

50 Best Plants

for Prairie Urban Gardens

in Southern Alberta



A Prairie **Urban Garden** is a yard or garden that follows the seven principles of xeriscaping. They are attractive and have a low environmental impact because they are designed and maintained in harmony with our dry prairie environment. Xeriscaping principles allow people to create beautiful, drought tolerant and low maintenance gardens right here in southern Alberta!

The seven principles of xeriscaping are:

1. Plan and design
2. Improve the soil
3. Create practical turf areas
4. Water efficiently
5. Choose appropriate plant
6. Use mulch
7. Maintain your xeriscape

Visit www.oldmanwatershed.ca/pug for:

- Detailed information about each plant
- A list of where to buy plants
- The principles of xeriscaping in more detail
- Photos of local Prairie Urban Gardens
- Resources to help you get started!



Plants presented were chosen based on their: Tolerance to drought; potential for purchase at local shops; nativeness to our local area; low maintenance requirements; aesthetic appeal. Each plant meets these criteria at varying degrees, however, they are all excellent choices for your yard.

Prairie Plant Categories

Wild Flowers1 – 10

Brown-eyed Susan (Blanket Flower), Dotted Blazing Star, Purple Coneflower, Wild Bergamot, Showy Jacob's Ladder, Thread leaf Tickseed (Moonbeam Tickseed), Spike Speedwell, Prairie Coneflower (Mexican Hat), Autumn Joy Sedum (Showy Stonecrop), Round-leaved or Richardson's Alumroot

Trees11 – 21

Limber Pine, Colorado Blue Spruce, White Spruce, Round-leaved Hawthorn, Amur Maple, Green Ash (Red Ash), Black Chokecherry, Bur Oak, Swedish Columnar Aspen, Western Mountain Ash, Flowering Crabapple

Shrubs22 – 31

Ninebark, Shrubby Cinquefoil, Mugo Pine, Thorny Buffaloberry (Silver Buffaloberry), Blue Juniper, Golden Currant, Skunkbrush Lemonade Sumac (Three-lobed Sumac), Soapweed or Yucca, Red Osier Dogwood, Silver Sagebrush

Grasses32 – 41

Blue Grama Grass, Feather Reed Grass, Blue Oatgrass, Switch Grass, Idaho Fescue, Junegrass, Prairie Dropseed, Needle and Thread, Little Bluestem, Indian Ricegrass

Ground Covers42 – 51

Kinnikinnick or Bearberry, Pink (Rosy Pussy-toes), Hens and Chicks, Stonecrop, Creeping and Common Juniper, Moss Phlox (Creeping Phlox), Western Yarrow, Thyme, Lamium, Deadnettle (Spotted Dead nettle,) Three-flowered Avens (Prairie Smoke, Old Man's Whiskers)

1 • WILDFLOWERS

BROWN-EYED SUSAN (BLANKET FLOWER)

Gaillardia aristata

A self-sowing native flower that grows in clumps.

Height: 60-76cm (24-30")

Spread: 30-46cm (12-18")

Flower colour: Yellow or yellow with burgundy.

Flowering period: Mid-summer to fall. Deadhead to prolong flowering.

Habitat: Full sun. Well drained soils.

Maintenance: Clip to ground level in March before green up. Divide every few years to maintain plant vigor.

Availability: Native plant suppliers or general plant nurseries.



DOTTED BLAZING STAR

Liatris punctata

A tall flower sometimes called gayfeather.

Height: 30-76cm (12-30")

Spread: 30-45cm (12-18")

Flower colour: Pinkish purple or white.

Flowering period: Late summer to early fall.

Habitat: Full sun. Well drained dry soils.

Maintenance: Clip to ground level in March before green up. Divide every few years to maintain plant vigor.

Availability: Native plant suppliers or general plant nurseries.



3 • WILDFLOWERS

PURPLE CONEFLOWER

Echinacea angustifolia

Several cultivars of this flower are commonly available.

Height: 45-70cm (18-28")

Spread: 45-60cm (18-24")

Flower colour: Purplish pink.

Flowering period: Mid-summer to mid fall. Deadhead to prolong flowering.

Habitat: Full sun to very light shade. Well drained soils.

