

Waterwise Plants

**for Lincoln &
SE Nebraska**



**Presented by
The Mayor's Water
Conservation Task Force**

Waterwise Plants for Lincoln, Nebraska

As Lincoln's population continues to grow, new pressures will be put on available public water resources. Using water wisely in the landscape is a vital part of water conservation. When you plan your landscape, be sure to include specific goals to reduce water use.

Although the plants listed here are valued for their low water needs, they still require regular watering during the first year. Plants develop healthy root systems when they are watered slowly. This allows moisture to soak into the ground instead of running off.

When planting perennials, prepare the soil before planting by adding organic matter. To enrich the soil, improve aeration and drainage, spread a 2-4 inch layer of organic matter on the soil surface. Dig this layer in to a depth of 6 inches. While compost or well-rotted manure is best, chopped leaves or grass clippings can be used although they may tie up some of the available nitrogen in the soil, making an additional application of fertilizer necessary. In most instances, soil improvement is not recommended when planting trees and shrubs. Testing your soil before planting is always a good idea.

After planting, add a layer of mulch over the soil to retain moisture and reduce runoff. Mulching also helps to control weeds. Three to four inches of mulch is plenty.

Lincoln nursery and garden centers will carry most of the plants listed in this brochure. If you have questions about a plant's suitability in your landscape, contact your nursery or the Lancaster County Cooperative Extension Service.

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Symbols Key

- Shade
- ◐ Part Sun
- Full Sun
- 🦋 Attracts Butterflies

Trees

BUCKEYE, OHIO

Aesculus glabra



Bloom Color: White
Bloom Time: May
Height: 45-50'
Spread: 35-45'
Remarks: Rounded tree with spring flower panicles followed by seed pods. Displays strong drought tolerance.

CHOCKECHERRY

Prunus species



Bloom Color: White
Bloom Time: April-May
Height: 25-30'
Spread: 15-20'
Remarks: Tough native tree that suckers to form thickets. Mow to keep in tree form. Great drought tolerance. Purple-leaved varieties available.

CRABAPPLE

Malus cultivars



Bloom Color: White, pink
Bloom Time: April-May
Height: 8-25'
Spread: 6-25'
Remarks: Showy blooms. New varieties with persistent fruit and disease tolerance.

Trees

GINKGO, MAIDENHAIR TREE

Ginkgo biloba



Height: 45-50'
Spread: 30-40'
Remarks: Fan shaped leaves turn yellow in fall. Slow grower. Tolerates air pollution. Smaller varieties available.

GOLDENRAIN TREE

Koelreuteria paniculata



Bloom Color: Yellow
Bloom Time: June-July
Height: 25-30'
Spread: 15-20'
Remarks: Lovely flowers and pod-like fruit. Tough and very drought tolerant.

HAWTHORN

Crataegus species



Bloom Color: White
Bloom Time: May-June
Height: 25-35'
Spread: 15-20'
Remarks: Tough, small tree with nice fall fruit.

HONEYLOCUST

Gleditsia triacanthos



Height: 40-50'
Spread: 35-40'
Remarks: Graceful habit with yellow fall color. A very tough tree. Look for thornless and seedless varieties.

Trees

KENTUCKY COFFEETREE

Gymnocladus dioicus



Height: 50-60'
Spread: 35-45'
Remarks: Adaptable to harsh conditions once established. Seedpods are poisonous.

LINDEN

Tilia species



Bloom Color: White
Bloom Time: May
Height: 40-60'
Spread: 30-50'
Remarks: Some are native to plains. Nice heart shaped leaves and fragrant blooms.

MAPLE

Acer species



Height: 25-60'
Spread: 25-50'
Remarks: Many types are drought tolerant. Great fall color. Armur maple is smaller and available as multi-trunked.

OAK

Oak species



Height: 50-60'
Spread: 40-50'
Remarks: Beautiful, durable trees. Many are drought tolerant and native. Interesting acorns, bark and leaf texture. Dwarf Chinkapin is available.

Trees

PINE

Pinus species



Height: 50-60'
Spread: 40-50'
Remarks: Many to choose from. Ponderosa, Bristlecone, Limber and Red Pine for drier soil.

