

# NATIVE PLANTS FOR WYOMING LANDSCAPES

## HERBACEOUS PERENNIALS



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Extension Horticulture Specialist, University of Wyoming

**B-1405**

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UNIVERSITY  
OF WYOMING

Extension

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Wyoming is home to many beautiful native plants, which live under a wide array of conditions, from dry, windswept knolls to shady, moisture-rich riparian areas. Some Wyoming natives thrive in hot, arid valleys that turn frigid in the winter; others prefer high mountain peaks where sunlight is intense and summer is extremely short.

Growing these plants in one's garden can be a rich experience. It is an education and a joy to watch as they progress from green spring shoots through their summer flowering frenzies and then to maturation, at which point their seed dribbles out or is cast upon the Wyoming winds. Native plants also provide many opportunities to witness up close the creatures that visit them—bees, butterflies, hawkmoths, flower beetles, and more! These plants work well in the garden when they are grown with other natives or are mixed and matched with non-native plants, many of which can also support a wide array of native pollinators.

In any part of the garden landscape—whether it be a tidy group of flower beds, a rock or crevice garden, or a rambunctious melee of flowers—native plants can play a part. Some time spent researching these plants will help you select those that suit your landscape best. Choosing plants that will grow well under the conditions you have (dry or wet; sunny or shady; lots of room to spread or sprawl versus crowded among neighboring plants) will lead to less work and more enjoyment. Also consider their growth habit—some native plants generally stay put in a clump with only the occasional seedling, while others slowly creep outward, reseed prolifically, or send out rhizomes and rapidly dominate large areas.

Some of these traits are affected by growing conditions (where you plan to put the plants). For example, showy milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*) can stay in a clump if it's given competition from other plants and not much additional water, or it can rapidly dominate an entire bed if given a few more resources. This can be undesirable if you are trying to grow a lot of different kinds of plants in a bed, or it can be desirable if you want to fill an area quickly or want a wilder look.

If you want native plants to reseed in an area, leave the seed heads up until spring (or until all the seed is gone) and either don't mulch or mulch with pea gravel or similar. Organic mulches (those made out of formerly living material, such as wood chips) tend to reduce the germination of seeds and the emergence of new seedlings. Many gardeners of native plants have noted that plants that result from reseeding may be hardier than the original plant.

Generally, native Wyoming plants that aren't found in riparian areas are adapted to soil with low organic matter levels, so soil amendment is typically not required. The amount of supplemental irrigation needed by native plants varies. All plants require some care, including watering, until they are established. If you plant a riparian plant in an area with low precipitation, it will likely require considerable irrigation for a long time.



Below is some information and photos to help you get started in deciding which native plants you want to grow and where they might fit within your landscape. The characteristics listed here are approximate—plants can grow larger or smaller depending on growing conditions, genetic variation, and other factors. Many of the native plants listed here grow best with full sun. Those that can handle some shade are noted.

Some of these natives are readily available as plants; others are not. We have listed their general availability under “Availability in nurseries”; however, you may not find them at your local nursery. Since many Wyoming communities don’t have local nurseries that carry these plants, availability ratings may include online sources. Plant species that are listed as uncommon can be grown from seed with a bit more effort on your part, if they can’t be located as plants. While it requires more effort, growing plants from seed can be a rewarding experience.

Seeds can be sown indoors to produce seedlings, which are then transplanted to a location outdoors; germinated outdoors in pots for later transplanting; or grown from seed sown directly in the ground. Some native flower seeds can be planted as they are (without pre-treatment), whereas others need a little cool moist treatment (stratification) for a number of weeks to help them germinate. The suggested weeks of cold stratification in the table at the end of this document are starting points for each species. The weeks required can vary based on seed source. See the UW Extension bulletin “Growing Wyoming Native Plants from Seed at Home” for more information on these subjects and processes.

Most of the plants included in this publication are native to Wyoming (a couple are native to nearby states). If you are wondering whether a plant is native to the state or your county, a quick search on <https://plants.usda.gov> will give you a rough idea. However, resources of this nature are always works in progress.

When researching a plant, you may have to do internet searches using multiple botanical names (a.k.a. scientific names) for the same plant. Due to new research based on DNA analysis and other factors, many plants have been given new botanical names (in *italics* below). If you can’t locate information on a plant of interest under the listed name, do a quick search for its synonyms and try searching under those instead.