Maintenance: Clip to ground level in March before green up. Divide every few years to maintain plant vigor.

Availability: Native plant suppliers, general plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



WILD BERGAMOT

Monarda fistulosa

Has a lemon-mint aroma and is sometimes called bee balm.

Height: 38-76cm (15-30")

Spread: 45-60cm (18-24")

Flower colour: Purple, pink or red.

Flowering period: Mid to late summer.

Habitat: Prefers dry to moist, well drained soils.

Maintenance: Clip to ground level in March before green up. Allow for air circulation around it. Clip off leaves infected with powdery mildew. Divide every 4-5 years to maintain plant vigor and prevent overcrowding.

Availability: Native plant suppliers, general plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



5 • WILDFLOWERS

SHOWY JACOB'S LADDER

Polemonium pulcherrimum

An early bloomer that self-sows.

Height: 20-60cm (8-24")

Spread: 30-45cm (12-18")

Flower colour: Purplish blue with yellow centre.

Flowering period: Mid spring to early summer and late summer to early fall. Deadhead to prolong flowering.

Habitat: Full sun to moderate shade. Dry to moist soils.

Maintenance: Clip to ground level in March before green up. Allow room for expansion because self-sowing.

Availability: Native plant suppliers, general plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



THREADLEAF TICKSEED (MOONBEAM TICKSEED)

Coreopsis verticillata,

Coreopsis verticillata cv. ' Moonbeam'

Native cultivars with fine textured foliage.

Height: 30-45cm (12-18")

Spread: 30-45cm (12-18")

Flower colour: Yellow.

Flowering period: Peaks in early to midsummer but continues in fall.

Habitat: Full sun to light shade. Poor to average well drained soils.

Maintenance: Clip to ground level in March before green up.

Availability: General plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



7 • WILDFLOWERS

SPIKE SPEEDWELL

Veronica spicata

Non-native that is also available in a creeping form.

Height: 40-45cm (16-18")

Spread: 30-45cm (12-18")

Flower colour: Blue, purple, pink or red.

Flowering period: Peaks in early to midsummer but continues in fall.

Habitat: Full sun to moderate shade. Well drained, dry to moist soils.

Maintenance: Clip to ground level in March before green up. Divide every 3-4 years to maintain vigor and reduce crowding.

Availability: General plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



PRAIRIE CONEFLOWER (MEXICAN HAT)

Ratibida columnifera

A native flower with a tap root.

Height: 30-60 cm (12-24")

Spread: 30-45 cm (12-18")

Flower colour: Yellow.

Flowering period: Early July to mid August.

Habitat: Full sun. Dry loamy to gravelly soils.

Maintenance: Clip to ground level in March before green up.

Availability: Native plant suppliers, general plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



9 • WILDFLOWERS

AUTUMN JOY SEDUM SHOWY STONECROP

Sedum spectabile 'Autumn Joy'

A non-native hybrid that flowers into the fall.

Height: 45-60cm (18-24")

Spread: 45-60cm (18-24")

Flower colour: Pink, deepens to red in fall.

Flowering period: Late summer-early fall.

Habitat: Full sun to light shade. Will tolerate sandy, rocky or gravelly soils.

Maintenance: Clip to ground level in March before green up. Divide every 3-4 years to maintain vigor and reduce crowding.

Availability: General plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



ROUND-LEAVED (RICHARDSON'S ALUMROOT)

Heuchera cylindrica and *Heuchera richardsonii*

Also known as coral bells and available in a wide range of cultivars.

Height: 7-8cm (18-20")

Spread: 3-4cm (8-10")

Flower colour: Creamy or pink.

Flowering period: Early to mid summer.

Habitat: Full sun to light shade. Well drained, sandy, gravelly or rocky soils.

Maintenance: Clip to ground level in March before green up. Divide every 3-4 years to maintain vigor.

Availability: Native plant suppliers or general plant nurseries.



11 • TREES

LIMBER PINE

Pinus flexilis

Evergreen tree with blue-green needles and brown cones.

Height: 8-9m (26-30')

Spread: 5m (16')

Habitat: Full sun. Well drained, rocky soils.

Maintenance: Low. Do not try to change uneven silhouette.

Availability: Native plant suppliers or general plant nurseries.



