

Gardening with Native Plants

Selections for Colorado Landscapes

Revised 8/22/19

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Why Grow Native Plants?

- Colorado native plants are naturally adapted to their specific Colorado climate, soil, and environmental conditions.
- They require reduced external inputs such as watering, fertilizing, and pruning. Most native plants are good for water conservation, as they are adapted to our arid climate.
- They also attract a wide variety of wildlife including mammals, birds, bees and butterflies.
- Landscaping with natives on a large or small scale can maintain biodiversity that otherwise could be lost to development.
- Due to the inherent low maintenance nature of native plants, the need for mowing and other conventional maintenance equipment can be eliminated.
- Native plants should not be collected from the wild because this reduces the biodiversity and causes a disturbed area that may be invaded by weeds.

Where to Grow Native Plants

- Due to Colorado's variation of elevation and topography, native plants are found in many habitats.
- In order to maximize survival with minimal inputs, plants should be selected to match the site's life zone (elevation) and the plant's moisture, light, and soil requirements.
- Even if a plant is listed for a particular life zone, the exposure (north, south, east, or west facing) of the proposed site should match the moisture requirement.

Life Zones of Colorado

- Plains: below 5,600 feet
- Foothills: 5,600 to 7,000 feet
- Montane: 7,000 to 9,000 feet
- Sub-Alpine: 9,000 – 11,000 feet
- Alpine: above 11,000 feet

Native and Non-Native Plants

- Growing native plants does not exclude the use of adapted non-native plants.
- There are many non-native plants adapted to Colorado's climate that can be used in a native landscape as long as moisture, light, and soil requirements are similar.
- If a site has a non-native landscape that requires additional inputs (such as irrigation), dry land native plants can be used in non-irrigated pockets within the non-native landscape.

Culture and Maintenance

- Successful establishment of native plants may require supplemental moisture after planting.
- Once established, the watering frequency can be reduced or eliminated, if the plant was sited in its native environmental conditions.
- Colorado soils, on average, are fairly low in organic matter and high in pH (alkaline). The good news is that native plants usually can be successfully grown in unamended soils.
- Native plants often do not need much maintenance; just the usual pruning of dead or diseased material, and cutting back perennials in the spring.

- Leaving seed heads on the plants in the fall will not only provide food for birds, but will increase plant hardiness and winter interest.
- Native plants do not require much fertilizer. Some tasks, such as weeding and deadheading, require the same time investment for native plant gardens as for gardens with non-natives.

Deciduous Trees

Rocky Mountain Maple (*Acer glabrum*)

- Attractive red stems; birds eat the buds, seeds and flowers.
- Though inconspicuous, the early spring flowers of this maple are quite fragrant.
- Its shiny, green leaves turn yellow to reddish-orange in fall.
- Prefers moist, well-drained rocky soils. Intolerant of heat.
- Mature height 20', spread 15'. Zone 3
- Full sun/partial shade. Max. Elev. 8,000 ft.

Bigtooth Maple (*Acer grandidentatum*)

- Outstanding Rocky Mountain native found from Montana south to Colorado, Arizona, Texas and Mexico.
- Can take the form of a small tree or large shrub.
- Five-lobed dark green leaves turning shades of yellow, orange and red in the fall.
- Thrives in alkaline clay soils, very drought tolerant.
- Mature height 25-30', spread 25'. Zone 4
- Full sun. Max. Elev. 8,000 ft.



Thinleaf Alder (*Alnus icana* subsp. *tenuifolia*)

- Dark green foliage - yellow fall color. Reddish bark and cone-like seeds in fall and winter.
- Small clump form tree with upright branching habit. Hardy to -50° F.
- Thinleaf Alder is grown for its attractive foliage, as well as the fact that it tolerates very wet conditions.
- It is often found near water, and its presence in nature is an indication of streams, springs, or seeps.
- Mature height 15 to 18', spread 10 to 12'. Zone 2
- Full sun/part shade. Max. Elev. 8,000 ft.

Rocky Mountain Birch (*Betula occidentalis fontinalis*)

- Commonly known as Water Birch or Western Red Birch, this shrubby tree is most commonly found growing in thickets along rivers, streams and springs.
- Non-peeling bark is shiny, reddish-brown and marked with white horizontal streaks.
- It is best when planted in small groups in consistently moist to wet soils.
- Mature height 30', spread 25'. Zone 4
- Full sun/part shade. Max. Elev. 9,000 ft.

