

# Plant Select®

Smart plants for the right places

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***If you're new to our newsletter, cheers!***

*For 29 years, our nonprofit has tested and selected low-water plants that thrive in the high plains and intermountain regions, so you can create waterwise landscapes that are beautiful, low maintenance, and have a positive environmental impact —no matter your skill level.*



**Photo:** Colorful [HALF PINT® Pineleaf Penstemon](#) (*Penstemon pinifolius* 'Compactum') is having a moment in the waterwise gardens at [Denver Botanic Gardens Chatfield Farms](#).

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**Plant Select's goal is to create smart plant choices for a new American landscape inspired by the Rocky Mountain region**

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**A warm welcome to our new Plant Select members:**

- [Arterra Landscape Design/Build Company](#) - Denver, Colo. – Landscape Professional Member
- **Alli Healy** – Individual Ambassador
- **Amy Simpson** – Individual Ambassador
- **Angela Nickerson** – Individual Ambassador
- **Anne Kempf** – Individual Ambassador
- **Becky Longardner** – Individual Ambassador
- **Catherine Wade** – Individual Ambassador
- **Connie Coffee** – Individual Ambassador
- **Dave Rambo** – Individual Ambassador
- **Janice Kitta** – Individual Ambassador
- **Jannette Boyer** – Individual Ambassador
- **Jeana Townsend** – Individual Ambassador



- Kim Weidmann – Individual Ambassador
- Kirsten Swanson – Individual Ambassador
- Margaret Johnson – Individual Ambassador
- Margie Yevara – Individual Ambassador
- Michael Robles – Individual Ambassador
- Sarah Marin – Individual Ambassador
- Teresa Rushton – Individual Ambassador

**And thanks to all who've renewed their memberships!**

**Learn how to become a Plant Select member:** Landscape Professional, Retail, Wholesale, Mail Order, Local Government, or Individual Ambassador

## Having plants in our landscapes is important ... even during drought



### Why plants make landscapes better, even in tough conditions

Step outside your front door into a lush, waterwise landscape and breathe in. Feeling calmer? Check! Is your home value higher? Check! Is the space around your home staying cooler? Check!

Explore the many ways that vegetative landscapes make a positive impact on our lives.

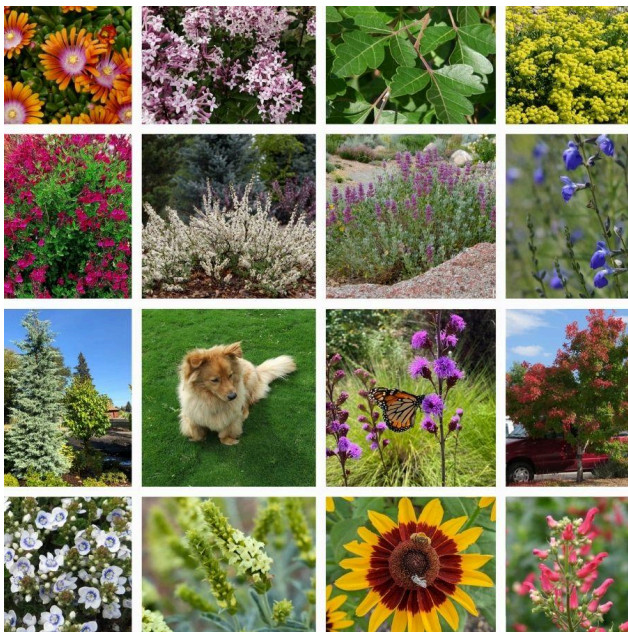
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### 3 big problems with "zeroscapes" (landscapes with minimal plants)

Extreme drought conditions can drive people to do extreme things, like ripping out their lawns and replacing them with nothing but rocks. These yards may be well-intentioned, but they can create big problems.

**[Show me >](#)**



## Two ways to create a smarter landscape for drought

Here are two simple things you can do to create a smarter, more water-efficient landscape for heat and drought.

[Show me >](#)



## What if we had a drought and our landscape plants didn't even know it?

Tom Heald, *University of Wyoming Extension*  
Panayoti Kelaidis, *Denver Botanic Gardens*

### NATIVE PLANT FEATURE

#### Engelmann's daisy

A resilient, native wildflower that adapts to a range of conditions



Engelmann's daisy (*Engelmannia peristenia*) is a perennial wildflower [native to the Southern Great Plains](#), including parts of Colorado and New Mexico.