COLORADO BLUE SPRUCE

Picea pungens

Evergreen tree with blue to bluish-green needles and brown cones.

Height: 30cm-20m (12"-26')

Spread: 60cm-8m (2'-26')

Habitat: Full sun to partial shade. Well drained soils.

Maintenance: Low. Pruning may be required only to tidy it up.

Availability: Widely available.



13 • TREES

WHITE SPRUCE

Picea glauca

Evergreen tree with green needles.

Height: 18m (59')

Spread: 6m (20')

Habitat: Full sun to partial shade. Well drained soils.

Maintenance: Low.

Availability: Widely available.



ROUND-LEAVED HAWTHORN

Crataegus chrysoarpa or *Crataegus rotundifolia*

Small tree with white or pink flowers in spring and prominent thorns.

Height: 5m (16')

Spread: 4m (13')

Habitat: Full sun to partial shade. Well drained soils.

Maintenance: Low. Does not require any significant pruning to maintain its shape.

Availability: Native plant suppliers or general plant nurseries.



15 • TREES

AMUR MAPLE

Acer ginnala

Small deciduous tree that produces red fruit in fall.

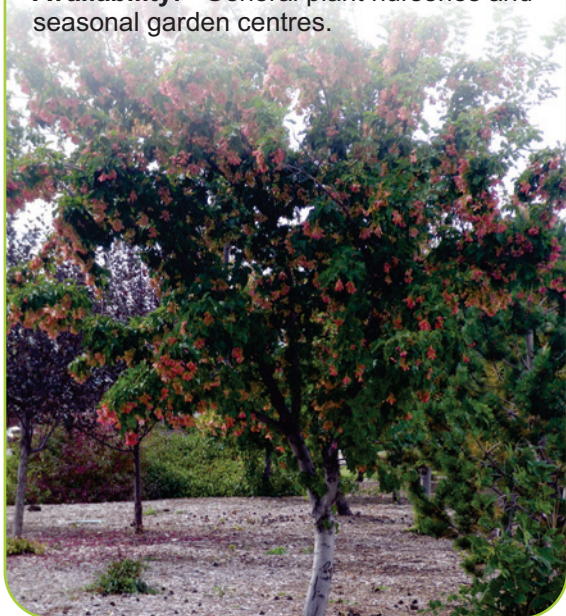
Height: 5-6m (16-20')

Spread: 3-4m (10-13')

Habitat: Full sun to light shade. Dry to moist soils.

Maintenance: Once trained as a tree it will not need any significant pruning to maintain its rounded canopy.

Availability: General plant nurseries and seasonal garden centres.



GREEN ASH OR RED ASH

Fraxinus pennsylvanica

Large deciduous tree with oval canopy.

Height: 15m (49')

Spread: 8-10m (26-33')

Habitat: Full sun to very light shade. Well drained soils are preferred.

Maintenance: Low. Tree must be provided adequate space to reach full maturity.

Availability: General plant nurseries and seasonal garden centres.



17 • TREES

BLACK CHOKECHERRY

Prunus virginiana var. melanocarpa

Small to medium sized deciduous tree with white flowers in spring.

Height: 7.6m (25')

Spread: 4.6m (15')

Habitat: Full sun. Well drained soils.

Maintenance: Requires some regular care and attention.

Availability: General plant nurseries and seasonal garden centres.



BUR OAK

Quercus macrocarpa

Large deciduous tree that produces acorns.

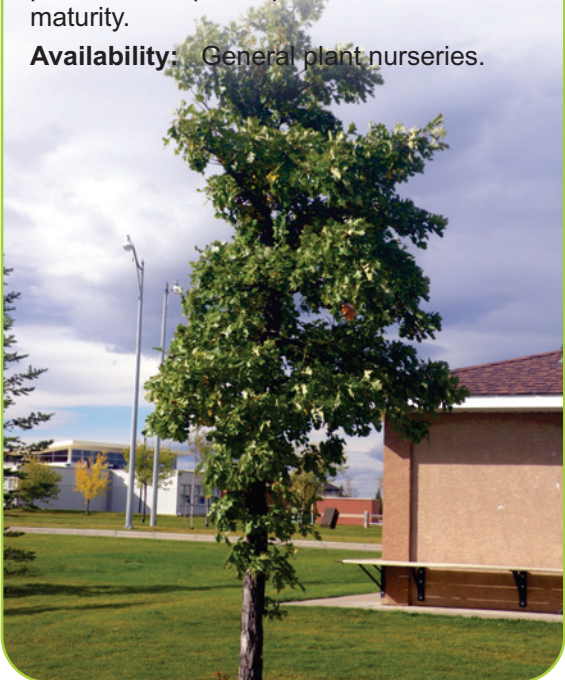
Height: 15m (49')

