



Evergreen Garden Club

# WILD IRIS



MAY 2021

HELLO

MAY

NEXT ZOOM MEETING  
TUESDAY May 11, 2021  
Meeting starts 9:15 a.m.  
Watch your email for the Zoom link  
PUBLIC GARDENS WORK DAY!

## **NEED A CURE FOR SPRING FEVER?**

*Play in the dirt with wild abandon!*

*EGC TUESDAY MAY 11<sup>th</sup> MEETING  
will be a workday for all public gardens!*

### **WHAT TO BRING?**

**Coffee Cup**  
**Gardening Gloves**  
**Shade Hat**  
**Sunscreen**  
**Water Bottle**  
**Favorite Hand Tools**

**Questions? Not sure which garden to work in?**  
**Contact Annell Hoy [annell517@yahoo.com](mailto:annell517@yahoo.com)**



***COMING UP IN JUNE!***  
**PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE IN THE  
DATE & PLACE FOR THE EGC JUNE MEETING!**  
***More details to follow***

Our EGC June Meeting will be held on  
June 15th ( the 3<sup>RD</sup> TUESDAY).

It will be held in-person, outside at the Aspen Ridge Church.

Please bring your own chair and beverage.

After the business meeting,  
we will have a members-only plant sale.  
Please bring in plants, plant divisions, seeds, bulbs, etc.  
for purchase by other members.

We will also have a donation table. Please bring garden related items for  
the donation table. All proceeds will be donated to EChO.

There will also be a crazy garden hat contest!  
The board will select a winner in each category:  
'funniest', 'most unique', and most 'gardeny' hat.



**April 13, 2021**  
**Evergreen Garden Club General Business Meeting**

The meeting was called to order by President, Cherie Luke at 9:15am on Zoom. Attending were Donna Moore, 2nd Vice President, Helen McLeman, Treasurer, Janice Theobald, Secretary, and Julie Ann Courim, Technology Officer. 17 members were on the call.

**President's Report** - Cherie opened the meeting with a welcome and acknowledged all April birthdays. It is confirmed that our June 15th (note, change of date) meeting will be in person at Aspen Ridge Church. Everyone is asked to bring their own chair and beverage as we will not be able to share any food or drinks.

We will have our hat contest and plant sale and donation table that benefits ECHO. Please bring plants to sell and any garden related items for the donation table.

All of the Board positions have been filled. Thanks to all who have volunteered. The current board will introduce their replacements during today's meeting.

**First Vice President** - will be held by Hannah Hayes. If anyone is interested in sharing their garden this season, please contact Hannah Hayes to schedule and get the correspondence out to everyone.

**2nd Vice President's Report** - Welcome to new members David Hanna and Karolyn Hartford.  
Our new 2nd Vice President is MaryBeth Mainero.

**Treasurer's Report** - Nothing new to report. Helen will stay on as Treasurer for another term.

**Secretary's Report** - March minutes have been approved by the general membership as reported in the Wild Iris. Our new Secretary is Janet Gluskoter.

**Technology Officer's Report** - Nothing new to report. Julie Ann will stay on as Technology Officer.

**General Program** '*The Sustainable Kitchen*' by Bonnie Kaake.  
Questions and answers followed.

The meeting adjourned at 10:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Theobald  
Secretary Evergreen Garden Club

# Biocontrol of Field Bindweed

By EGC Member, Cindy Gibson

Don't let the delicate white flowers of Field Bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis* var. *linearifolius*) fool you. It is a beast. The roots can travel to 10 feet deep and contain a 2-to-3-year food supply. It will produce up to 300 seeds that stay viable in the soil for 40 years. And it cannot be dug out easily — the stems are fragile and any root piece left in the soil will produce a new plant.

We have all tried mulching, carefully trimming the exposed foliage and perhaps, herbicides. There is another weapon, however, in the gardener's tool belt that is worth trying. It involves using a biological control, *Aceria malherbae*.

*Aceria malherbae*, is a microscopic mite that infests the newest growth of the plant by forming a leaf gall. The gall is basically a small growth that houses the developing mites. This initially reduces flowering and stunts the growth of the stems. Mites overwinter on the root buds and emerge again with spring growth. The activity of the mites can kill the bindweed usually within two to three years.

