Pollinator Plants for the Colorado Garden

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• Assistant Manager of Horticulture at Denver Botanic Gardens Chatfield Farms
  • Native plants, prairie plants
  • Plant Select
  • Water Smart Xeric plants
  • Cactus collection
• 9 years in public gardens professionally
• Began career in St. Louis, Missouri
• I am a plant nerd!
  • Not an entomologist...
WHAT TO PLANT...

- Perennials
  - Supplemented with reseeding annuals
- Drought-tolerant
- Long bloom period
- Open flowers (no double petals)
- Yellow, white, blue, or purple
- A variety of plants
  - Spring bloom
  - Summer bloom
  - Fall bloom
Achillea millefolium

- **Common name:** Yarrow
- **Native Range:** Europe, western Asia, North America
- Zones 3 to 9
- **Height:** 24 – 36”           **Spread:** 24 – 36”
- **Bloom period:** June to September; rebloom potential
- **Bloom color:** white, yellow, pink
- **Water:** Dry to medium; needs good drainage
- **Maintenance:** Medium; requires deadheading
- **Suggested Use:** Naturalize; may reseed readily
- Fragrant leaves
- Tolerates deer, drought, air pollution
Plant Select
Agastaches

- Short-lived fragrant, herbaceous perennial
- Requires full sun, good drainage, xeric conditions
- Cut back in the spring
- Agastache aurantiaca CORONADO®
- Agastache cana 'Sinning' SONORAN SUNSET®
- Agastache Red CORONADO® Red Hyssop
- Agastache rupestris 'Sunset® Hyssop'
- See also: Agastache foeniculum
Allium cernuum

- **Common name:** nodding onion
- **Bulb**
- **Native Range:** Canada to Mexico
- **Zones:** 4 to 8
- **Height:** 12 – 18”  **Spread:** 3 – 6”
- **Bloom period:** June to August
- **Bloom color:** Pink
- **Full sun to part shade**
- **Water:** Dry to medium
- **Maintenance:** Low
- **Suggested Use:** Naturalize; may reseed readily
- **Fragrant leaves**
- **OTHER ALLIUMS, TOO**
Anchusa capensis

- **Common Name:** Cape Forget Me Not
- **Height:** 8-16 inches  
  **Width:** 4-8 inches
- **Bloom Time:** May to October
- **Bloom Description:** Blue
- **Sun,** Partial Sun
- **Water:** Moderate
- **Zones:** 5-10
- **Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sandy loam
- **Deer Resistant
- **Maintenance:** Cut back to base every fall. Then rake up.
- **5-10 Year Maintenance:** Remove old plants and replace with new plants. Allow to reseed
- **Elevation Guide:** Up to 8125 ft
Amsonia jonesii

- **Common name:** Desert Blue Star
- **Native Range:** AZ, NM, UT, CO
- **Zones:** 4 – 9
- **Height:** 10 – 14”  
  **Spread:** 12 – 16”
- **Bloom period:** April – June
- **Bloom color:** Blue
- **Sun:** Full sun
- **Water:** Moderate to xeric
- Blooms early, attractive unique flower, **Plant Select®**
- **Attracts pollinators**
- **Tolerates deer, clay soils, sandy loam**
Berlandiera lyrata

- **Common name:** Chocolate flower
- **Native Range:** Southern US, Mexico
- **Zones:** 4 – 10
- **Height:** 12 – 24”  **Spread:** 12 – 24”
- **Bloom period:** May – October
- **Bloom color:** Yellow rays, maroon brown center
- **Water:** Dry to medium
  - Chocolate fragrance, showy seedheads, Plant Select®
- **Attracts pollinators (moths)**
- **Tolerates deer, drought, clay soils, alkaline pH**
Cleome serrulata

- **Common name:** Rocky Mountain Bee Plant
- **Annual**
- **Native Range:** Western & Midwestern US
- **Height:** 3 – 6’  
  **Spread:** 24 – 48”
- **Bloom period:** July - September
- **Bloom color:** White, Purple, Pink
- **Full sun**
- **Water:** Medium to dry; likes good drainage
- **Maintenance:** Low; will self-seed
- **Flower:** Showy, fragrant
- **Tolerates drought**
Coreopsis spp.