REDBUD

Cercis canadensis



Bloom Color: Reddish-purple, white
Bloom Time: April-May
Height: 20-30'
Spread: 20-25'
Remarks: Loaded with Spring blooms. Prefers growing in some shade.

SERVICEBERRY

Amelanchier species



Bloom Color: White
Bloom Time: April-May
Height: 15-25'
Spread: 8-12'
Remarks: Beautiful native tree/shrub. White flowers in spring followed by summer fruit that birds love.

SPRUCE; BLUE, BLACK HILLS

Picea species



Height: 35-50'
Spread: 25-40'
Remarks: Blue-green color on this evergreen. Very drought tolerant.

Shrubs

BUFFALO CURRANT

Ribes odoratum



- Bloom Color:** Yellow
Bloom Time: June-July
Height: 3-6'
Spread: 2-4'
Remarks: Native clove-scented shrub with black berries.

BUSH CINQUEFOIL

Potentilla species



- Bloom Color:** Yellow, orange, white, salmon
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 2-4'
Spread: 3-6'
Remarks: Heat loving shrub with bright colors and compact habit.

BUTTERFLY BUSH

Buddleia species



- Bloom Color:** Pink, white, purple
Bloom Time: July-September
Height: 3-10'
Spread: 3-6'
Remarks: Colorful bloom spikes set on silvery foliage.

CHOKEBERRY

Aronia species



- Bloom Color:** White
Bloom Time: May-June
Height: 5-8'
Spread: 4-5'
Remarks: Native, adaptable shrub with seasonal interest: Blooms, fruit and vibrant fall color.

Shrubs

CORAL BERRY

Symphoricarpos orbiculatus



Bloom Color: White, pink

Bloom Time: May

Height: 3-6'

Spread: 4-6'

Remarks: Native. Arching branches are heavy with berries all winter.

COTONEASTER

Cotoneaster species



Bloom Color: White, pink

Bloom Time: May-June

Height: 2-5'

Spread: 4-6'

Remarks: Nice fruit display, fall color.

DOGWOOD

Cornus species



Bloom Color: White, yellow

Bloom Time: May-June

Height: 3-10'

Spread: 3-8'

Remarks: Red and yellow twig color adds to winter landscape. Variegated leaves on some types. Seasonal interest.

FERNLEAF BUCKTHORN

Rhamnus asplenifolia



Height: 10-15'

Spread: 6-9'

Remarks: Willow-leaved shrub has an exotic look. Very tough shrub.

Shrubs

FLOWERING QUINCE

Chaenomeles species



- Bloom Color:** White, pink, red
Bloom Time: March-April
Height: 6-10'
Spread: 4-6'
Remarks: Stems are loaded with delicate blooms in Spring.

FORSYTHIA

Forsythia species



- Bloom Color:** Yellow
Bloom Time: March-April
Height: 8-10'
Spread: 4-6'
Remarks: Brilliant yellow flowers in early spring.

JUNIPER

Juniperus species



- Height:** 1-6'
Spread: 5-8'
Remarks: Durable evergreen used for screens, hedges and windbreaks.

LILAC

Syringa species



- Bloom Color:** White, lilac, rose-purple
Bloom Time: May
Height: 6-12'
Spread: 6-8'
Remarks: Very fragrant blooms on shiny green foliage.

Shrubs

MOCK ORANGE

Philadelphus species



Bloom Color: White
Bloom Time: April-May
Height: 6-8'
Spread: 4-8'
Remarks: Very fragrant white blooms cover entire shrub.

NINEBARK

Physocarpus opulifolios



Bloom Color: White
Bloom Time: May-June
Height: 5-8'
Spread: 3-5'
Remarks: Blooms and exfoliating bark on this upright shrub. Showy purple-leaved forms available.

PINE

Pinus species



Height: 3-8'
Spread: 3-8'
Remarks: Evergreen that is suitable for small spaces, rock gardens. Mugo is a nice choice.

ROSE, SHRUB

Rosa rugosa



Bloom Color: White, red, pink, yellow
Bloom Time: June-September
Height: 3-8'
Spread: 4-6'
Remarks: Easy care, lots of color. Some are fragrant. Landscape roses are also drought tolerant.