Quaking Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*)

- Best grown in rich, acidic, consistently moist, well-drained soils in full sun.
- Perhaps most noted for its beautiful white bark, its deep green foliage that quakes in the slightest breeze and its golden yellow fall foliage color.
- Aspens are susceptible to a large number of disease and insect problems, including leaf spots, cankers, scale and aphids.
- Short lived on the Front Range, tends to sucker heavily. *Buy only Nursery Grown Trees!*
- Mature height 35', spread 15'. Zone 4
- Full sun. Max. Elev. 10,000 ft.

Wafer Ash (*Ptelea trifoliata*)



- This small tree or shrub is native to the lower 48 states and Canada. One of the few small trees that performs well in shade.
- Clusters of fragrant, ½" greenish-white flowers in June produce persistent elm-like wafers 1" in diameter.
- The common name refers to a reported use in earlier days of the bitter fruit as a substitute for hops in brewing beer.
- The bitter bark of the root has also been used for home remedies.
- Mature height 15', spread 12 to 15'.
- Zone 4. Full sun to partial shade; bright yellow fall color. Max. Elev. 7,000 ft.

Gambel Oak (*Quercus gambelii*)



- This Rocky Mountain native is a hardy, xeric tree with a shrubby growth habit. Also known as Scrub Oak and Rocky Mountain White Oak.
- Dark green leaves change in fall to yellow with occasional orange to red to bronze.
- Tan acorns with a scaly cap develop in summer.
- It reproduces from seed, root sprouts, and tillers.
- Mature height 15', spread 12'. Zone 4
- Full sun; deer resistant. Max. Elev. 10,000 ft.



Evergreen Trees

Rocky Mountain Juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*)



- Native to the Rocky Mountain States, it can take the form of a small tree or large shrub.
- Slow growing evergreen with a narrow, pyramidal growth habit.
- Useful as a privacy screen or a specimen plant.
- Common cultivars available include Cologreen, Moonglow and Skyrocket.
- Mature height 30 to 40', spread 10 to 15'. Zone 4
- Full sun; deer resistant; tolerant of dry and alkaline soils. Max. Elev. 8,900 ft.



Colorado Spruce (*Picea pungens*)



- Native only to the Rocky Mountain States, but widely used throughout the country.
- Blue Spruce prefer rich, moist soil in full sunlight, but are very adaptable to most any condition.
- Very hardy tree with a slow to moderate growth rate (30 feet after 35 years).
- Color can vary from green to blue to silver, depending on genetics and the cultivar.
- Mature height 60', spread 25'. Zone 3
- Full sun/part shade; deer resistant. Max. Elev. 9,500 ft.



Bristlecone Pine (*Pinus aristata*)



- Hardy, very drought tolerant native pine. *Buy only Nursery Grown trees!*
- Holds its needles longer than other pines. White speckles on the needles are a secreted resin.
- Grows well in poor, rocky, alkaline soils. Do not plant in irrigated areas!
- This may be one of the most long-lived species in the world. Some specimens in California are over 5000 years old.
- Mature height 30', spread 15'. Zone 4
- Full sun and dry soils; deer resistant. Max. Elev. 10,000 + ft.



Pinon Pine (*Pinus cembroides edulis*)

- Slow growing native pine. Do not plant in lawn areas!
- *Buy only Nursery Grown trees!*
- The current recommendation is to plant trees that are 6' tall or less in height.
- Well adapted to 9" to 15" of annual precipitation – requires no irrigation once established.
- Mature height 30', spread 20'. Zone 4
- Full sun and well-drained soil preferred; deer resistant. Max. Elev. 7,500 ft.



Limber Pine (*Pinus flexilis*)

- This Colorado native grows on some of the harshest sites – high elevations that are rocky, dry and exposed.
- It typically grows at elevations of 9,000 to 11,000 feet, but is found below 5,000 feet on the plains NE of Ft. Collins.
- Sensitive to soil compaction; drought, heat and salt resistant.
- Branches can be bent double without breaking - withstands heavy snows and wind.
- Mature height 40', spread 20 to 30'. Zone 2
- Full sun; cold hardy. Max. Elev. 11,000 ft.



Ponderosa Pine (*Pinus ponderosa*)

- Native pine with a medium rate of growth. Difficult to transplant
- *Buy only Nursery Grown trees!*
- The current recommendation is to plant trees that are 6' tall or less in height.
- Stressed trees are susceptible to engraver beetles (Pine Ips, MPBB)
- Mature height 50', spread 25'. Zone 3
- Full sun; deer resistant; intolerant of wet or poorly drained soils. Max. Elev. 9,000 ft.