- A mid-summer bloomer that thrives in the heat when other plants fade
- Requires full sun, deadheading for rebloom
- A variety of species to choose from: some annual, some perennial, and a variety of colors and sizes
- Can be short lived
- Coreopsis tinctoria
- Coreopsis lanceolata
- Coreopsis auriculata
Crambe maritima

- **Common name:** Sea kale
- **Type:** Herbaceous perennial
- **Native Range:** Europe, northern Africa, southwestern Asia
- **Zones:** 5 to 9
- **Height:** 30 – 36”
- **Spread:** 24 – 30”
- **Bloom period:** June to August
- **Bloom color:** White
- **Full sun**
- **Water:** Medium to dry
- **Maintenance:** Medium; requires deadheading and leaf cleanup
- **Flower:** Showy, Fragrant
- **Tolerates drought**
Spring bulbs

- Early spring bulbs
  - Tulips
    - Species tulips
    - Traditional tulips
  - Alliums
    - Gladiator
    - Purple Sensation
    - White Giant
- Crocus
- Camassia
- Hyacinth/Muscari
- Scilla
Echinacea angustifolia

- **Common name:** Narrow-leaf coneflower
- **Native Range:** Central North America
- **Zones:** 3 – 8
- **Height:** 12 – 24”  **Spread:** 12 – 18”
- **Bloom period:** June – July
- **Bloom color:** Light pink to pale purple
- **Sun:** Full sun
- **Water:** Dry to medium
- **Winter interest, winter forage for birds, medicinal value**
- **Attracts native bees, birds, butterflies**
- **Tolerates deer, drought, clay soils**
Echinacea tennesseensis

- **Common name**: Tennessee coneflower
- **Native Range**: Tennessee
- **USDA Zone**: 5 – 6
- **Height**: 18 – 24”  **Spread**: 12 – 18”
- **Bloom period**: June – August
- **Bloom color**: Purple, pink
- **Sun**: Full sun to part shade
- **Water**: Medium
- Dried arrangements, endangered plant, winter forage for birds, winter interest, **Plant Select®**, blooms facing east
- Attracts bees, birds, butterflies
- Tolerates deer, drought, clay soils
Ericameria nauseosus var. nauseosus

- **Common name:** Baby Blue Rabbitbrush
- **Plant Type:** Shrub
- **Height:** 12 – 36” **Width:** 24 – 36”
- **Bloom period:** September-November
- **Bloom color:** Yellow
- **Sun, Partial Sun**
- **Water:** Dry to xeric
- **Zones 4-9**
- **Soil Type:** Clay, loam, sandy
- **Deer Resistant**
- **North American Native:** Yes
- **Annual Maintenance:** Shape/Shear to small mound or just enough to remove seedheads EVERY late fall or very early spring. This will maximize late summer blooming.
- **Elevation Guide:** Up to 7500 ft.
Eriogonum umbellatum var. aureum

- **Common name:** Kannah Creek Buckwheat
- **Perennial Groundcover**
- **Height:** 12-16 inches  
  **Width:** 18-24 inches
- **Bloom period:** May to July
- **Bloom color:** Yellow
- Sun, Partial Sun
- **Water:** Moderate to xeric
- Zones 3-8
- **Soil Type:** Well-drained clay, loam or sandy
- Deer Resistant
- Winter Interest – Yes
- North American Native – Yes
- Annual Maintenance - Cut back/shear off spent flower heads every fall. Or leave for winter interest and shear in March.
- **Elevation Guide:** Up to 8125 ft
Eremerus spp.