Shrubs

SERVICEBERRY

Amelanchier species



Bloom Color: White
Bloom Time: April-May
Height: 6-12'
Spread: 5-10'
Remarks: White spring blooms followed by edible fruit. Red and orange fall color.

SPIREA

Spiraea species



Bloom Color: Pink, white
Bloom Time: May-October
Height: 3-7'
Spread: 3-6'
Remarks: Long blooming if sheared. Excellent fall color.

ST. JOHN'S WORT

Hypericum species



Bloom Color: Yellow
Bloom Time: June-July
Height: 3-6'
Spread: 3-6'
Remarks: Sunny yellow flowers on compact shrub.

SUMAC

Rhus species



Bloom Color: Red, maroon
Bloom Time: August
Height: 2-15'
Spread: 5-12'
Remarks: Native, withstands heat/drought. Brilliant fall color, fruit set.

Shrubs

VIBURNUM

Viburnum species



- Bloom Color:** White, blush pink
Bloom Time: May-June
Height: 4-18'
Spread: 3-10'
Remarks: Large genus that offers choices for any space. Attributes include: blooms, fruit clusters, fall color.

Perennials

ANEMONE

Anemone sylvestris



- Bloom Color:** White
Bloom Time: May
Height: 18"
Spread: 24-36"
Remarks: Native, vigorous spreader.

ARTEMISIA

Artemisia species



- Bloom Color:** White, very small
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 12-36"
Spread: 18-36"
Remarks: Beautiful silver foliage. Many types available.

ASTER

Aster species



- Bloom Color:** White, purple, pink
Bloom Time: July-September
Height: 12-24"
Spread: 18-36"
Remarks: Prairie asters are very drought tolerant. Pinch back stems in early summer for compact habit.

Perennials

BABY'S BREATH

Gypsophila paniculata



Bloom Color: White
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 36"
Spread: 36"
Remarks: Dwarf cultivar available,
great for cut flowers

BASKET-OF-GOLD

Aurinia saxitillia



Bloom Color: Gold-yellow
Bloom Time: May
Height: 18"
Spread: 18"
Remarks: Shear after blooming.

BEEBALM

Monarda didyma



Bloom Color: Red, pink, purple
Bloom Time: July-September
Height: 18-36"
Spread: 24-36"
Remarks: Dwarf varieties available.
Can be very vigorous in
growth.

BERGENIA

Bergenia cordifolia



Bloom Color: Rose pink
Bloom Time: April-May
Height: 15"
Spread: 18"
Remarks: Glossy, semi evergreen
leaves with blooms in spring.

Perennials

BLACK-EYED SUSAN

Rudbeckia species



- Bloom Color:** Yellow, gold
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 18-24"
Spread: 18-24"
Remarks: Native, daisy-like flowers are great for cutting.

BLANKET FLOWER

Gaillardia species



- Bloom Color:** Crimson red with yellow accents
Bloom Time: June-August
Height: 16-24"
Spread: 16-24"
Remarks: Very drought tolerant. Provide good drainage.

BLUE FALSE INDIGO

Baptisia australis



- Bloom Color:** Indigo blue
Bloom Time: May-June
Height: 36"
Spread: 36"
Remarks: Native prairie plant. Dwarf variety available.

BOLTONIA, FALSE CHAMOMILE

Boltonia asteroides



- Bloom Color:** White, pale pink
Bloom Time: August-October
Height: 36"
Spread: 36-42"
Remarks: Great fall color. Shear back in early summer to prevent from falling over.

Perennials

BUTTERFLY MILKWEED

Asclepias tuberosa



- Bloom Color:** Orange
Bloom Time: July
Height: 18-24"
Spread: 18"
Remarks: Native prairie plant with clusters of orange flowers.

CANDYTUFT

Iberis sempervirens



- Bloom Color:** White
Bloom Time: May
Height: 15"
Spread: 18"
Remarks: Shear after blooming.

CARNATION, PINKS

Dianthus species



- Bloom Color:** Pink shades, purple, rose
Bloom Time: June-August
Height: 6-18"
Spread: 12-24"
Remarks: Nice blue-green foliage and flowers for cutting.