It has ruffled green leaves and puts on a show of golden-yellow flowers for most of the summer.

Engelmann's daisy will happily flower during drought. If you want to help prolong its bloom period, give it a little supplemental water.

Did we mention that this wildflower is industrial-strength tough? It adapts to all kinds of conditions, including hot sites with poor soils. (And yes, clay!) The only areas this plant doesn't seem to like are moist or shady spots.



Engelmann's daisy attracts a variety of pollinators. Plus, the [Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center](#) says "birds relish the seed."

In the afternoon sun, Engelmann's daisy often tilts in the heat. If you prefer an upright structure, plant it among more rigid perennials (like coneflower), among [grasses](#), or in an east-facing location. The flower petals fold under themselves in the heat, but the plant bounces back by the next day.

This wildflower re-seeds, filling in around itself.

- > *Full to part sun*
- > *Water: Moderate, dry, or xeric*
- > *Soil: Clay, loam, or sandy*

Get full plant details

## Turquoise Tails blue sedum

Lovely, four-season beauty... with very little water needed



Some sedums adapt well to heat and drought.

Others? Not so much.

If you love the look of sedums but need a toughie, check out [Turquoise Tails blue sedum](#) (*Sedum sediforme*).

It's an heirloom sedum species that's native to the Mediterranean. Lauren Springer, Scott Ogden, and Kelly Grummons shared it with the Plant Select program.

Turquoise Tails blue sedum thrives with very little care and water. Lauren Springer irrigates this sedum about **once a month during the heat of summer** in northern Colorado.



Turquoise Tails grows in a robust, compact mound, creating a sculptural accent in low-water landscapes, on green roofs, and in rock gardens.

Creamy-yellow flowers rise above the foliage in July (when many plants pause blooming), attracting bees and other pollinators.

This sedum can easily be tucked in among larger perennials, cacti, and succulents thanks to its compact size. In larger spaces, consider placing groups of three to five plants together to highlight the texture.

> Full to part sun  
> Water: Dry to xeric  
> Soil: Clay, loam, sandy, or gravel

*Photo: Turquoise Tails blue sedum lines the walkway of a waterwise front yard in the Denver area, welcoming visitors.*



Get full plant details

Watch Grace Johnson's  
video on this sedum

## Congrats to our 2026 Plant Select award winners!

Every year, we recognize people who've gone above and beyond to advance Plant Select's mission.

During the Plant Select Annual Conference on June 11, we were honored to recognize **five organizations and individuals** with our 2026 Plant Select Partner Awards.



*The High Country Gardens team—including Lauren Carvalho, Kristina Bentz, and Tabar Gifford—received one of Plant Select's Organizational Partner Awards. Photo credit: Scott Dressel-Martin.*

See our 2026 award recipients

## Help shape the future of western landscapes Become a Plant Select member

Plant Select rigorously tests plants for at least three years in our tough western conditions. Plants are evaluated on diverse criteria—like water use, resiliency, beauty, disease resistance, and pollinator visitations—so gardeners of all skill levels can be successful.



If you'd like the option to participate in our Denver-area plant evaluations and share input on plants this summer, please [become a Plant Select member](#). It's one of many perks of supporting our nonprofit.

Your annual membership helps fund the research, trials, and advancement of climate-resilient plants, including both native and well-adapted plants.

Explore our memberships

### Save the date 2027 industry conferences

Utah Green Conference 2027 | Sandy, Utah | January 25-27, 2027  
ProGreen 2027 | Denver, Colo. | January 26-28, 2027  
Rocky Mountain Green Expo | Casper, Wyoming | Mid-February 2027 (dates TBD)

### Smart plants for the right places Low-water perennials that shine in June



SPANISH PEAKS®  
foxglove



Shimmer evening  
primrose



Tennessee purple  
coneflower

#### Botanical names:

*Digitalis thapsi* | *Oenothera fremontii* 'Shimmer' | *Echinacea tennesseensis*

### Quick links

Hummingbird plants

Native plants

High elevation plants

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