- Foxtail lilies
- Fall planted bulb
- Requires full sun, good drainage, protection from high winds
- Many species and varieties to choose from
  - Cleopatra
  - White Beauty
  - Romance
Eschscholzia californica

- **Common Name**: California poppy
- **Native Range**: Western United States
- **Zone**: 6 to 10
- **Height**: 12 – 18”
- **Width**: 12 – 18”
- **Bloom period**: June to July
- **Bloom color**: Orange to yellow
- **Water**: Medium
- **Maintenance**: Low
- **Suggested Use**: Annual; will reseed
- **Flower**: Showy
Erysimum capitatum

- **Common Name:** Western wallflower
- **Native Range:** Western North America
- **Zones:** 3 to 7
- **Height:** 12 – 24”  
  **Spread:** 6 – 12”
- **Bloom period:** May to July
- **Bloom color:** Orange to yellow to copper
- **Water:** Dry to medium
- **Maintenance:** Low
- **Suggested Use:** Naturalize; annual that may reseed
- **Flower:** Showy
- **Tolerates drought**
- **See also other Erysimum species**
Gaillardia aristata

- **Common name:** Blanket flower
- **Native Range:** Western US & Canada
- **Zones:** 3 – 8
- **Height:** 18 – 30”  **Spread:** 12 – 18”
- **Bloom period:** May – September
- **Bloom color:** Yellow, orange, red
- **Sun:** Full sun
- **Water:** Low to medium
- Colorful blooms, good cut flower, rebloom potential, long blooming season
- **Attracts butterflies, bees**
- **Tolerates deer, rabbits, drought, poor soils**
Lavandula angustifolia

- **Common name:** English lavender
- **Native Range:** Europe
- **Zones:** 5 to 8
- **Height:** 24 – 36”  
  **Spread:** 24 – 48”
- **Bloom period:** June to August
- **Bloom color:** Purple, white
- **Full sun**
- **Water:** Dry to medium; requires good drainage
- **Maintenance:** Medium; requires yearly shearing
- **Flower:** Showy, Fragrant
- **Tolerates rabbits, deer, drought, air pollution**
- **Tons of varieties to choose from; English lavender is hardier than French lavender in Colorado**
Liatris spp.

- Requires full sun, good drainage, medium moisture
- Late season bloomer highly sought after by pollinators (and horticulturists)
- Liatris pychnostachya
- Liatris ligulistyris
- Liatris punctata
- Liatris spicata
- Too much moisture, too rich of soil, and part shade will make this plant flop
Linum lewisii

- **Common name:** Blue flax, Prairie flax
- **Native range:** Western US & Canada
- **Sun:** Full sun to part shade
- **Zones:** 3 – 9
- **Height:** 24 – 36”   **Spread:** 18 – 24”
- **Bloom period:** March – September
- **Bloom color:** Pale blue, dark blue, white
- **Water:** Medium to low
- **Attracts butterflies, bees**
- **Tolerates deer, drought, poor soils**
Monarda bradburiana

- **Common name:** Eastern Beebalm
- **Native Range:** Southern & central US
- **Zones:** 5 to 8
- **Height:** 12 – 24”  **Spread:** 12 – 24”
- **Bloom period:** May
- **Bloom color:** Pink, white & purple
- **Sun:** Full sun to part shade
- **Water:** Dry to medium
- **Fragrant flower, fragrant leaves**
- **Attracts hummingbirds, butterflies, bees**
- **Tolerates deer, drought, poor soils**
Penstemon spp.