CATMINT

Nepeta species



- Bloom Color:** Lavender blue
Bloom Time: May-August
Height: 12"-18"
Spread: 18-24"
Remarks: Easy to grow and drought tolerant. Blooms persist all season if faded flowers are cut back.

Perennials

COLUMBINE

Aquilegia species



- Bloom Color:** Blue, purple, red, pink, yellow
Bloom Time: May-July
Height: 12-24"
Spread: 12-24"
Remarks: Versatile plant for sun or shade.

CONEFLOWER

Echinacea species



- Bloom Color:** White, pink, purple
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 18-24"
Spread: 18-24"
Remarks: Drought tolerant native plant.

CONEFLOWER, MEXICAN HAT

Ratibida



- Bloom Color:** Yellow
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 24-36"
Spread: 24-36"
Remarks: Native plant with showy blooms.

CORAL BELLS

Heuchera species



- Bloom Color:** Red, pink
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 8-12"
Spread: 12-18"
Remarks: Leaf colors range from purple to marbled greens. Nice stems of tubular flowers.

Perennials

CRANESBILL

Geranium species



Bloom Color: Blue, rose, pink, white, pale pink, magenta

Bloom Time: May-September

Height: 12-24"

Spread: 12-36"

Remarks: Hardy, dependable plant for any area. Showy blooms. Many sizes and colors.

DAYLILY

Hemerocallis species



Bloom Color: Yellow, pink, red and more

Bloom Time: June-September

Height: 18"-36"

Spread: 24"-36"

Remarks: Many cultivars are repeat bloomers.

FLAX, GOLDEN

Linum flavum



Bloom Color: Yellow

Bloom Time: June- July

Height: 12"-24"

Spread: 12"-24"

Remarks: Dislikes heavy clay soil. Amend soil with gravel.

GAYFEATHER

Liatris species



Bloom Color: Purple, white

Bloom Time: July-September

Height: 18"-24"

Spread: 18"-24"

Remarks: Attractive spiked blooms.

Perennials

GOLDENROD

Solidago species



- Bloom Color:** Golden yellow
Bloom Time: August-September
Height: 18-36"
Spread: 18-36"
Remarks: Easy to grow, compact hybrids available.

HOSTA

Hosta species



- Bloom Color:** White, lavender
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 12-40"
Spread: 12-40"
Remarks: Many varieties. Drought tolerant once established.

IRIS

Iris species



- Bloom Color:** Purple, blue, white, pink, yellow
Bloom Time: May-June
Height: 12-36"
Spread: 18-24"
Remarks: Drought tolerant and tough. Do not bury rhizomatous root too deep for risk of rotting.

LAMB'S EAR

Stachys byzantina



- Bloom Color:** Pale pink (small)
Bloom Time: July
Height: 12-18"
Spread: 18-36"
Remarks: Great fuzzy silver foliage. Is a vigorous grower that thrives in poor, dry soils.

Perennials

LEADPLANT

Amorpha canescens



Bloom Color: Lavender blue
Bloom Time: June-July
Height: 24-36"
Spread: 18-24"
Remarks: Tough native shrub-like plant.

LENTEN ROSE

Helleborus orientalis



Bloom Color: White, rose, purple
Bloom Time: April-May
Height: 18"
Spread: 18"
Remarks: Leathery leaves and nice early spring blooms.

MEADOW SAGE, SALVIA

Salvia x sylvestris



Bloom Color: Dark purple, violet
Bloom Time: May-October
Height: 18-24"
Spread: 18-24"
Remarks: Showy spikes of flowers. Shear back all spent flowers to get continual blooms.

OZARK SUNDROPS, EVENING PRIMROSE

Oenothera macrocarpa



Bloom Color: Yellow
Bloom Time: May-July
Height: 6-12"
Spread: 24"
Remarks: Large, cup shaped flowers on this native plant. Exceptional drought tolerance.

Perennials

PENSTEMON, BEARDTONGUE

Penstemon species



- Bloom Color:** Red, purple, rose, white, pink
Bloom Time: June-July
Height: 12-36"
Spread: 18-24"
Remarks: Showy tubular flowers on long stems. Needs well drained soils.