The mites can be ordered from the Colorado State Insectary in Palisade, using the [Request-a-Bug](#) online form. For this biocontrol, CSU charges \$35.00 per 1,000 galls.

As the insectary only has a limited number of mites, it is recommended that orders are placed early in the season.

The insectary also has biocontrol for Russian knapweed, Spotted and Diffuse knapweed, puncture vine aka "Goatheads", Leafy spurge Canada thistle, Musk thistle, Dalmatian toadflax, yellow toadflax.

For further information, take a look at this article about the CSU Insectary:

<https://sam.extension.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2016/07/12-summer.pdf>



# EFFICIENT USE OF WATER IN THE GARDEN & LANDSCAPE

By Larry Stein, Extension Horticulturist &  
Doug Welsh, Extension Horticulturist

[Efficient Use of Water in the Garden and Landscape - Earth-Kind® Landscaping Earth-Kind® Landscaping \(tamu.edu\)](http://tamu.edu)

A helpful and informative article about efficient watering by EARTH-KIND



## **EFFICIENT, RESPONSIBLE WATER USE**

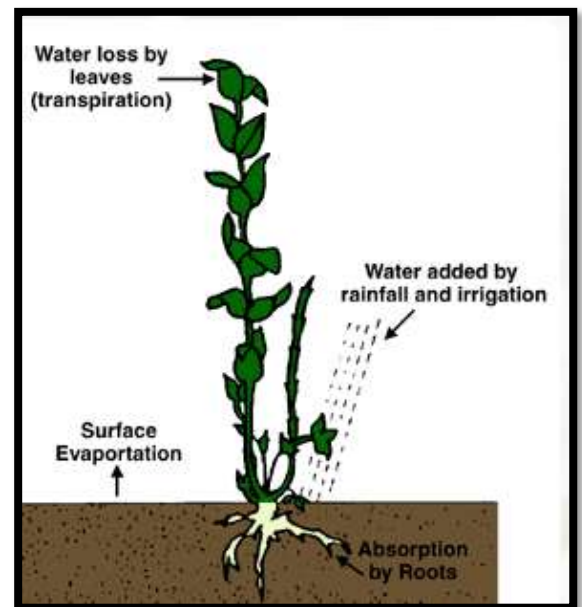
The danger of exhausting valuable aquifers by excessive pumping is paralleled by the threat of polluting the groundwater with industrial, agricultural and home landscape contaminants. Nitrates from excessive and untimely fertilization are especially threatening.

## **PLANTS, SOILS AND WATER**

When water is applied to the soil it seeps down through the root zone very gradually. Each layer of soil must be filled to 'field capacity' before water descend to the next layers. This water movement is referred to as the wetting front. Water moves downward through a sandy coarse soil much faster than through a fine-textured soil such as clay or silt.

If only one-half the amount of water required for healthy growth of your garden or landscape is applied at a given time, it only penetrates the top half of the root zone; the area below the point where the wetting front stops remains dry as if no irrigation has been applied at all.

Once enough water is applied to move the wetting front into the root zone, moisture is absorbed by plant roots and moves up through the stem to the leaves and fruits. Leaves have thousands of microscopic openings, called stomates, through which water vapor is lost from the plant. This continual loss of water called transpiration, causes the plant to wilt unless a constant supply of soil water is provided by absorption through the roots.





The total water requirement is the amount of water lost from the plant plus the amount evaporated from the soil. These two processes are called evapotranspiration. Evapotranspiration rates vary and are influenced by day length, temperature, cloud cover, wind, relative humidity, mulching, and the type, size and number of plants

### ***WATERING TECHNIQUES***

Proper water methods are seldom practiced by most gardeners. They either under or over water when irrigating.

The person who under-waters usually doesn't realize the time needed to adequately water an area; instead, he applies light, daily sprinklings. It is actually harmful to lightly sprinkle plants every day. Frequent light applications wet the soil to a depth of less than 1 inch. Most plant roots go much deeper. Light sprinkling only settles the dust and does little to alleviate drought stress of plants growing in hot, dry soils. Instead of light daily waterings, give plants a weekly soaking. When watering, allow the soil to become wet to a depth of 5 to 6 inches.

This type of watering allows moisture to penetrate into the soil area where roots can readily absorb it. A soil watered deeply retains moisture for several days, while one wet only an inch or so is dry within one day.