Spread: 12m (39')

Habitat: Full sun to partial shade. Well drained soils.

Maintenance: Low. Tree must be provided adequate space to reach full maturity.

Availability: General plant nurseries.



19 • TREES

SWEDISH COLUMNAR ASPEN

Populus tremula 'Erecta'

Tall, narrow deciduous tree perfect for creating privacy.

Height: 9-12m (30-39')

Spread: 2m (7')

Habitat: Full sun. Well drained soils.

Maintenance: Low. Fast growing.

Availability: General plant nurseries and seasonal garden centres.



WESTERN MOUNTAIN ASH

Sorbus scopulina

Medium sized tree with clusters of white flowers in spring.

Height: 5.5-10m (18-33')

Spread: 5m (16')

Habitat: Full sun to light shade. Grows in most soils.

Maintenance: Low. Produces orange berries.

Availability: Native plant suppliers.



21 • TREES

FLOWERING CRABAPPLE

Malus x astringens cultivars

Small deciduous trees with white, red or pink flowers.

Height: 5.5-10m (18-33')

Spread: 5m (16')

Habitat: Full sun. Well drained soils.

Maintenance: Moderate. Pruning is best done late in winter.

Availability: General plant nurseries and seasonal garden centres.



NINEBARK*Physocarpus opulifolius*

Large shrub with several leaf colour options.

Height: 1.8–2.4m (6–8')

Spread: 1.8–2.4m (6–8')

Flower Colour: White.

Foliage Colour: Burgundy, coppery-orange, purplish-red, golden-green.

Flowering Period: Late spring to early summer.

Habitat: Full sun to partial shade. Dry to moist, loam to sandy soils.

Maintenance: Low. Prune after flowering.

Availability: Plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



23 • SHRUBS

SHRUBBY CINQUEFOIL

Dasiphora floribunda or *Potentilla fruticosa*

Low shrub with irregular branches.

Height: 60cm-1.2m (24"-4')

Spread: 90cm-1.2m (36"- 4')

Flower Colour: Native - yellow. Cultivars - white, orange, pink or yellow.

Foliage Colour: Green leaves.

Flowering Period: June – September

Habitat: Full sun to partial shade. Well-drained loam to sandy soils.

Maintenance: Low. Prune after flowering.

Availability: Native plant suppliers, general plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



MUGO PINE*Pinus mugo*

Variable species that can be a dwarf sized shrub, large shrub or small tree.

Height: 60cm-3.7m (24"-12')

Spread: 90cm-2.0m (36"-6'6")

Flower Colour: Brown cones.

Foliage Colour: Green needles.

Habitat: Full sun to light shade. Well-drained loam to sandy soils.

Maintenance: Low. Prune late May - early June.

Availability: Seasonal garden centres for large, general plant nursery for dwarf.



25 • SHRUBS

THORNY BUFFALOBERRY (SILVER BUFFALOBERRY)

Shepherdia argentea

A native shrub with edible fruit.

Height: 2.6m (8'6")

Spread: 2.6m (8'6")

Flower Colour: Yellow. Red berries in late summer.

Flowering Period: Early spring.

Foliage Colour: Grey-green to silver.

Habitat: Full sun. Very well-drained loam or sandy soils.

Maintenance: Minimal pruning. Tends to sucker.

Availability: Native plant suppliers or general plant nurseries.



BLUE JUNIPER*Juniperus scopulorum*

An evergreen that comes in several sizes.