PEONY

Paeonia lactiflora



- Bloom Color:** Many
Bloom Time: May-June
Height: 36"
Spread: 36-48"
Remarks: Fragrant, showy spring blooms. Drought tolerant once established.

PINCUSHION FLOWER

Scabiosa columbaria



- Bloom Color:** Lavender blue
Bloom Time: May-September
Height: 12-18"
Spread: 12-18"
Remarks: Showy flowers set on long, tubular stems. Semi-evergreen foliage.

PITCHER SAGE

Salvia azurea



- Bloom Color:** Blue-violet
Bloom Time: late July-early September
Height: 36-48"
Spread: 36"
Remarks: Native prairie plant. Exceptional drought tolerance.

Perennials

POPPY MALLOW, WINECUPS

Callirhoe involucrata, *Callirhoe alcaeoides*



- Bloom Color:** Bright rose-purple, white
Bloom Time: June-August
Height: 12"
Spread: 18"
Remarks: Native groundcover.
Excellent drought tolerance.

PURPLE PRAIRIE CLOVER

Dalea purpurea



- Bloom Color:** Purple
Bloom Time: June-July
Height: 12-18"
Spread: 12-18"
Remarks: Native prairie plant with round purple flower heads. Needs excellent drainage.

PUSSYTOES

Antennaria species



- Bloom Color:** White
Bloom Time: June
Height: 6"
Spread: 12"
Remarks: Flower resembles cat's paw.

RATTLESNAKE MASTER

Eryngium yuccafolium



- Bloom Color:** White
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 24"
Spread: 18"
Remarks: Yucca-like foliage topped with rounded blooms.

Perennials

ROCK CRESS

Arabis caucasia



Bloom Color: White
Bloom Time: May-June
Height: 6"
Spread: 12-18"
Remarks: Variegated foliage available

RUSSIAN SAGE

Perovskia atriplicifolia



Bloom Color: Lavender
Bloom Time: July-September
Height: 36-48"
Spread: 36"
Remarks: Delicate silver-gray foliage with spikes of blooms. Exceptional drought tolerance.

SEA LAVENDER

Limonium latifolium



Bloom Color: Lavender
Bloom Time: June
Height: 18"
Spread: 18"
Remarks: Easy to grow. Provide good drainage. Nice cut flowers.

SEDUM

Sedum species



Bloom Color: Pink, salmon, yellow, white
Bloom Time: July-October
Height: 3-18"
Spread: 12-36"
Remarks: Many types available from ground covers to tall varieties.

Perennials

SKULLCAP

Scutellaria species



- Bloom Color:** Purple
Bloom Time: June-August
Height: 10-12"
Spread: 12-18"
Remarks: Native variety 'Smoky Hills' is very drought tolerant. Shear back after blooms fade for second flush.

SNEEZEWEED, HELEN'S FLOWER

Helenium autumnale



- Bloom Color:** Yellow, orange, red
Bloom Time: August-September
Height: 24-36"
Spread: 24"
Remarks: Native plant. Good with ornamental grasses.

SNOW IN SUMMER

Cerastium tomentosum



- Bloom Color:** White
Bloom Time: May-June
Height: 8"
Spread: 12"
Remarks: Silvery leaves forms carpet.

STOKE'S ASTER

Stokesia laevis



- Bloom Color:** Blue, purple, white
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 12-18"
Spread: 18"
Remarks: Showy blooms. Needs soil that drains well.

Perennials

THYME

Thymus species



Bloom Color: White, lavender
Bloom Time: June-July
Height: 3-6"
Spread: 12-24"
Remarks: Use as ground cover or between paving stones.

TICKSEED

Coreopsis species



Bloom Color: Lemon-yellow, gold
Bloom Time: May-September
Height: 12-36"
Spread: 12-36"
Remarks: Cut off spent blooms for continuous color.

VERONICA

Veronica species



Bloom Color: Purple, blue, white, rose
Bloom Time: May-August
Height: 2-24"
Spread: 12-24"
Remarks: Many types available from ground covers to upright varieties. Moderately drought tolerant.