In contrast, there are those who water so often and heavily that they drown plants. Too much water in a soil causes oxygen deficiency, resulting in damage to the root system. Plant roots need oxygen to live. When a soil remains soggy little oxygen is present in the soil. When this condition exists, roots die and no longer absorb water. The leaves begin to show signs of insufficient water. Often gardeners think these signs signal lack of water, so they add more. This further aggravates the situation and the plant usually dies quickly.

**\*\*\*With our super dry conditions and sometimes compacted soils, water sometimes pools or takes a few minutes to absorb. Thoroughly moisten the soil, move on to the next, and then come back and water again to allow the water time to reach a desirable depth, instead of running off.**

**To avoid repetitive or non-pertinent information, parts of this article have been left out. To read this article in its entirety, please follow the link in the heading above.**





Soil Moisture Level	How Soil Feels and Looks			
	Coarse (sand)	Light (loamy sand, sandy loam)	Medium (fine sandy loam, silt loam)	Heavy (clay loam, clay)
No available soil moisture. Plants wilt. Irrigation required. (First Range)	Dry, loose, single grained, flows through fingers. No stain or smear on fingers.	Dry, loose, clods easily crushed and flows through fingers. No stain or smear on fingers	Crumbly, dry, powder, barely maintains shape. Clods break down easily. May leave slight smear or stain when worked with hands or fingers.	Hard, firm baked, cracked usually too stiff or tough to work or ribbon* by squeezing between thumb or forefinger. May leave slight smear or stain.
Moisture is available, but level is low. Irrigation needed. (Second Range)	Appears dry; will not retain shape when squeezed in hand	Appears dry; may make a cast when squeezed in hand but seldom holds together.	May form a weak ball** under pressure but is still crumbly. Color is pale with no obvious moisture.	Pliable, forms a ball; ribbons but usually breaks or is crumbly. May leave slight stain or smear.
Moisture is available. Level is high. Irrigation not yet needed (Third Range)	Color is dark with obvious moisture Soil may stick together in very weak cast or ball.	Color is dark with obvious moisture. Soil forms weak ball or cast under pressure. Slight finger stain but no ribbon when squeezed between thumb and fore finger.	Color is dark from obvious moisture. Forms a ball. Works easily, clods are soft with mellow feel. Stains finger and has slick feel when squeezed.	Color is dark with obvious moisture. Forms good ball. Ribbons easily, has slick feel. Leaves stain on fingers.
Soil moisture level following an irrigation. (Fourth Range)	Appears and feels moist. Color is dark. May form weak cast or ball. Leaves wet outline or slight smear on hand.	Appears and feels moist. Color is dark. Forms cast or ball. Will not ribbon but shows smear or stain and leaves wet outline on hand.	Appears and feels moist. Color is dark. Has a smooth, mellow feel. Forms ball and ribbons when squeezed. Stains and smears. Leaves wet outline on hand.	Color is dark. Appears moist; may feel sticky. Ribbons out easily; smears and stains hand; leaves wet outline. Forms good ball.

\* Ribbon is formed by squeezing and working soil between thumb and forefinger.

\*\* Cast or ball is formed by squeezing soil in hand.

\*\*\* Note from the editor





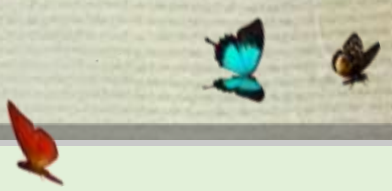
SPRING

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!**

**David Hanna  
Karolyn Hartford**

***Best Wishes to all our EGC  
May Birthday  
Boys & Girls!***





**THE POST OFFICE GARDEN IS IN NEED OF ANOTHER PERSON OR TWO TO HELP WITH SUMMER WATERING. PLEASE CONTACT LOUISE HEERN IF INTERESTED; [louiseheern@gmail.com](mailto:louiseheern@gmail.com)**

**INTERESTED IN WORKING IN ONE OF THE COMMUNITY GARDENS THIS SUMMER? PLEASE CONTACT ANNELL HOY FOR DETAILS; [annell517@yahoo.com](mailto:annell517@yahoo.com)**




### **UNDERSTANDING THE FERTILIZER LABEL**

The label on a bag of fertilizer shows the percentages of nutrients in the mix. The three numbers shown most prominently, called the N-P-K ratio, refer to the amounts of nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K) in the bag. For example, an 8-4-4 fertilizer contains, by weight, 8 percent nitrogen, 4 percent phosphorus, and 4 percent potassium. Nitrogen is the most critical element, promoting good foliage growth and flowers.