- Early to mid-summer blooming herbaceous perennial
- Requires good drainage and full sun, prefers alkaline soils
- May reseed in some garden settings
- Can be very xeric
- Penstemon strictus
- Penstemon grandiflorus
- Penstemon cobaea
- Penstemon pinifolius
Ratibida columnifera

- **Common Name:** Upright Prairie Coneflower
- **Native Range:** North America
- **Zone:** 4 to 9
- **Height:** 12 – 36”  
  **Spread:** 12 – 18”
- **Bloom period:** June to September
- **Bloom color:** Yellow or red rays and dark brown center disk
- **Full sun**
- **Water:** Dry to medium
- **Maintenance:** Medium; will reseed
- **Flower:** Showy
- **Attracts:** Butterflies, bees
- **Tolerates drought**
Plant Select Sages

- Herbaceous perennials with fragrant foliage
- Midsummer blooms
- Require good drainage, may handle part shade
- Deadheading may promote rebloom and prevent reseeding
- *Salvia argentea*
- *Salvia daghestanica*
- *Salvia chrysophylla*
- *Phlomis cashmeriana*
Sedum sediforme

- **Common name:** Turquoise Tails Blue Sedum
- **Perennial Groundcover**
- **Height:** 6-10 inches  **Width:** 12-18 inches
- **Bloom period:** Early summer
- **Bloom color:** Yellow
- Sun, Partial Sun
- **Water:** Dry to xeric
- **Zones:** 5a-10
- **Soil Type:** Well-drained clay, loam, or sandy
- **Deer Resistant**
- **Winter Interest**
- **North American Native - No**
- **Annual Maintenance:** Shear/dead head back to foliage in summer after it has finished blooming
- **Elevation Guide:** Up to 8125 ft
Seseli gummiferum

- **Common name:** Moon Carrot
- **Biennial**
- **Height:** 24-36 inches  
  **Width:** 12-20 inches
- **Bloom period:** Midsummer to fall
- **Bloom color:** White, pink
- **Sun, Partial Sun**
- **Water:** Moderate to xeric
- **Zones 5-9**
- **Soil Type:** clay, loam, sandy
- **Deer Resistant**
- **North American Native - No**
- **Annual Maintenance:** Hand trim back dead stems in spring.
- **5-10 Year Maintenance:** Follow annual maintenance and allow to go to seed as it is a biennial. Thin out any undesirable seedlings. Is reseeding too much only allow a few individuals to set seed
- **Elevation Guide:** Up to 6200 ft
Solidago rugosa ‘Fireworks’

- **Common name:** rough goldenrod
- **Zones:** 4 to 8
- **Height:** 36 – 42”  
  **Spread:** 30 – 36”
- **Bloom period:** September to October
- **Bloom color:** Yellow
- **Full sun**
- **Water:** Medium
- **Maintenance:** Low
- **Suggested Use:** Rain Garden
- **Flower:** Showy
- **Attracts:** Butterflies, bees
- **Tolerates:** deer, clay soil, wet soil
Stachys lavandulifolius

- **Common name:** Pink Cotton Lamb's Ear
- **Height:** 8-10”  **Width:** 12-18”
- **Bloom period:** Late Spring
- **Bloom color:** Pink
- **Sun:** Partial Sun
- **Water:** medium to low
- **Zones:** 5-9
- **Soil Type:** Loam or sandy soil
- **Deer and rabbit resistant**
- **North American Native:** No
- **Annual Maintenance:** Shear back to the ground every spring to make way for the new year’s growth.
- **Elevation Guide:** Up to 5200 ft
Symphyotrichum novae-angliae

- **Common name:** New England aster
- **Native Range:** Eastern North America
- **Zones:** 4 – 8
- **Height:** 3 – 6’  
  **Spread:** 2 – 3’
- **Bloom time:** August – September
- **Bloom color:** Deep pink-purple
- **Sun:** Full sun
- **Water:** Medium
- **Showy flower, good cut**
- **Attracts butterflies, bees**
- **Tolerates clay soils**
- **See also:** Symphyotrichum novae-angliae ‘Purple dome’
Honorable Mentions

- Flowering shrubs and trees
- Herbs! Lots of Herbs!
- Sunflowers
- Nepeta (Catmint)
- Willows
- Iris
- ....................