More information on a variety of plants is available by visiting the Barnyards & Backyards website, [www.barnyardsandbackyards.com](http://www.barnyardsandbackyards.com), and clicking on “Native Plants.”

Growing plants in Wyoming is always an experiment! As you try out different plants, you will soon learn which thrive in your landscape and which just aren’t a good fit. This will help guide future plant purchases and lead you to a lifetime of enjoyment of the native plants that call our state home. Happy growing!

**A note on toxicity:** Like plants from other parts of the world, native plants can be toxic. Their toxicity can vary by plant species, the conditions in which they are growing, their stage of growth, and which organism consumes them (humans, livestock, pets, etc.). If you have a concern in this area, please research each plant to learn about any toxic properties. Never consume any plant that you don’t know with complete certainty to be nontoxic. Our state hosts some of the most toxic native plants in North America.

For livestock toxicity the USDA ARS’s **Plants Poisonous to Livestock in the Western States** site can provide useful information (visit <https://bit.ly/usda-ars-poisonous-plants>). More in-depth information on the toxicity of many plants to livestock and humans can be found in *Toxic Plants of North America* by George E. Burrows and Ronald J. Tyrl.





## ANISE HYSOP

*Agastache foeniculum*

Height: 2–3 feet

Width: 18+ inches

Availability in nurseries: available

More cold hardy than other *Agastaches* species you might find at a nursery, this purple-flowered plant is also a bumblebee magnet. Plants in nurseries are often hybrids between this species and other *Agastaches*. The common name comes from the odor of the leaves when they are rubbed or crushed. This member of the mint family can be short-lived in the garden and reseeds freely. Many mints can be prolific spreaders.



## SMALL-LEAF PUSSYTOES

*Antennaria parvifolia* 'McClintock'

Height: 1–2 inches (leaves)

Width: 8–12 inches or more

Availability in nurseries: available

Various species of this native plant can be found across the state and are for sale in nurseries. Often grown for its foliage in the landscape. Flowers are interesting but inconspicuous in many varieties. Pink or red flowers can be found in some, such as *Antennaria rosea*, but these are harder to find commercially. Plants can slowly expand their territory as they grow outwards. Pussytoes can be divided and transplant reasonably well. Though many don't, some pussytoes can reseed (sometimes vigorously). Some species are also a food source for butterfly larvae.



## COLORADO BLUE COLUMBINE

*Aquilegia coerulea*

Height: 18–24 inches

Width: 15 inches

Availability in nurseries: available

This beautiful columbine is not just native to Colorado! It also thrives in Wyoming at higher elevations. One of our native plants that can handle some shade (and might appreciate or require it in hotter parts of the state). Will grow better with regular watering in drier areas. Can be a prolific reseed under the right conditions. Columbines can cross-pollinate, so seedlings may produce flowers with other colors.



## MILKWEED

*Asclepias* spp.

Height: 20–30 inches

Width: 6–8 inches at base; wider at top when in bloom

Availability in nurseries: available

Two clump-forming species that work well in garden beds, *Asclepias tuberosa* (orange flowers, top left) and *A. incarnata* (pink flowers, bottom left), are attractive to butterflies and some bees. Larval host for monarchs. *A. incarnata* (rose milkweed, swamp milkweed) appears to be hardier than *A. tuberosa* at higher elevations; it also tends to be a bit taller. *A. speciosa* is also native but can spread prolifically by rhizomatous growth and/or reseeding.



## PURPLE POPPYMALLOW

*Callirhoe involucrata*

Height: 6–12 inches

Width: 2–3 feet

Availability in nurseries: available

Covered with beautiful cup-like magenta flowers, this lovely sprawling plant dies back to a large taproot each fall. Also known as winecup, this long-flowering plant is visited by bumblebees. It can be started from seed and is also found in nurseries. Reseeds under the right conditions but does not transplant well due to its taproot. If you'd like to transplant a seedling from your garden, do this when it is very small. Available as a Plant Select® selection.



## SUGARBOWL CLEMATIS

*Clematis scottii*

Height: 12–16 inches

Width: 18 inches

Availability in nurseries: available

This is a bush-type clematis, not one of the vining species that are often seen in gardens. It's a slow grower and takes a little while to bulk up from small plants. Can be a bit floppy later in the season. Bumblebees push themselves into the urn-shaped flowers. The amusing seed heads can lead to a fair amount of reseeding under the right conditions. Different selections exist, including a Plant Select® selection.