# Adding Organic Matter

**Table 39-1. Routine Application Rates for Compost**

 Site	Incorporation Depth <sup>2</sup>	Depth of Compost before Incorporation <sup>1</sup>	
		Plant-based compost and other compost known to be low in salts <sup>3</sup>	Compost made with manure or biosolids for which the salt content is unknown <sup>4</sup>
One-time application—such as lawn area	6–8"	2–3"	1"
	3–4"	1–1½"	½"
Annual application to vegetable and flower gardens—first 3 years	6–8"	2–3"	1"
	3–4"	1–1½"	½"
Annual application to vegetable and flower gardens—fourth year and beyond	6–8"	1–2"	1"
	3–4"	1"	½"



<sup>1</sup> Three cubic yards (67 bushels) covers 1,000 square feet approximately 1 inch deep.

<sup>2</sup> Cultivate compost into the top 6–8 inches of the soil. On compacted/clayey soils, anything less may result in a shallow rooting depth, predisposing plants to reduced growth, low vigor, and low stress tolerance. The 3–4 inch depth is shown as an illustration of how application rates need to adjust when the deep cultivate is not practiced.

<sup>3</sup> Plant-based composts are derived solely from plant materials (leaves, grass clippings, wood chips, and other yard wastes). Use this application rate also for other compost known, by soil test, to be low in salts.

<sup>4</sup> Use this application rate for any compost made with manure or biosolids unless the salt content is known, by soil test, to be low. Excessive salts are common in many commercially available products sold in Colorado. Based on soil tests of commercially available compost, this application rate may be too high for products extremely high in salts.

Resource: *The Science of Gardening* by David Whiting



# FACT SHEETS

[www.ext.colostate.edu](http://www.ext.colostate.edu)

TYPE A QUESTION OR FACT SHEET # INTO THE SEARCH BAR  
PRINT THE FACT SHEET



Colorado State University  
Extension

## Native Herbaceous Perennials for Colorado Landscapes

Fact Sheet No. 7.242

Gardening Series | Flowers

By I. Shonle, L.G. Vickerman and J.E. Klett\*

### Why Grow Native Herbaceous Perennials?

There are many benefits to using Colorado native herbaceous perennials for home and commercial landscapes. They are naturally adapted to Colorado's climates, soils and environmental conditions. When they are correctly sited, they make ideal plants for a sustainable landscape. Native herbaceous perennials require less external inputs such as watering, fertilizing and other cultural factors when the planting site mimics the plant's native habitat.

Using Colorado natives in landscapes may attract a variety of wildlife including mammals, birds, butterflies and other native pollinators. Rapid urbanization in the state is reducing biodiversity (the number of different species found in a given area) as habitat is removed for building and road construction. Landscaping with natives on a large, or small, scale helps maintain biodiversity that otherwise would be lost to development.

The perennials listed in Table 1 were specifically chosen because they require low or moderate amounts of water. Not all perennials listed are available at all nurseries and garden centers, so it may be necessary to contact a number of commercial outlets to find a specific plant. If a perennial is not sold in the trade, asking for it may improve its future availability. Native perennials should not be collected from the wild because this reduces biodiversity, causes a disturbed area that may be invaded by weeds, and may be illegal. Transplanting a plant from the wild to the garden is rarely successful because of root damage and transplant shock.

\*I. Shonle, Colorado State University Extension agent, Gilpin county; J. Klett, Extension landscape horticulture specialist and professor, department of horticulture and landscape architecture. L.G. Vickerman, former Extension agent, contributed to the first edition 4/2014



Figure 1: *Callirhoe involucrata* (Purple poppy mallow).

Most of the perennials listed in Table 1 are available as container-grown plants. Native perennials often do not have as great a visual impact in the container or immediately after planting as do traditional horticultural species. Over time, however, they will reward the homeowner with their natural beauty.