Height: 3–6m (10-20')

Spread: 90cm-1.8m (36"–6')

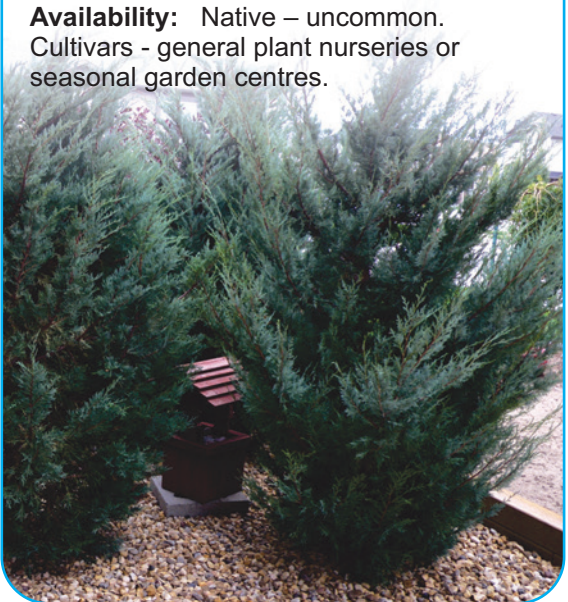
Flower Colour: Bluish-white, berry-like.

Foliage Colour: Blue to bluish-green needles.

Habitat: Full sun. Well drained soils. Drought tolerant once established.

Maintenance: Low. Prune late May – early June.

Availability: Native – uncommon. Cultivars - general plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



27 • SHRUBS

GOLDEN CURRANT

Ribes aureum

A native medium sized shrub with edible fruit.

Height: 1.8m (6')

Spread: 1.8m (6')

Flower Colour: Yellow.

Flowering Period: Mid-spring.

Foliage Colour: Green. Orange in fall.

Habitat: Full sun to partial shade. Well-drained loam, sandy, or gravelly soil.

Maintenance: Low. Prune during summer after flowering.

Availability: Native plant suppliers and nurseries or general plant nurseries.



SKUNKBRUSH**(LEMONADE SUMAC, THREE-LOBED SUMAC)***Rhus trilobata*

Native shrub whose fruit can be used to make lemonade.

Height: 90cm - 1.5m (36"-5')

Spread: 90cm - 1.5m (36"-5')

Flower Colour: Pale yellow.

Flowering Period: Late spring to early summer.

Foliage Colour: Dark green.

Habitat: Full sun. Well-drained soil.

Maintenance: Low. No pruning required. Extremely drought tolerant.

Availability: Native plant suppliers and nurseries.



29 • SHRUBS

SOAPWEED (YUCCA)

Yucca glauca

Unique, native shrub.

Height: 60cm–90cm (24-36")

Spread: 60cm–90cm (24-36")

Flower Colour: Creamy-white.

Flowering Period: June – July.

Foliage Colour: Bluish-green with narrow white edge.

Habitat: Full sun. Well-drained sandy or rocky coarse-textured soils.

Maintenance: Minimal once established.

Availability: Native plant suppliers and nurseries, some general plant nurseries.



RED OSIER DOGWOOD

Cornus sericea or *Cornus stolonifera*

Large, native shrub that is highly adaptable.

Height: 3.0m (10')

Spread: 3.0m (10')

Flower Colour: White.

Flowering Period: Late spring.

Foliage Colour: Green and white variegated leaves. Red or yellow bark.

Habitat: Full sun to partial shade.

Maintenance: Low. Light pruning.

Availability: Native plant suppliers and nurseries, general plant nurseries.



31 • SHRUBS

SILVER SAGEBRUSH

Artemisia cana

Evergreen shrub that smells like sage.

Height: 60–120cm (2-4')

Spread: 60–120cm (2-4')

Flower Colour: Yellow.

Flowering Period: August – September.

Foliage Colour: Silver.

Habitat: Full sun. Well-drained loam or sandy soils.

Maintenance: Limited pruning of old wood to improve vigor.

Availability: Native plant suppliers and nurseries.



BLUE GRAMA GRASS*Bouteloua gracili*

Native grass with distinct eyelash shaped flowers.

Height: 30–45cm (12")

Spread: 30cm (12")

Flower colour: Burgundy – purple at maturity; green in early season.

Foliage colour: Short curly green leaves.

Flowering period: Mid to late summer.