## PURPLE PRAIRIE CLOVER

*Dalea purpurea*

Height: 2–3 feet

Width: 1–2 feet

Availability in nurseries: available

A favorite of bumblebees, this plant calls much of the central and eastern portions of our state home. It is a nitrogen-fixing legume sporting purple flowers with striking orange anthers. The flowers open in sequence from the bottom of the thimble-shaped flower to the top. A slow grower at first, it appreciates extra moisture in dry sites. *D. candida* is another native bumble bee magnet (white flowered), but you're less likely to find it at a nursery.



## SULFUR BUCKWHEAT

*Eriogonum umbellatum*

Height: 6–12 inches

Width: 8–12 inches

Availability in nurseries: available

Long season of interest. Flowers turn a rusty orange color as they get older. The leaves often turn from glossy green in the summer to a lovely brick-red color in the fall. There are many other *Eriogonum* species in Wyoming, but most will need to be grown from seed. Some of these species have white, ball-like flower clusters, sometimes with a pink tinge. There are several varieties of sulfur buckwheat in the trade, and it is available as a Plant Select® selection.





## BLANKET FLOWER

*Gaillardia aristata*

Height: 12–18 inches

Width: 12–18 inches

Availability in nurseries: available

A very bright and beautiful long-blooming native plant. Visited by a variety of bees and other pollinators. Straight species can reseed, has rhizomatous tendencies, and is susceptible to powdery mildew. Spreading habit can be useful in a meadow-type garden. Various selections of this species and hybrids (which are often less drought tolerant) are available in nurseries.



## MAXIMILIAN SUNFLOWER

*Helianthus maximiliani*

Height: 3–7 feet

Width: 24–36 inches

Availability in nurseries: available

A very large, striking plant that blooms in mid to late summer. This plant will appreciate extra moisture in many parts of the state, or it may be stunted and flower poorly. Can spread vigorously via rhizomes in some situations and reseeds moderately. Needs plenty of room to grow.



## LEWIS' FLAX

*Linum lewisii*

Height: 20–25 inches

Width: ~18 inches

Availability in nurseries: available

A lovely plant with sky-blue/purple flowers that open in the mornings and drop their petals as the day proceeds. This plant is a prolific seed producer. It should be located in areas where reseeding won't be a problem or should be deadheaded before seed has a chance to mature. This can be difficult if one doesn't like cutting plants back before they stop blooming, as seed from earlier flowers ripens while the plant continues to bloom. Plants can be trimmed to half their height to remove all the seed heads at once.



Photo: Amy Fluet

## COLORADO FOUR O'CLOCK

*Mirabilis multiflora* (also known as wild or desert four o'clock)

Height: 1–2 feet

Width: 2–5 feet+

Availability in nurseries: available

Hailing from just south of our state's southern border (hence its name), this can be a large (wide) and long-lived plant. The bright flowers that cover the plant can lead to reseeding when in a favorable location. Transplant plants when very young, as their taproot makes transplanting difficult when they are older.



## FIRECRACKER & BEARDLIP PENSTEMON

*Penstemon eatonii*, *Penstemon barbatus*

Height: up to 3 feet

Width: 12–18 inches

Availability in nurseries: available

Need some red in your life? Though native to just beyond our borders in Utah and Colorado, these penstemons (also called beardtongues) can really brighten up a Wyoming landscape! *P. eatonii* (pictured) tends to bloom before *P. barbatus*. These penstemons can cross with other purple penstemon species to produce progeny with flower colors that range from pink to dark purple. Attractive to hummingbirds. Reseeds under favorable conditions. *P. barbatus* is available as a Plant Select® selection.



Photo: Plant Select®

## BLUE MAT PENSTEMON

*Penstemon caespitosus*

Height: 1–2 inches Width: 12+ inches

Availability in nurseries: available

Looking for a groundcover? This is a very low-growing plant that can carpet areas of ground while also providing lovely blue flowers. This and similar species can burn back in the winter in windy, sunny locations but then typically regrows. There is a Plant Select® selection of this plant (pictured).



## LARGE BEARDTONGUE

*Penstemon grandiflorus*

Height: 1–3 feet

Width: 8–12 inches

Availability in nurseries: available

One of the more spectacular penstemons. This plant's large, showy blooms can stop neighborhood traffic—but see it while you can! The bloom period can be short (~2 weeks). Reseeds moderately. Can be short-lived and will often reseed itself into a different location in the garden. Blooms can be purple, white, or pinkish. 'Prairie Jewel' is available as a Plant Select® selection.