### Where to Grow Native Herbaceous Perennials

Due to Colorado's varying elevation and topography, native plants are found in a variety of habitats. To maximize survival with minimal external inputs, plants should be selected for your site's life zone and the plant's moisture, light and soil requirements. Even if a plant is listed for a particular life zone, the aspect (north, south, east or west facing) of the proposed site should match the moisture requirement. For example, a prairie zinnia, which requires full sun and has a very low moisture requirement, should not be sited with plants requiring higher moisture needs. Similarly, a prairie zinnia should not be planted on the north side of a building, where there is increased shade and moisture could severely affect its growth and appearance.

Growing native perennials does not exclude using adapted non-native plants. There are many non-native plants that are adapted to Colorado's climate and can



### Quick Facts

- A Colorado native perennial is defined as a plant existing in Colorado prior to European settlement.
- Native plant gardens create wildlife habitat for a variety of birds, mammals and insects.
- Landscaping with native plants makes a significant contribution to biodiversity that otherwise would be lost to development.
- Native plant communities in Colorado vary due to differences in exposure, elevation, rainfall, soils and temperature extremes. Native plant communities vary across Colorado visually distinct from other parts of the state.

© Colorado State University Extension, 3/04. Revised 4/14.  
[www.ext.colostate.edu](http://www.ext.colostate.edu)



# PLANTtalk COLORADO

[www.planttalk.org](http://www.planttalk.org)

RELIABLE INFORMATION ON MORE THAN  
500 HORTICULTURAL TOPICS



The screenshot shows the Planttalk Colorado website. At the top, the logo "Planttalk Colorado" is displayed in green. Below the logo is a navigation bar with "Home", "Sponsors", and "Feedback" links, and a search box on the right. A main content area is circled in grey, containing the text: "Planttalk Colorado™ provides reliable, timely information on more than 500 horticultural topics." Below this is a "Hot Topics" section with three items: "Perennials: Maintaining" (with a frog illustration), "Landscaping & the Law", and "Winter Browning of Evergreens". A second circle highlights a sponsorship notice: "Planttalk Colorado™ is sponsored by Colorado State University Extension, Denver Botanic gardens, and the Green Industries of Colorado." The right sidebar features a search box, a "Planttalk en Español" link, social media icons for RSS, YouTube, and Pinterest, a "Multimedia" section with "Conifer Tree ID Videos" (listing various tree species), and "Other videos" (listing various gardening topics). A "Brochures" section at the bottom left offers "English" and "Spanish" options. The "ask an EXPERT" logo is also visible.



# 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Victory Market of Organic Garden Plants

Tomatoes – dozens of varieties – mostly wonderful heirlooms

Herbs! Peppers! Other Vegetables – ALL ORGANIC!

*All are seed-started by our members  
or divided from our own organic gardens.*



**SUNDAY MAY 16, 2021**

**9 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

*(Come Rain or Shine! – you stay in your car)*

**THOMAS JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL  
PARKING LOT**

**Off of East Hampton and Holly Street  
Just to the south of Holly**

**Payment: DONATIONS ONLY**

*(Please bring a watertight container to carry your purchases!)*

*Presented by*

**Front Range Organic Gardeners**



PLEASE NOTE!  
UPDATED  
INFORMATION  
RE: FROG

For more info: [www.GardenFROG.org](http://www.GardenFROG.org) or e-mail [frog.plant.sale@gmail.com](mailto:frog.plant.sale@gmail.com)

Over 90% of FROG's proceeds benefit public education on organic gardening, and grants to other non-profits who practice and promote organic gardening principles

As COVID rules constantly change, please check the websites above before visiting for the most accurate sites and times. Thank you!

## Hummers have arrived!

A reminder from CSU CCC Extension, that hummingbirds typically return to Colorado in late April, so don't be surprised if you hear that familiar buzz! After their long journey from wintering in warmer climates, hummingbirds will now be frantically searching for food. Male hummingbirds arrive first to establish their territories; a good food source helps them choose a desirable site.

We're in luck since they generally nest at elevations above 6,000 feet! No need to buy the powdered hummingbird nectar mix – instead, make homemade hummingbird nectar.

**All you need is 4 parts water to 1-part white granulated table sugar – boil the water, stir in the sugar until completely dissolved, and let it cool.**

Adding more sugar DOES NOT HELP the hummers; in fact, too much sugar can cause liver damage. Don't use dye, food coloring or commercial nectars – they have chemicals the birds don't need and could be harmful. DO NOT USE HONEY – it will quickly ferment and become poisonous to the birds. Make sure your feeder has some red trim to attract them, and keep feeders clean. Of course, there are many native wildflowers that they are attracted to as well; feel free to contact me for more information.

