½ height in spring.	Needs full sun to bloom. Butterflies love it. On the Texas SuperStar™ plant list.
Flowering Perennials	Texas Lilac Vitex (China & India)	Large fast growth bush that grows to over 6 feet in height. Develops a bloom spike at the end of each stalk. Lilac color.	4.5	5	Cut back to about 6 inches in the winter to manage the size of this bush. Deadheading will enhance the blooming period.	Grows best in well drained soil. Can be acid or alkaline type. A great attractor plant for butterflies and bees.
Flowering Perennials	Hot Lips Salvia (Mexico)	Small Red w/white center flowers on a ball shaped bush, grows to 3 feet.	3.5	4.5	In late January prune back the dead limbs. No deadheading needed during year to maintain active blooms.	Grows well in partial sun setting. Does well in beds with mulched soil and good drainage.

Flowering Perennials	Dahlberg Daisy (Native)	Small Yellow flowers on a small lacey bush only grows to about 6" tall	4.5	5	No maintenance needed, is very hardy	Grows well in rocky soil. Is a very prolific seed maker so you will find more small bushes starting in nearby parts of your garden with time.
Flowering Perennials	Esperanza or Yellow Bells (native)	Yellow blossoms, plant can grow to 15 feet tall with climbing support.	5	3	Fertilizing (though they will bloom without it)	Must be in fenced area or in a protected area from deer until it grows beyond their reach. On the Texas SuperStar™ plant list.
Flowering Perennials	Lantana (American subtropics)	Deciduous. 2-3 ft. Available in a wide variety of colors, flowers as soon as weather gets hot lasting until 1st freeze.	4.5	3.5	Cut back the dead limbs in February.	The deer resistance can vary from plant to plant and from year to year. They are not a favorite of deer, but they will eat when hungry enough.
Flowering Perennials	Indigo Spires (Hybrid)	Herbaceous perennial to 5'. Beautiful indigo flower plumes at the top of the bush.	4.5	5	Cut back the dead limbs in February.	This is a butterfly favorite and the flowers last from spring to fall with no deadheading required.
Flowering Perennials	Mexican Bush Sage (Mexico)	A loose bushy shape grows to about 4 feet and is topped with a white and purple flower that blooms from summer to frost.	4.5	5	Cut back the dead limbs in February. No deadheading is needed to keep the blooms coming.	This is a favorite of butterflies and hummingbirds. Have never seen the deer touch it. On the Texas SuperStar™ plant list.

Flowering Perennials	Mealy Blue Sage or Salvia farinacea (Native)	Small flowering plant that will grow to about 2 foot tall topped with a light blue flower cone.	4.5	5	No maintenance needed, is very hardy	Does best in full sun, works well as a filler or scattered in groups around the edges of your landscape. (Is seen in abundance around the rough of the CR golf course.)
Flowering Perennials	Society Garlic (Native)	Small bulb plant that produces a small flower usually pink. Grows to about 8 inches in small clumps	4	3.5	Trim back dead foliage in winter, will need to protect from deer browsing in some conditions.	Grows best in loose soil with good drainage, full to partial sun.
Flowering Perennials	Firebush (Tropical & Subtropical America)	Small shrub (3 feet tall) with spring/fall flowers shaped like tubes. The flower is reddish orange.	4	4	Trim back dead foliage in winter, will need to protect from deer browsing in some conditions.	Grows well in full sun. Is a great attractor for hummingbirds and butterflies. On the Texas SuperStar™ plant list.
Flowering Perennials	Autumn Sage or Salvia Greggii (Native)	Small shrub (3 feet tall) with spring/fall flowers shaped like trumpets. The wild version is red, but white and pink varieties are also available.	4	5	You may want to do some pruning to control shape during the growing season. Cut back the dead limbs in February.	
VINES or CLIMBING PLANTS						
Vines	Crossvine or Trumpet Flower (Native)	A climbing, woody vine reaching 50 ft. long with showy, orange-red, trumpet-shaped flowers, semi-evergreen leaves which turn purple	4.5	3.5	No maintenance other than you may need to control the length through pruning.	A favorite for attracting hummingbirds. Deer will browse these leaves when hungry.

		in winter.				
Climbing Plants	Confederate Jasmine (Asia)	A perennial vine that has a bright green leaf that is known for its fast growth and hardiness. Various flower shades are available.	4.5	5	May need to prune annually to control its coverage or density.	Grows well on a fence or trellis and deer have not touched it. Does well in full sun and heat.
SUCCULENTS						
Succulents	Jade (South Africa)	Tree or bush shape	3	4	Can be potted and moved indoors. A common problem is overwatering.	Grows well in partial shade.
GROUND COVERS & GRASSES						
Ground Covers	Asiatic Jasmine (Asia)	Evergreen	4.5	4.5	Recommended that you mow at the highest blade setting to control the height of the cover and stimulate the growth once per year.	Grows well in the heat and can tolerate short freezing periods. Does best in partial or full sun but can also make it in full shade.
Ground covers	Dwarf Ruellia or Dwarf Mexican Petunia (Mexico)	Spectacular, low-growing, heat-tolerant perennial with profusions of violet, light pink or white flowers. Highly pest resistant. Quickly fills in as a ground cover.	4	4		Full sun or partial shade. Make sure you get the Dwarf version if you want to limit the height to a foot or less.

Grass	Maiden Grass (Asia)	Large perennial grasses with clumps of narrow foliage. Available in a dwarf variety if you don't want that much height. Leaves turn brown in fall. Silver midribs. Fan-shaped flowers on 1-8 ft panicles.	4.5	5	Cut back the dead stalks in February.	Full sun or partial shade in good drainage. There are several varieties which can give you different flower colors or shapes. (NOTE: some varieties are considered "invasive" species in the south, so please check before planting.)
Grass	Lindheimer Muhly (Native)	Large perennial grasses with clumps of narrow foliage. Grows to about 4 feet tall.	4.5	5	Cut back to about 8 inches in late winter	Grows well in full sun or partial shade. Place in a well drained area and avoid overwatering.
Grass	Buffalo Grass (Native)	Small grass blades on a runner type structure.	4.5	5	Depending on water you may need to mow occasionally, but not required.	Grass goes dormant in drought or winter...requires no maintenance but will tend to venture into surrounding areas due to runners.

In recognition of members who contributed their landscaping experience and recommendations:

Bettie Burton
Jan Donner
Marti Gebert
Kip Kiphart
Pam McCurley
Jay Pennington
Sandy Ragan
Janette Reamer
Dick Stephens