## ROCKY MOUNTAIN PENSTEMON

*Penstemon strictus*

Height: 18–24 inches

Width: 12–18 inches

Availability in nurseries: available

A good starter penstemon since it is adaptable to a wide variety of conditions. Visited by bees, hummingbirds, and swallowtail butterflies. It can be susceptible to powdery mildew, especially when grown in shade. Prolific reseeders under the right conditions; deadhead to avoid reseeding. Available as a Plant Select® selection. *Penstemon glaber* (sawsepal penstemon) is another easy-to-grow purple/blue-flowered penstemon, with a more trailing type of growth habit, but you are less likely to find it in nurseries. Easy to grow from seed.





## BLUE MIST PENSTEMON

*Penstemon virens*

Height: 7–9 inches (when flowering)

Width: 9 inches

Availability in nurseries: available

A well-named penstemon—patches of plants blooming amongst pine trees can create a mist of blue from a distance. One of the few penstemons that can take partial shade. Seed may need two spells (years if outside) of cold to germinate well, so starting these plants in pots placed outdoors can be an option. Unlike many penstemons, it can be a long-lived plant and can last several decades in a garden.



## KELSEY'S PHLOX

*Phlox kelseyi*

Height: 2 inches or less

Width: can grow 16 inches or more

Availability in nurseries: reasonably available online and in local nurseries with rock garden plants

A beautiful, relatively long-flowering phlox that is visited by bees and butterflies. *P. kelseyi* is found in a few locations in Wyoming; the cultivar 'Lemhi Purple' was originally collected in the Lemhi Mountains, which are near the southwest portion of the Montana-Idaho border. There are also forms with white, pink, or other shades of purple. Can burn back a bit in windy locations over winter but then regrows.



## PRAIRIE CONEFLOWER

*Ratibida columnifera* (also known as upright prairie coneflower)

Height: 18–24 inches

Width: 18–24 inches

Availability in nurseries: available

Long bloom period. Can be a short-lived plant but reseeds moderately to vigorously depending on the location. Flowers can be yellow or burnt orange. Some cool native bees, such as digger bees, visit this cheerful plant.



## BLACK-EYED SUSAN

*Rudbeckia hirta*

Height: approximately 24 inches

Width: approximately 24 inches

Availability in nurseries: available

Variety *pulcherrima* is native. Various varieties (pictured) available in cultivation. A sometimes short-lived perennial with great mid to late summer color. Can be a vigorous reseeder. (Color patterns on petals may change as new seedlings grow up and bloom.)





## GOLDENROD

*Solidago* spp.

Height: 18–24 inches

Width: 16 inches

Availability in nurseries: available

Many goldenrods are vigorous rhizomatous spreaders that will quickly take over a garden bed. ‘Golden Baby’ is a clumping hybrid goldenrod highly attractive to bees. Good source of late summer and fall food for a variety of bees. There is a Plant Select® selection of Rocky Mountain goldenrod (*Solidago multiradiata*) that is also a clump former.



Photo: Amy Fluet

## WHITE HEATH ASTER

*Symphyotrichum ericoides*

Height: 1–3 feet

Width: 36+ inches

Availability in nurseries: available

Asters provide an excellent food source for bees, especially later in the year. Many of our native asters are rhizomatous and can be aggressive spreaders, which may be a favorable trait in a wildflower “meadow” type planting but less desirable in a bed with other plants. Research asters before you plant them. The cultivar ‘Snow Flurry’ (pictured) is a low-growing form (4–6 inches) that is not usually a spreader. *Symphyotrichum falcatum* is also said to be well behaved in a garden bed situation.



## STEMLESS FOUR-NERVE DAISY

*Tetranneuris acaulis* (also *Hymenoxys acaulis*)

Height: 2–8 inches

Width: 4–8 inches

Availability in nurseries: available

This beautiful native plant probably deserves a better common name. The short plants send up sunny blooms on wiry stems for a long time during the summer. Periodic deadheading will keep plants tidy if desired. Can reseed fairly vigorously under the right conditions. Can be grown from seed. There are some varieties of this variable plant in our state that produce their flowers very close to the short foliage—nice for rock garden enthusiasts.