**Christine M. Crouse**  
Director/Agent, CSU Extension in Clear Creek County  
303-679-2424 (Office)  
[Christine.crouse@colostate.edu](mailto:Christine.crouse@colostate.edu)

**Rather feed the hummingbirds with flowers?  
See the diagram below.**





Trumpet vine

Bush fuchsias

Columbine



SIZE  
3½ - 4"

**Anna's hummingbird** A resident of the Pacific seaboard, its diet includes the nectar of fuchsia, tobacco plant, and century plant flowers.

**CREATING A MULTILEVEL GARDEN**

Build up layers of cascading plants on the side of your home by securing a trellis to an exterior wall located in the sun. Plant a trumpet vine, or one of the colorful climbing honeysuckles, and train the plants to grow up and over a wooden trellis. Place a selection of shrubs such as bush fuchsia and four o'clock, and fragrant low-flowering herbs like phlox, bugle, and Canada columbine below and in front of the trellis.



SIZE  
3¾"

**Black-chinned hummingbird** Similar to the ruby-throated hummingbird, the male has a black gorget with a violet band.



## Native Plant Outreach Habitat Hero Workshops



Spring is here, and migratory birds are at our doorstep! Do you have a welcome plan yet? That is, do you know how to create a garden that feeds, shelters, and supports birds? If not, then you should sign up for one of our last native plant outreach workshops!

During these free, 1.5-hour webinars, we'll teach you the foundations of bird-friendly gardening. And to help you make an even bigger impact, we'll share skills for promoting bird-friendly gardening in your community. You'll also receive four \$10 coupons for you and your friends to get a discount on native plants!

There are five more workshops scheduled between now and May 20. Each is identical, so you only need to attend one. We hope you'll join us!

---

### Event Details

#### **Native Plant Outreach: Habitat Hero Workshops**

*Now through May 20*

Online via Zoom

**Free**

[View Dates and Register](#)

**FOR MORE DETAILS AND/OR REGISTRATION REGARDING THE PROGRAMS ON THIS PAGE,  
PLEASE FOLLOW THE LINK BELOW**

[Upcoming events | Audubon Rockies](#)

MAY  
01

[Habitat Hero](#) | Saturday, May 1, 2021 - 9:00am Mountain

### Native Plant Outreach Workshop 5/1

(Online Event)

Improve your skills in growing native plants and encouraging others to do so.

[Details »](#)

MAY  
04

[Habitat Hero](#) | Tuesday, May 4, 2021 - 12:00pm Mountain

### Native Plant Outreach Workshop 5/4

(Online Event)

Improve your skills in growing native plants and encouraging others to do so.

[Details »](#)

MAY  
06

[Habitat Hero](#) | Thursday, May 6, 2021 - 12:00pm Mountain

### Native Plant Outreach Workshop 5/6

(Online Event)

Improve your skills in growing native plants and encouraging others to do so.

[Details »](#)

MAY  
11

[Habitat Hero](#) | Tuesday, May 11, 2021 - 12:00pm Mountain

### Native Plant Outreach Workshop 5/11

(Online Event)

Improve your skills in growing native plants and encouraging others to do so.

[Details »](#)

MAY  
20

[Habitat Hero](#) | Thursday, May 20, 2021 - 12:00pm Mountain

### Native Plant Outreach Workshop 5/20

(Online Event)

Improve your skills in growing native plants and encouraging others to do so.

[Details »](#)

MAY  
22

[Habitat Hero](#) | Saturday, May 22, 2021 - 10:00am Mountain

### Pollinator Plant Swap

(Fort Collins, CO)

Give and receive plants that support pollinators!

[Details »](#)

## Stay in the Know

Sign up for emails to stay up to date on how you can help and enjoy birds in Colorado, Wyoming, and Utah.

[Sign Up](#)



## Six Ornamental Native Grasses for *Dry Conditions and Higher Altitudes*

The Front Range and Eastern Plains of Colorado are part of the short grass prairie that lies in the rain shadow of the Rocky Mountains. This is a high and dry steppe climate dominated by short grasses of inches in height that include **buffalo grass** (*Buchloe dactyloides*) and **blue grama** (*Bouteloua gracilis*), the state grass of **Colorado**. The area is semiarid and the average annual rainfall is 10 to 15 inches.

