

# Landscaping with Blue

By  
Scott Hininger  
University of Wyoming Extension  
Sheridan County  
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Blue is my favorite color, however the selection as it relates to landscaping plants is somewhat limited. Probably what comes to mind first is the grape hyacinth (*Muscari armeniacum*). This small grape colored bulb is one of the first to come up in the spring. It is very adaptable and can be used in many different types of plantings, and either mixed with other plants or can be used in a mass planting to give that special wow effect, such as a meandering stream.

Another short bulb to consider is the Siberian squill (*scilla siberica*), this short blue flowered bulb is cold hardy, deer resistant, fairly drought resistant, and fairly long lived perennial. This bulb with its small flower really needs to be planted with some density in order to appreciate the blue color.

The “glory of the snow” (*Chionodoxa luciliae*), is another one of the first bulbs to come out in the spring. This small bulb has three to six pale blue starlike flowers with white centers. The six inch height and green foliage does not need to be planted as dense as the Siberian squill.

And of course do not forget the crocus. This bulb is deer and squirrel resistant. The short two to three inch height and bluish lavender color can add a nice buffer or boarder to a flower bed.

Another shorter bulb is the striped squill (*Puschkinia scilloides*), which is four to six inches tall with a single flower scape having a nodding, starlike, fragrant flowers, that from a distance has a blueish color. This self-seeding bulb naturalizes like most of the rest of these bulbs quite well.

For an annual look at Baby Blue Eyes Seeds, this quick-bloomer is loved for its gorgeous, soft-blue blooms that bring early color to the flower garden. The four to twelve inch height plants depending on soil type and moisture will have about a month of blooming time. This is a good choice for those areas that start off bare and later on will fill in with perennial plants.

For a taller bulb look at *Allium caeruleum* which is prized for its deep, clear blue flower heads. Azure Allium is one of the few, true blue flowers in the plant kingdom. Blooms late spring to early summer. Grows up to 2' high and makes great cut flowers. Easy to grow and

deer resistant. Between the round blue seed head and the green glasslike foliage this plant can really add to a flowerbed.

For something really different try Big Blue Sea Holly which is fabulous for hot, dry spots 'Big Blue' has green thistle-like foliage and blooms with huge 4" diameter bracts that surround the flower's blue center cone. An excellent cut flower, fresh or dried and a rugged plant for the xeric garden. Drought resistant/drought tolerant plant (xeric). This plant is deer and rabbit resistant. It grows over two feet tall, and blooms mid to late summer giving you some blue color later in the year.

Most of these bulbs can be added to most any landscape plan. They can work in full sun to partial shade. They can be massed or clumped to provide specific bold color, or mixed in with other annuals or perennials to add color early in the year, giving away to the other colors later. Since these bulbs do not have a deep root system they can be planted under trees to provide color or contrast. Not to mention that early on the insects will like these blooming plants. For those of you wanting to plant a red white and blue flower garden then I have given you some ideas for the blue part of that arrangement.

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