## GARRETT'S FIRECHALICE

*Zauschneria garrettii* (*Epilobium canum* ssp. *garrettii*)

Height: 4–9 inches

Width: 18–24 inches

Availability in nurseries: available

Native to the northwestern corner of our state, this plant can provide a lot of mid to late summer color in our landscapes. Spreads slowly by rhizomes and can cover a large area in time, given the right conditions. Very attractive to hummingbirds. There is a Plant Select® selection of this plant.



## LESS COMMON PLANTS TO TRY



### PACIFIC ANEMONE

*Anemone multifida*

Height: 8–16 inches

Width: 8 inches

Availability in nurseries: uncommon

This plant produces many white to reddish/pink flowers (colorful sepals rather than petals), though individual flowers don't last long and bloom period is short. Flowers are followed by fluffy seed heads. This plant can be a prolific reseeder.



### LAVENDERLEAF SUNDROPS

*Calylophus lavandulifolius*

Height: 7–10 inches

Width: 12–18 inches

Availability in nurseries: uncommon

Lovely, long-blooming plant with sunshine-yellow flowers. Leafcutter bees will cut circles out of the petals and use them to construct their nests. Cultivars of this plant vary in their cold hardiness. Seed collected from higher elevations can produce more-cold-hardy plants for gardens. It can be a prolific reseeder. *C. serrulatus* is available as a Plant Select® selection but has smaller flowers.



Photo: Dr. Stephen Love

### BLUEBELL OR HAREBELL

*Campanula rotundifolia*

Height: 8–12 inches

Width: 10+ inches

Availability in nurseries: available

This dainty little flower is a common sight in Wyoming. A longer-lived plant that can spread by seed and rhizomatous growth. Can grow in partial shade.



### ROCKY MOUNTAIN BEE PLANT

*Cleome serrulata*

Height: up to 4 feet

Width: 18–24 inches

Availability in nurseries: uncommon

A large, robust flowering annual that is visited by bees, butterflies, and other pollinators. Foliage has an odor when crushed that some folks do not like. Can reseed quite a bit when in favorable conditions. Can often be found growing in disturbed areas (along dry roadsides as pictured here).



## NARROW-LEAF CONEFLOWER

*Echinacea angustifolia*

Height: 18–24 inches

Width: 12–18 inches

Availability in nurseries: uncommon

Shorter and more drought-tolerant than eastern purple coneflower (*E. purpurea*), which is the species commonly found in nurseries. Reseeds. A slowish grower, it may take a few years to bulk up from a seedling. May need to grow from seed. Birds eat the seeds when plants are left standing.



## CUTLEAF DAISY

*Erigeron compositus*

Height: 3–5 inches

Width: 4–6 inches

Availability in nurseries: uncommon

A common plant across a large part of Wyoming. A cheerful early bloomer, this hairy-leaved small daisy works well as a groundcover between paving stones and similar locations. Flowers range from white to pink to lavender. It can reseed a lot. Not hard to start from seed. There are other *Erigerons* (often called fleabanes) available in nurseries.



## OLD MAN'S WHISKERS/ PRAIRIE SMOKE

*Geum triflorum*

Height: 8–16 inches

Width: 8+ inches over time

Availability in nurseries: uncommon

The flowers of this plant are visited by bumblebees. Flowers are followed by seedheads with “wild hairdos” that linger for quite a while and add interest to any garden. Likes a bit more moisture than some of our native plants and can spread slowly by rhizomes under favorable conditions. Very dry conditions can shorten its life span. Will grow in partial shade.



## SCARLET GILIA

*Ipomopsis aggregata*

Height: up to 3+ feet

Width: 9 inches

Availability in nurseries: uncommon because it is biennial or short-lived perennial

A variable plant, it can be quite tall or on the shorter side and blooms with red/orange, pink, or even white flowers. This plant is a biennial or short-lived perennial, so it usually forms a rosette of leaves the first year, then blooms the second year and dies that fall. This hummingbird favorite takes up little room in the garden until it bursts into bloom in mid to late summer. If you'd like to have it remain in your garden, you will need to let it go to seed; simply leave the flower stalks standing until late winter/early spring. If you plant it two years in a row, you should have plants blooming each year.





## DOTTED BLAZING STAR

*Liatris punctata* (also known as Gayfeather)

Height: 12–18 inches

Width: 6–12 inches

Availability in nurseries: uncommon

More drought-tolerant than other *Liatris* species that are from the tall-grass prairies and wetter locations. Harder to find in nurseries than other species, so you might need to grow this one from seed. Takes a few years to bulk up from a seedling. Long-lasting, late-blooming flower heads are attractive to butterflies and bees. Can reseed a lot in favorable conditions. Rocky mountain blazing star (*Liatris ligulistylis*) may be a little easier to locate as plants.