Gardeners growing native gardens should understand the differences in rainfall where these grasses are native and plan supplemental irrigation accordingly. **Generally, among the natives, the taller the grass, the more water the plant requires.**

### Little bluestem

*Schizachyrium scoparium*

Native Perennial

Height: 24 to 36 inches

Spread: 18 to 24 inches

Full sun

Moisture: Moderate to dry

USDA zones 3 to 9

Blooms mid to late summer



A lovely, tough-as-nails prairie native offering grey-green leaf blades that turn bold shades of purple, red and orange in autumn





*Natural Setting with Companions*



*Tended garden setting*

**Blonde Ambition  
blue grama grass**  
*Bouteloua gracilis 'Blond  
Ambition'*

Native Perennial  
Height: 12 to 30 inches  
Spread: 12 to 30 inches  
Full sun  
Moisture: Moderate to dry  
USDA zones 4 to 9  
Blooms mid to late  
summer



*Seed Heads*

**Side oats grama grass**  
*Bouteloua curtipendula*

Native Perennial  
Height: 12 to 24.5 inches  
Spread: 12 to 24 inches  
Full sun  
Moisture: Dry to medium  
USDA zones 4 to 9  
Blooms July to August  
  
Native prairie grass noted for  
one-sided seed head arrangement



*Seed Heads*



**Prairie Dropseed**  
***Sporobolus heterolepis***

Native Perennial  
Height: 24 to 36 inches; Spread: 24 to 36 inches  
Full sun; tolerates light shade  
Moisture: Dry to medium; USDA zones 4 to 9  
Blooms August to October



**Mexican hair grass or Silky thread grass (*below*)**  
***Stipa tenuifolia***

Native Perennial  
Height: 12.5 to 18 inches  
Spread: 12.5 to 18 inches  
Full sun  
Moisture: Dry  
USDA zones 5 to 10

*Natural Setting with Companions*



**Blue Oatgrass**  
*Helictotrichon sempervirens*

Native Perennial  
Height: 24 to 36 inches; Spread: 24 inxhwa  
Full Sun - Moisture: Dry to medium  
USDA zones 4 to 8 Blooms June



**Blue Fescue**  
*Festuca glauca elijah blue*

Native Perennial  
Height: .75 to 12 inches  
Spread: .50 to .75 inches  
Full sun  
Moisture: Dry to medium  
USDA zones 4 to 8  
Blooms June - July



Although not native, Karl Forrester grasses do well in the landscape (and even better when provided extra moisture). They are 99.9% deer and elk resistant.



Companion plants blend beautifully with ornamental grasses.



Companions don't always have to be plants!



Grasses are a natural for mass plantings. Remember plant 1/3 to 2/3 (one should dominate) if mass planting with companions.



Unless they are diseased, leave seed heads intact. They add winter interest and feed the birds!



Cutting grasses back in early spring will promote the best growth. Cut when you first start seeing green shoots appear from the bottom of the plant, before the shoots get too tall.



# When it's time to Divide!



When it's time to divide, grasses will often die out in the middle, forming a distinct donut shape.

Note: You do not have to wait for this to happen to divide your grasses.



Divide in the spring  
By digging up the entire plant –  
Cut a section that looks vigorous –  
Separate it from the rest of the plant –  
And re-plant

For more information/options and a complete list of native Colorado grasses, visit [www.ext.colostate.edu](http://www.ext.colostate.edu) and search fact sheet 7.232

Or visit this direct link:

<http://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/ornamental-grasses-7-232/>





## RAISED BEDS – THE EASY SOLUTION

There's a simple solution to dealing with soil that is too shallow or drains poorly: heap soil on top of it and grow above grade. To form the sides of a raised bed, use landscape timbers, decay-resistant wood, brick, concrete block or stone; or simply make a firm mound with sloping sides and a surrounding ditch. Plan to have the soil surface within the raised bed one foot or more above the normal grade outside.