VINCA

Vinca minor



Bloom Color: Lavender
Bloom Time: May-June
Height: 3-6"
Spread: 36" +
Remarks: Easy to grow groundcover.

Perennials

YARROW

Achillea species



- Bloom Color:** Yellow, gold, red, rose, orange, pink, white
- Bloom Time:** June-September
- Height:** 12-24"
- Spread:** 18-24"
- Remarks:** Exceptional drought tolerance. Some species are native. Cut back faded flowers to promote more blooms. Vigorous grower.

YUCCA, SOAPWEED

Yucca glauca, Yucca filamentosa



- Bloom Color:** Creamy white
- Bloom Time:** June-August
- Height:** 36"
- Spread:** 36"
- Remarks:** Spiny foliage not a good choice for high traffic areas. *Yucca glauca* is native to central U.S. Extremely drought tolerant.

Ornamental Grasses

BIG BLUESTEM

Andropogon gerardii



- Bloom Color:** Tan seedhead
- Bloom Time:** July-August
- Height:** 48"
- Spread:** 24"
- Remarks:** Native prairie grass. Nice copper fall color.

Ornamental Grasses

BLUE FESCUE

Festuca glauca



- Bloom Color:** Tan seedhead
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 12"
Spread: 12"
Remarks: Blue-gray tuft grass is showy when mass planted or at the border of flower beds.

CAREX OR SEDGE GRASS

Carex elata, Carex stricta



- Bloom Color:** Tan seedhead
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 12"
Spread: 12-36"
Remarks: Low growing, spreading groundcover grass with good drought tolerance. Nice variegated varieties available.

FEATHER REED GRASS

Calamagrostis x acutifolia



- Bloom Color:** Tan seedhead
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 36-40"
Spread: 24-36"
Remarks: Soft, green blades with showy seedhead. Upright habit.

LITTLE BLUESTEM

Schizachyrium scoparium



- Bloom Color:** Tan seedhead
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 24-36"
Spread: 18"
Remarks: Nebraska's state grass. Nice blue-green blades and copper fall color.

Ornamental Grasses

MISCANTHUS, SILVER GRASS

Miscanthus sinensis



- Bloom Color:** Tan seedhead
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 3-6'
Spread: 18-24"
Remarks: Some cultivars have showy variegated blades. Nice arching, graceful appearance.

NORTHERN SEA OATS

Chasmanthium latifolium



- Bloom Color:** Tan seedhead
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 30-36"
Spread: 24-36"
Remarks: Unique flat seed head. Reseeds, so plant in confined space or remove seedlings.

PRAIRIE DROPSEED

Sporobolus heterolepis



- Bloom Color:** Tan seedhead
Bloom Time: July-August
Height: 24"
Spread: 18"
Remarks: Native prairie grass. Tolerates poor, dry soil. Graceful, narrow blades.

RAVENNA GRASS

Saccharum ravennae, *Erianthus ravennae*



- Bloom Color:** Tan seedhead
Bloom Time: August
Height: 8-10'
Spread: 3-6'
Remarks: Very large grass with showy plumes. Cut to ground in early spring.

Ornamental Grasses

SIDEOATS GRAMA

Bouteloua curtipendula



Bloom Color: Tan seedhead

Bloom Time: July-August

Height: 36"

Spread: 24"

Remarks: Oat-like seed heads grow to one side of the stem. Good fall color.

SWITCHGRASS

Panicum virgatum



Bloom Color: Tan seedhead

Bloom Time: July-August

Height: 4-7'

Spread: 3'

Remarks: Native tall grass. 'Prairie Sky' & 'Heavy Metal' have blue tones. 'Shenandoah' has red tipped blades.

Special Thanks to:

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Nebraska Statewide Arboretum
arboretum.unl.edu

Campbell's Nurseries and Garden Centers

Finke Gardens and Nursery

Artwork by Renee' Lanik,
UNL Institute of Agriculture



We encourage you to visit the waterwise gardens at
Lincoln Water System
2021 N. 27th Street, Lincoln

Visit the Mayor's Water Conservation Task Force
website at lincoln.ne.gov keyword: water