Habitat: Full sun, shade intolerant. Well drained soils.

Maintenance: When used as sod, mow no lower than 10 cm (4"). When not mowed, cut back to 15 cm (6") in spring.

Availability: Native plant suppliers.

When used as sod replacement, should be purchased as seed² and sown at 1.8 kg/93 m (4 lbs/1000 ft). Plugs also available.



33 • GRASSES

FEATHER REED GRASS

Calamagrostis acutiflora

Attractive, tall grass great for adding vertical interest.

Height: 90–100cm (36 – 39")

Spread: 45cm (18")

Flower Colour: Pink – purple in early season, light brown as it matures.

Foliage Colour: Long, green leaves.

Flowering Period: Early to midsummer.

Habitat: Full sun to partial shade.
Tolerates all soils.

Maintenance: Clip 1/3 of its height in spring before green up.

Availability: General plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



BLUE OATGRASS

Helictotrichon sempervirens

Non-native grass with vivid blue foliage.

Height: 100cm (39")

Spread: 30–45cm (12–18")

Flower Colour: Light brown.

Foliage Colour: Silver-blue to steel blue.

Flowering Period: Early to midsummer.

Habitat: Full sun to very light sun.

Requires well drained soils, will rot in wet soils.

Maintenance: Clip 1/3 of its height in spring before green up.

Availability: General plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



35 • GRASSES

SWITCH GRASS

Panicum virgatum

Native grass that is admired for its color change over the growing season.

Height: 120–150cm (47–59")

Spread: 60–90cm (24–36")

Flower colour: Green or burgundy.

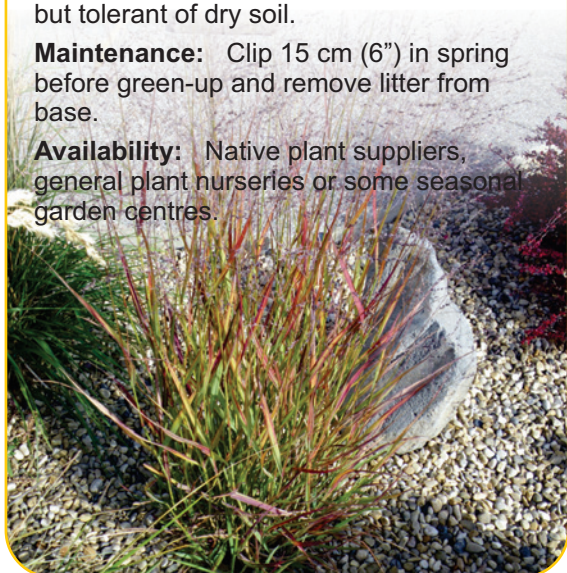
Foliage colour: Start as green with red tinge, switching to red or burgundy over growing season.

Flowering Period: Late summer.

Habitat: Full sun. Likes moist, clay soil but tolerant of dry soil.

Maintenance: Clip 15 cm (6") in spring before green-up and remove litter from base.

Availability: Native plant suppliers, general plant nurseries or some seasonal garden centres.



IDAHO FESCUE

Festuca idahoensis

Native grass best grouped in clusters.

Height: 90cm (36")

Spread: 25cm (10")

Flower colour: Green to tan coloured as it matures.

Foliage colour: Bluish-green.

Flowering period: June–July.

Habitat: Full sun. Well drained soil.

Maintenance: Clip 1/3 of its height in spring before green up.

Availability: Native plant suppliers.



37 • GRASSES

JUNEGRASS

Koeleria macrantha, *Koeleria gracilis*,
Koeleria pyramidata

Native grass that is very hardy.

Height: 45cm (18")

Spread: 30cm (12")

Flower colour: Green. Matures to straw-tan colour.

Foliage Colour: Greenish-blue.

Flowering Period: Late spring to early summer.

Habitat: Full sun. Tolerates poor soil of all types if well drained.

Maintenance: Clip 1/3 of its height in spring before green up.

Availability: Native plant suppliers or mail order.



PRAIRIE DROPSEED*Sporobolus heterolepis*

Native grass that adds colour in fall.

Height: 60–90cm (24–36")

Spread: 50–60cm (20–24")

Flower Colour: Pink with hints of brown.