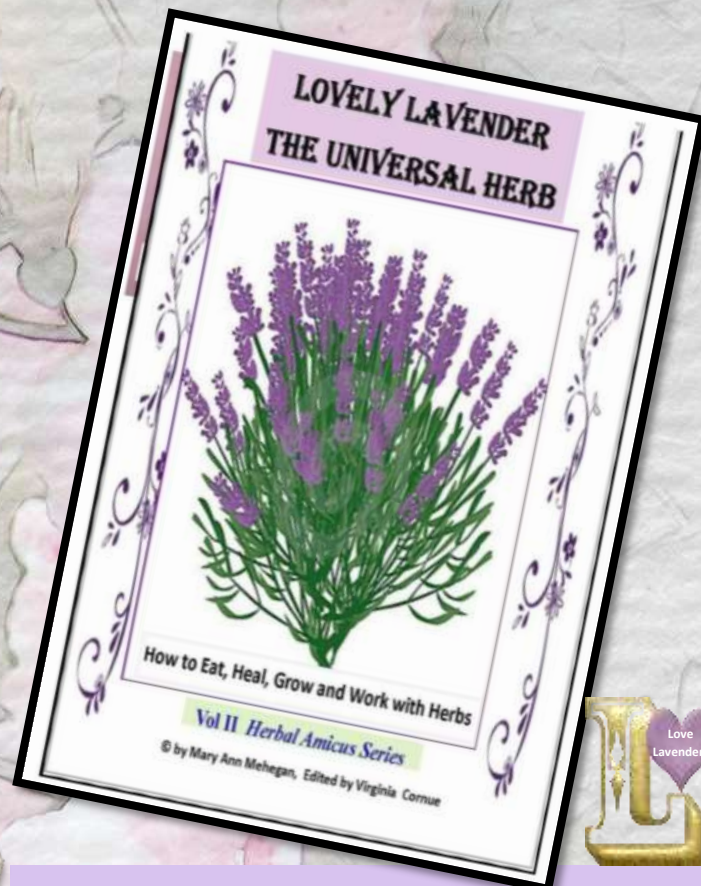
Dig a 4-inch layer of organic material into the existing soil, going down a foot or more if you can. Then add topsoil (taken from another part of the garden or purchased), and dig it into the improved native soil, adding another 4-inch layer of organic matter at the same time. Water the bed deeply and let it settle before you plant. If it sinks significantly, mix more topsoil into the bed.

Resource: *Sunset 365 Days of Garden Color*

**If possible, line the bottom of your raised bed with wire cloth before filling to keep the pocket gophers and voles from coming up from underneath.**



# Lavender the Universal Herb



## Farfalle with Vegetables and Lavender

Adapted from Mark Bittman

½ pound of pasta, such as farfalle, orecchiette, or gemelli

2 or 3 cloves garlic, sliced thin or crushed

2 medium zucchini or summer squash (about 1 pound), trimmed

2 medium carrots, peeled and trimmed

1 bell pepper (use whatever color you prefer), cored

2 to 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil (enough to completely coat the bottom of your sauté pan)

1 teaspoon fresh or dried lavender flowers, plus additional for garnish

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil and salt it. Add the pasta and cook until al dente (i.e. just barely tender, which is usually one minute less than the recommended cooking time.)
2. Meanwhile, slice the vegetables thin, using a food processor, mandolin, or knife. Pour the olive oil into a large unheated skillet and add the garlic. Turn the heat to medium and gently cook the garlic until it starts to turn golden, stirring occasionally. (Cooking the garlic this way will both infuse the oil with the garlic flavor and minimize the possibility of it burning and becoming bitter.) When the garlic turns golden, add the vegetables. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and add the lavender, crushing the flowers in your fingertips to release their fragrance. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the veggies barely soften, just 5 minutes or so.
3. Hopefully the pasta will be nearly done just as the vegetables are nearly done. (If you start cooking the garlic right after you add the pasta to the boiling water, the timing should be right.) Drain the pasta, reserving some cooking water. Add pasta to vegetables and continue to cook, adding water as necessary to keep mixture moist.
4. Taste, and add more lavender to taste; it should be distinctive but not too strong. When pasta and vegetables are tender but not mushy, adjust seasoning for salt and pepper, garnish with a couple of lavender flowers if you have them, and serve. A nice crisp sauvignon blanc would be really nice with this dish.

Please send any submissions or corrections for the Wild Iris to [louiseheern@gmail.com](mailto:louiseheern@gmail.com)