Southwestern White Pine (*Pinus strobiformis*)

- Native to southwestern Colorado and the mountains of Arizona, west Texas and Mexico.
- Soft dark bluish-green needles and large ornamental cones.
- Also known as Mexican white pine or Chihuahua white pine.
- Tolerant of urban settings, drought, exposure, alkaline soils, salt and heat.
- Mature height 50', spread 30'. Zone 4
- Full sun; adaptable to a wide range of soil types. Max. Elev. 6,000 ft.



Deciduous Shrubs

Saskatoon Serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*)

- This multi-stemmed shrub has showy white flowers in compact clusters which appear in April before the leaves. Fall color ranges from mostly yellow to orange.
- Small, round, edible berries ripen to dark purplish-black in June and resemble blueberries in size, color and taste.
- Berries may be eaten fresh off the plant or used in jams, jellies and pies.
- Mature height 10', spread 8'. Zone 2
- Full sun to part shade; adaptable to a wide range of soil types. Max. Elev. 10,000 ft.



Leadplant (*Amorpha canescens*)

- A small native shrub that typically occurs in open woodlands, glades and prairies.
- Open growth habit with arching stems and gray-green fuzzy fern-like foliage.
- Showy 3" to 4" flower spikes of dense, tiny bluish-purple flowers in June and July.



- The common name refers to the once held belief that the plant was an indicator of lead in the ground.
- Mature height and spread 2 to 4'. Zone 3
- Full sun; deer resistant. May die back to the ground in winter, but will regrow in the spring. Max. Elev. 8,000 ft.

Mountain Mahogany (*Cercocarpus montanus*)



- *Cercocarpus montanus* is a woody shrub which grows up to 10' tall. Its vase-like shape and silvery seed plumes are perhaps its most outstanding features.
- Early summer flowers are insignificant, but give way to fruits (hard nutlets) with long, attractive, silvery-white, feathery tails which cover the shrub in late summer.
- Commonly called mountain mahogany because the bark is a red mahogany color. Green foliage turns russet in the fall.
- Mature height 10', spread 4 to 8'. Zone 5
- Full sun. Max. Elev. 9,500 ft.

Fernbush (*Chamaebatiara millefolium*)



- A 2006 Plant Select introduction. This little known Colorado native makes a great specimen or hedge.
- Foliage has a fern-like appearance with a greenish-gray color.
- Showy flower spikes in mid-summer resemble those of lilacs from a distance, but close up resemble a single rose.
- A great plant for enhancing the garden's habitat value as the flowers are highly attractive to native bees.
- Mature height and spread 4 to 5'. Zone 4
- Full sun; deer resistant. Thrives in poor soils and dry conditions. Max. Elev. 7,500 ft.

Rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*)



- Also known as Chamisa or Rubber Rabbitbrush, this native is typically found growing in sunny open areas with dry soils (sandy, gravelly or clay) in a variety of habitats.
- It thrives in disturbed soils, and is often found growing with sagebrush.
- Twigs are covered with persistent, felt-like, white to gray hairs.
- Abundant yellow blooms cover the plant July – October.
- Mature height and spread 4'. Zone 2
- Full sun; deer resistant. Max. Elev. 9,500 ft.

Redtwig Dogwood (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)

- Red Osier or Red Twig Dogwood is a spreading, suckering multi-stemmed shrub with conspicuous red twigs.
- Dense, flat-topped clusters of creamy-white blossoms are followed by umbrella-shaped clusters of pea-sized white berries.
- Native to much of North America where it is typically found growing in wet swampy areas, wetland margins or along lakes and rivers.
- Mature height 9', spread 12'. Zone 3
- Full sun to part shade; tolerant of a wide range of soils, including swampy or boggy conditions. Max. Elev. 9,500 ft.

Apache Plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*)



- Apache Plume is a slender, upright, deciduous to semi-evergreen, multi-branched shrub with grayish-white, pubescent branches.

- This 2002 Plant Select has dark green leaves that contrast well with the loose clusters of white, apple blossom-like flowers that appear late spring – summer.
- Distinctive, pink, feathery plumes are borne at the tips of very dense, twiggy, slender branches.
- Mature height and spread 5'. Zone 4
- Full sun to part shade; moderate to rapid growth in any well-drained soil. Max. Elev. 9,000 ft.

New Mexico Privet (*Forestiera neomexicana*)



- A handsome native large shrub/small tree with great adaptability to different growing conditions.
- While not a true privet, this fast growing dense plant is good for hedges and screens.
- The beautiful whitish bark accentuates the bright yellow fall foliage.
- Female plants produce large quantities of blue-black berries that are eaten by birds.
- Mature height 8', spread 6'. Zone 4
- Full sun; tolerant of clay and sandy soil. Very drought resistant once established. Max. Elev. 7,500 ft.