## COLORADO TANSYASTER

*Machaeranthera coloradoensis*

Height: 4–6 inches

Width: 8–12 inches

Availability in nurseries: uncommon

This long-blooming plant bears pink flowers on low-growing foliage. Plant it along the edge of borders or along paving stones. One of the more drought-tolerant asters, it can get powdery mildew when watered too much. This usually well-behaved plant reseeds a bit.



## WHITE-TUFTED EVENING PRIMROSE

*Oenothera caespitosa*

Height: approximately 12 inches

Width: 12–24 inches

Availability in nurseries: uncommon

Huge, fragrant white flowers open in the evening and then turn pink and shrivel up in the heat of the following day. A larval and nectar food source for hawkmoths. A highly variable species. Can reseed a lot depending on the plant and the location. Some varieties spread via rhizomes; others stay more clumped. Though lovely, some species in this genus can be aggressive rhizomatous spreaders and are best suited to rarely (or never) watered wildflower “meadow” plantings. Some yellow-flowered plants in this genus bloom all day.



## OTHER PENSTEMONS TO TRY

Availability in nurseries: uncommon

There are many penstemons native to our state that make great plants for landscapes. A few to consider: thicketleaf penstemon (*Penstemon pachyphyllus*), sidebells penstemon (*Penstemon secundiflorus*), and larchleaf penstemon (*Penstemon laricifolius*). Thicketleaf is a long-lived performer with waxy, tough leaves and blue/purple flowers. Sidebells is a thing of beauty, with blue-green waxy foliage and often pinkish flowers that all face one direction (hence the name). Larchleaf grows over much of our state and is a petite, dainty plant that works well in between rock pavers, at the front of beds, and in rock gardens. Reseeds. If you are interested in finding out which penstemons are native to your county, visit <https://plants.usda.gov/state-search>, then type in “penstemon” and click on Wyoming and the county of interest. Seed is available for many kinds.





## EASTERN PASQUEFLOWER

*Pulsatilla patens*

Height: 6–12 inches

Width: 8–12 inches

Availability in nurseries: uncommon

A very early bloomer that may be visited by queen bumble bees when they emerge in spring. Fuzzy leaves and blooms are followed by feathery seed heads. Will reseed when in a favorable location. Young plants take a while to bulk up.



## LANCELEAF SEDUM

*Sedum lanceolatum*

Height: 2–4 inches

Width: 2–4 inches

Availability in nurseries: uncommon

A cheerful but somewhat short-lived small plant, this sedum can be found in many areas of the state. The succulent, fleshy leaves are barely noticeable until the plant bursts into bloom. Not hard to start from seed. Can reseed. Plant it in an area where it won't be covered by larger plants, such as the front edge of garden beds or, even better, in un-mulched areas between flagstone pavers.



## DESERT PRINCESPLUME

*Stanleya pinnata*

Height: up to 3 feet

Width: up to 18–24 inches

Availability in nurseries: uncommon

A spectacular, but sometimes short-lived, plant; may require re-planting or reseeding. Visited by bumble bees. This member of the brassica plant family can concentrate selenium from the soil and become toxic to livestock if they are without other forage sources. Can reseed. Looks a bit raggedy when not in bloom, so consider planting attractive neighbors nearby.



## EASTER DAISY

*Townsendia hookeri* (and other species)

Height: 2 inches

Width: 4–7 inches

Availability in nurseries: uncommon

You are unlikely to find this early-spring cutie in most nurseries; however, it is not hard to grow from seed. The flowers open in late winter/early spring and are visited by whatever bees and butterflies are around. Many species can also set seed without pollination. Locate this petite plant somewhere where it won't be swamped by larger plants. Works well in between paving stones in places where it won't be stepped on too often. Seed heads look like dandelion fluff. Other attractive species are *Townsendia alpigena* (*T. montana*), *Townsendia spathulata*, and *Townsendia parryi* (this last is a biennial or very short-lived perennial with very large flowers for a *Townsendia*).