Foliage Colour: Deep green, through maturity they become golden with shades of orange and pink.

Flowering Period: August – September.

Habitat: Full sun. Dry, rocky locations.

Maintenance: Clip back to 15 cm (6") in spring before green up. Clear decayed plant material from base in spring.

Availability: Seed available or mail order plugs/containers.



39 • GRASSES

NEEDLE AND THREAD

Stipa comata

Native grass with long thread like seeds.

Height: 45cm (18")

Spread: 30cm (12")

Flower Colour: Distinct green which turns to light brown as it matures.

Foliage Colour: Light green.

Flowering Period: Late spring to early summer.

Habitat: Full sun. Very well drained soil.

Maintenance: Clip back to 15 cm (6") in spring before green up.

Availability: Native plant suppliers or mail order.



LITTLE BLUESTEM

Schizachyrium scoparium

Native grass that adds colour in fall.

Height: 90cm (36")

Spread: 30cm (12")

Flower Colour: Pinkish.

Foliage Colour: Light green with bluish tinge that changes to rusty-orange or pinkish-red in fall.

Flowering Period: August – September.

Habitat: Full sun. Well drained soils.

Maintenance: Clip back to 15 cm (6") in spring before green up.

Availability: Native plant suppliers or mail order.



41 • GRASSES

INDIAN RICEGRASS

Achatherum hymenoides

A slow growing but very showy native grass.

Height: 50–70cm (20–28")

Spread: 30–45cm (12–18")

Flower Colour: Green turning to straw/tan colour.

Foliage Colour: Green.

Flowering Period: Late spring.

Habitat: Full sun. Well drained gravelly soils.

Maintenance: Clip back to 15 cm (6") in spring before green up.

Availability: Native plant suppliers or mail order.



KINNIKINNICK (BEARBERRY)

Arctostaphylos uva-ursi

Native, trailing evergreen with red fruit.

Height: 20-30cm (8-12")

Spread: 60-90cm (2-3')

Flower Colour: Pinkish to white.

Foliage Colour: Dark green.

Flowering Period: Spring.

Habitat: Full sun to partial shade. Well-drained, sandy acidic soils.

Maintenance: Minimal.

Availability: Native plant suppliers and nurseries.



43 • GROUND COVERS

PINK (ROSY PUSSY-TOES)

Antennaria rosea or *Antennaria microphylla*

Mat forming native perennial perfect for rock gardens.

Height: 10-15cm (4-6")

Spread: 30cm (12")

Flower Colour: Pink or creamy white.

Foliage Colour: Silvery-green.

Flowering Period: Late spring to early summer.

Habitat: Full sun. Dry, well-drained soils. Poor soil conditions.

Maintenance: Minimal.

Availability: Native plant suppliers and nurseries.



HENS AND CHICKS

Sempervivum spp.

Mat forming non-native perennial with many colour options.

Height: 7-15cm (3-6")

Spread: 30-60cm (12-24")

Flower Colour: Red, pink, yellow, purple or white.

Foliage Colour: Green, greenish-blue, purple, red.

Flowering Period: Summer.

Habitat: Full sun. Well-drained, poor soils.

Maintenance: Very low.

Availability: General plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



45 • GROUND COVERS

STONECROP

Sedum spp.

Forms a dense mat of colourful flowers.

Height: 5-25 cm (2-10")

Spread: 30-60 cm (12-24")

Flower Colour: Yellow, pink or rose.

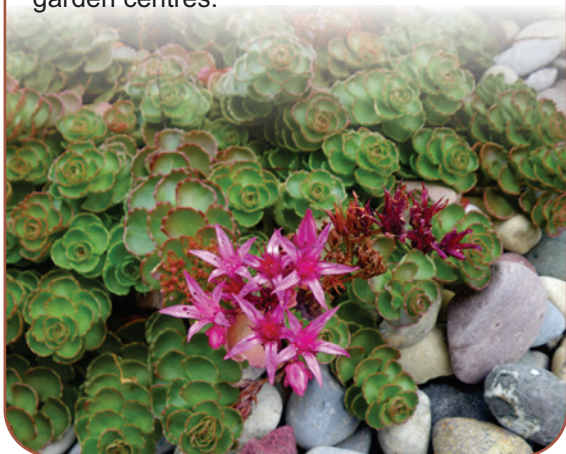
Foliage Colour: Green, bluish-green, red or purple.

