

You Can Help by Planting Quality Gopher Tortoise Forage Plants in Your Yard



Remember when selecting tortoise forage species to plant in a school yard or for home landscaping to consider these key points: 80% of a tortoise's diet is grass- native and nonnative (Bahia, St. Augustine, Alexander grass and even crabgrass are good) and tortoises frequently eat the flowering species "weeds" and sedges found throughout grassy areas - herbaceous species provide important nutrients but are used in smaller amounts compared to grasses. Tortoises will eat fern fiddleheads, smilax (green briar) shoots and many wetland plants like pennyworts and rushes. Tortoises will eat any garden plant you would eat. Keep in mind if there are tortoises and they like a plant, then they could at some point consume a great deal or all of that plant. Plants attractive to butterflies are also often

species eaten by tortoises. Fruit producing trees should be along edges or infrequent so as not to shade out the grass and herbaceous species needed by tortoises if you wish to encourage them. Do not use weed killers or insecticides where tortoises are feeding. Consider:

- 1) Climate requirements – Northern Florida, Central Florida, or South Florida
- 2) Level of usage as forage - Very High, High, Moderate, Low
- 3) Desirability for landscaping – Attractive, Low Key, Not Attractive / Seasonal / Year Round
- 4) Required water – Daily, Bi-Weekly (twice), Weekly (once) - (if not getting normal rainfall)
- 5) Availability for purchase (plant or seeds) – Easy to Find, Moderately Hard to Find, Hard to Find
- 6) Amount of care required – Frequently, Periodically, Occasionally

Common Name	Scientific Name	Tree, Shrub, Herb, Vine, Cactus	Climate North = N Central=C South=S ()=not best	Level of Usage as Forage VH, H, M, L	Desirability for Landscaping A, LK, NA / S or YR	Water Daily Bi-Wk Wk	Availability Easy Moderate Hard - To find for purchase	Care F P O
Aster	Aster spp.	Herb, Shrub	N,C,S	M-VH	Attractive S	D	Easy	F
Beautyberry	Callicarpa americana	Shrub	N,C,S	M	Attractive YR	Wk	Easy	O
Spanish Needles	Bidens spp.	Shrub	N,C,S	VH	Attractive S	Bi-Wk	Moderate	P
Blackberry	Rubus spp.	Shrub	N,C,S	VH	Attractive S	Bi-Wk	Easy	P
Blanket Flower	Gaillardia spp.	Herb	N,C,S	H	Attractive S	Bi-Wk	Easy	P
Blueberry	Vaccinium darrowii Vaccinium mucronatum	Shrub	N,C,S	H	Low Key S	Bi-Wk	Easy	P
Butterfly Pea	Centrosema spp.	Vine	N,C,S	M	Attractive S	Wk	Easy	O
Capeweed	Phyla nodiflora	Herb	N,C,S	H	Low Key YR	Wk	Hard	O
Coco Plum	Chrysobalanus icaya	Shrub	S	M	Attractive YR	Wk	Easy	O
Coral Bean	Erythrina herbacea	Shrub	N,C,S	M	Attractive S	Bi-Wk	Easy	O
Coreopsis	Coreopsis spp.	Herb/ Shrub	N,C,	H	Attractive S	D	Easy	F
Dayflower	Commelina spp.	Herb	N,C	H	Attractive S	D	Easy	F
Gayfeather	Liatris spp.	Herb	N,C	L-M	Attractive S	Bi-Wk	Easy	P
Golden Aster	Chrysopsis spp.	Herb	N,C	H	Attractive S	Bi-Wk	Easy	P
Gopher Apple	Licania michauxii	Herb	N,C,S	H	Attractive S	Wk	Moderate	O
Greeneyes	Berlandiera spp.	Herb	N,C	H	Attractive S	Wk	Moderate	O
Hibiscus	Hibiscus spp.	Shrub	N,C,S	M	Attractive YR	Wk	Easy	O
Kalanchoe	Kalanchoe spp.	Herb	(N), C,S	L	Attractive S	Wk	Easy	O
Lantana	Lantana spp.	Shrub	N,C,S	M	Attractive YR	Wk	Easy	O
Lupine	Lupinus spp.	Herb-shrub	N,C	M-H	Attractive S	Wk	Moderate	O

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Mex. Clover	<i>Richardia</i> spp.	Herb	N,C,S	VH	Low Key	Wk	Hard	O
Mulberry	<i>Morus rubra</i>	Tree	N,C,S	M	Attractive YR	Wk	Easy	O
Paintbrush	<i>Carphephorus</i> spp.	Herb	N,C	VH	Attractive S	Bi-Wk	Easy	P
Pansy, Violets	<i>Viola</i> spp.	Herb	N, C	H	Attractive S	Bi-Wk	Easy	F
Passion Flw.	<i>Passiflora</i> spp.	Vine	(N)C,S	L-M	Attractive S	D	Easy	F
Pawpaw	<i>Asimina</i> spp.	Shrub	N,C,S	L-M	Low Key S	Wk	Moderate	O
Petunia, Wild	<i>Ruellia caroliniensis</i>	Herb	N,C,S	M	Attractive S	Wk	Easy	F
Plums	<i>Prunus</i> spp.	Tree	N,C	M	Attractive YR	Wk	Easy	O
Porterweed	<i>Stachytarpheta</i> spp.	Herb	(N),C,S	M	Attractive S	D	Easy	P
Portulacca	<i>Portulacca</i> spp.	Herb	N,C,S	VH	Attractive S	Bi-Wk	Easy	P
Prickly Pear	<i>Opuntia</i> spp.	Cactus	N,C,S	M-VH	Attractive YR	Wk	Easy	O
Railroad vine Morningglory	<i>Ipomoea</i> spp.	Vine	N,C,S	L-M	Attractive S	Wk	Easy	O
Saw Palmetto	<i>Serenoa repens</i>	Shrub	N,C,S	M	Attractive YR	Wk	Easy	O
Seagrape	<i>Coccoloba uvifera</i>	Tree	S	M	Attractive YR	Wk	Easy	O
Sea Oxeye	<i>Borrchia frutescens</i>	Shrub	N,C,S	M	Attractive S	Bi-Wk	Easy	O
Sunflower	<i>Helianthus</i> spp.	Herb	N,C,S	L-M	Attractive S	Wk	East	O
Sumac, Winged	<i>Rhus copallina</i>	Shrub	N,C,S	M	Attractive S	Wk	Moderate	O
Verbena	<i>Verbena</i> spp.	Herb	N,C,S	H	Attractive S	Bi-Wk	Easy	P
Wedelia	<i>Wedelia trilobata</i>	Herb	N,C,S	M	Attractive YR	Wk	Easy	O
Wild Grape	<i>Vitis</i> spp.	Vine	N,C,S	VH	Attractive S	Wk	Easy	O