Common name	Botanical name	Cold, moist stratification period *	Other treatments**
Agastache	<i>Agastache foeniculum</i>	0–4 weeks	L
Pacific anemone	<i>Anemone multifida</i>	0–4 weeks	Sowing fresh can help germination. Storing seed for 6 months before planting can increase germination on nonfresh seed.
Small-leaf pussytoes	<i>Antennaria parvifolia</i>	0–8 weeks	L
Colorado blue columbine	<i>Aquilegia coerulea</i>	4–8 weeks	
Rose milkweed	<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	3–6 weeks	
Milkweed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	3–6 weeks	
Poppy mallow	<i>Callirhoe involucrata</i>	4–6 weeks	Before stratification pour boiling water over seed, let set at room temp for 24 hours. Or scratch the seed coat to scarify.
Lavenderleaf sundrops	<i>Calylophus lavandulifolius</i>	0–6 weeks	
Bluebell bellflower or harebell	<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>	0–8 weeks	Germination can continue over a month-long period.
Sugarbowl clematis	<i>Clematis scottii</i>	0–16 weeks	Warm moist stratification can work as well. Seedlings are slow to grow.
Rocky Mountain bee plant	<i>Cleome serrulata</i>	4 weeks	
Purple prairie clover	<i>Dalea purpurea</i>	12 weeks	Scarify seed gently with sandpaper as an alternative to stratification.
Narrow-leaf coneflower	<i>Echinacea angustifolia</i>	0–4 weeks	
Cutleaf daisy	<i>Erigeron compositus</i>	0–6 weeks	L
Sulfur buckwheat	<i>Eriogonum umbellatum</i>	4 weeks	
Blanket flower	<i>Gaillardia aristata</i>	0–4 weeks	
Old man’s whiskers/Prairie smoke	<i>Geum triflorum</i>	0–8 weeks	
Maximilian sunflower	<i>Helianthus maximiliani</i>	4 weeks	
Scarlet gilia	<i>Ipomopsis aggregata</i>	6 weeks	
Dotted blazing star	<i>Liatris punctata</i>	0–4 weeks	
Lewis’ flax	<i>Linum lewisii</i>	0–6 weeks	
Colorado tansyaster	<i>Machaeranthera coloradoensis</i>	none	L
Colorado four o’clock	<i>Mirabilis multiflora</i>	0–8 weeks	Can soak in water 12 hours before stratification.
White-tufted evening primrose	<i>Oenothera caespitosa</i>	0–12 weeks	Long germination time, with few seedlings.
Beardlip penstemon	<i>Penstemon barbatus</i>	3–8 weeks	
Blue mat penstemon	<i>Penstemon caespitosus</i>	12 weeks	L
Firecracker penstemon	<i>Penstemon eatonii</i>	3–8 weeks	L
Large beardtongue	<i>Penstemon grandiflorus</i>	4–8 weeks	
Thickleaf penstemon	<i>Penstemon pachyphyllus</i>	8 weeks	<i>Penstemon secundiflorus</i> 8 weeks, <i>Penstemon laricifolius</i> up to 12 weeks
Rocky Mountain penstemon	<i>Penstemon strictus</i>	3–12 weeks	
Blue mist penstemon	<i>Penstemon virens</i>	4–12 weeks	May require two cycles of cold, with a period of warm temperatures in between
Kelsey’s phlox	<i>Phlox kelseyi</i>	?	May be best to propagate by cuttings.
Eastern pasqueflower	<i>Pulsatilla patens</i>	8 weeks	
Prairie coneflower	<i>Ratibida columnifera</i>	0–4 weeks	
Black-eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	none	
Lanceleaf sedum	<i>Sedum lanceolatum</i>	0–8 weeks	L
Goldenrod	<i>Solidago multiradiata</i>	none	
Desert princesplume	<i>Stanleya pinnata</i>	none	L
White heath aster	<i>Symphotrichum ericoides</i>	none	May take a while to germinate. L
Stemless four-nerve daisy	<i>Tetraneuris acaulis</i>	none	Don’t overwater the seedlings.
Easter daisy	<i>Townsendia hookeri</i> (and other species)	none	
Garrett’s firechalice	<i>Zauschneria garrettii</i>	4 weeks	L Erratic germination. Rooted stem cuttings may work better than seeding.

\*As you will note ranges are provided with respect to how long seeds should be cold-moist stratified. Different lots of the same plant species can have varying amounts of dormancy. If in doubt, use the higher number of weeks. See our publication “Growing Wyoming Native Plants from Seed at Home” for more information on this subject.

\*L =Some sources report that germination is better with light exposure (surface sow).

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