Flowering Period: Early spring.

Habitat: Full sun. Very well-drained loam or sandy soils.

Maintenance: Minimal pruning. Tends to sucker.

Availability: Native - Native plant suppliers and nurseries. Cultivars – General plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



CREeping AND COMMON JUNIPER

Juniperus horizontalis & *Juniperus communis*

Low, spreading evergreen that needs to maintenance.

Height: 10–30cm (4–12")

Spread: 1- 2.5m (3–8')

Foliage Colour: Green, blue, chartreuse, golden- yellow, silver-blue or bluish-green.

Habitat: Full sun, tolerance to partial shade. Well drained soils.

Maintenance: Low. No pruning if right size species selected.

Availability: Native- Native plant suppliers & nurseries. Cultivars and non-native- General plant nurseries or season garden centres.



47 • GROUND COVERS

MOSS PHLOX (CREEPING PHLOX)

Phlox subulata

Forms a dense mound with abundant flowers in spring.

Height: 5-15 cm (2-6")

Spread: 30-45 cm (12-18")

Flower Colour: Pink, lavender, red, pale blue or white.

Flowering Period: May to June.

Foliage Colour: Green, needle-like.

Habitat: Full sun to light shade. Dry, well-drained soils.

Maintenance: Low. Trim 1/3 of foliage in late winter or early spring.

Availability: Native – not available.
Cultivars - common to general plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



WESTERN YARROW

Achillia millefolium

Spreading flower that prefers hot, dry areas.

Height: 70cm (27")

Spread: 60cm (24")

Flower Colour: White, yellow, rose or red.

Flowering Period: Early to late summer.

Foliage Colour: Green.

Habitat: Prefers full sun, tolerant of partial shade.

Maintenance: Moderate. Cut back in spring before green up. Deadhead to extend flowering. Requires containment.

Availability: Native- native plant suppliers. Cultivars- general plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



49 • GROUND COVERS

THYME

Thymus spp.

A minty smelling plant that will tolerate foot traffic.

Height: 2.5–15cm (1– 6")

Spread: 15-60cm (6-24")

Flower Colour: Purple, pink or white.

Flowering Period: Late spring to early summer.

Foliage Colour: Green or variegated green with white or yellow highlights.

Habitat: Full sun. Poor to average, well-drained soil.

Maintenance: After flowering cut back 1/3.

Availability: General plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



LAMIUM, (DEADNETTLE, SPOTTED DEADNETTLE)

Lamium maculatum

A great option for shady spots around trees.

Height: 15–30 cm (6-12")

Spread: 30-60 cm (12-24")

Flower Colour: Pink, purple or white.

Flowering Period: Late spring to late summer.

Foliage Colour: Deep green, silver or variegated.

Habitat: Full shade.

Maintenance: Low. Trim to keep tidy. Requires containment.

Availability: General plant nurseries or seasonal garden centres.



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THREE-FLOWERED AVENS (PRAIRIE SMOKE, OLD MAN'S WHISKERS)

Geum triflorum

A unique flower with fern like leaves.

Height: 60cm (24")

Spread: 30cm (12")

Flower Colour: Pinky red.

Flowering Period: Late spring to mid-summer.

Foliage Colour: Blue-green.

Habitat: Full sun to light shade. Well drained, loamy to sandy soils.

Maintenance: Low. Cut back to ground level in late winter or early spring before green up.

Availability: Native plant suppliers or some general plant nurseries.





The Prairie Urban Garden project is an initiative of the Oldman Watershed Council (OWC). The OWC promotes good practices for the home and yard because the river starts in our own backyards. Herbicides, fertilizers, and other chemicals used in yards are showing up in our waterways, affecting aquatic life as well as downstream users.

The OWC promotes garden mindful of water conservation because of Southern Alberta's semi-arid environment, where water is scarce and drought is common. Together, we have an opportunity to be leaders in demonstrating good water management!



The Oldman Watershed Council (OWC) is a collaborative forum for all voices, working for watershed health through education, action, and stewardship.

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