Rock Spirea (*Holodiscus dumosus*)



- Tolerant of both heat and drought; the leaves, when crushed, have a spicy scent.
- Fragrant pinkish-white flowers create 7" plumes that rest on slender arching branches.
- Flowers appear in late June and persist through the winter, with the color deepening to russet in the fall.
- The fine textured foliage turns to reddish bronze in the fall. Tolerant of any soil type as long as it is well drained.
- Mature height and spread 4'. Zone 4
- Full to partial shade; deer resistant. Max. Elev. 10,000 ft.

Waxflower (*Jamesia americana*)



- A 2003 Plant Select® introduction, this native shrub is excellent for dry shade.
- Intensely fragrant and showy clusters of white, waxy flowers appear in April/May.
- Added interest comes from the flaking, reddish-brown bark.
- Leaves are green with a whitish underside. Fall color is red with orange and pink tones.
- Mature height 5', spread 4'. Zone 3
- Full sun to partial shade; prefers dry soil with good drainage. Max. Elev. 9,000 ft.

Twinberry Honeysuckle (*Lonicera involucrata*)

- Native to North America, from Alaska through the western U.S. to Mexico.
- Tubular yellow flowers in pairs bloom in June-July. Flowers are surrounded by two green bracts that turn a showy bright red.
- Flowers give way to small, juicy ¼" diameter jet black berries in pairs. Hummingbirds and butterflies enjoy the flowers, birds love the fruit.
- Naturalizes through self-seeding and will spread over time to form colonies.
- Mature height and spread 5'. Zone 4
- Partial shade to full shade, best in moist soils with good drainage. Max Elev. 11,000 ft.

Littleleaf Mockorange (*Philadelphus microphyllus*)



- Noted for its small leaves, fine texture, fragrant summer flowers, exfoliating bark and drought tolerance.
- Native to the western United States from Wyoming to California and Texas.
- Fragrant cross-shaped 1" flowers appear in June. The scent is described as orange sherbet/vanilla ice cream/grape gum.
- Water once per week for the first season. It will survive on natural rainfall thereafter.

- Mature height and spread 4'. Zone 4
- Full sun. Must have well drained soil, as it will not tolerate wet feet. Max. Elev. 9,000 ft.

Three Leaf Sumac (*Rhus trilobata*)

- Also known as Skunkbush, this native shrub features tart, edible red berries and yellow to orange-red fall foliage.
- Flowers are yellowish in clustered spikes. The showy fruit clusters are eaten by wild birds.
- Native Americans valued Skunkbush and made use of the fruit, twigs, leaves, and shoots. The fruits were used in foods and medicines, and to make a lemonade-like beverage.
- Mature height and spread 6', Zone 2.
- Full sun to part shade; adaptable to a wide range of soil types. Max. Elev. 9,000 ft.



Boulder Raspberry (*Rubus deliciosus*)

- A native shrub with an arching growth habit and exfoliating cinnamon-colored bark.
- Large, showy, white single flowers appear in late spring.
- The flowers produce fuzzy, coarse and seedy raspberries that range in taste from tart to sweet.
- Berries are attractive to birds and other wildlife, but are generally considered unpalatable.
- Mature height 4 to 5', spread 5'. Zone 4
- Full sun to partial shade. Works great as an understory plant in dry shade; deer resistant. Max. Elev. 9,000 ft.



Western Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos occidentalis*)

- Songbirds use this native plant for food, cover and nesting sites.
- Western snowberry suckers through underground stems, so it can become problematic if planted in a place where you don't want it to spread.
- In mid-summer, it has small, pale pink flowers. The flowers turn into white waxy berries later in the summer.
- One of the best things about this plant is it likes dry shade!
- Mature height 3 to 5', spread 5'. Zone 3
- Full sun to full shade; deer resistant. Max. Elev. 8,500 ft.



Evergreen Shrubs

Kinnikinnik/Bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)

- A trailing evergreen groundcover shrub with glossy green, paddle-shaped leaves on flexible branches.
- Clusters of small, bell-shaped pink/white flowers occur on bright red stems in May.
- Bright red berries follow the flowers and persist into winter. Berries are indeed eaten by bears.
- Found throughout North America from Labrador to Alaska and south to Virginia and California.
- Mature height 4 to 6", spread 5 to 6'. Zone 1
- Shade to partial shade; deer resistant; coarse, rocky, slightly acidic soils preferred. Max. Elev. 10,000 ft.



Curl-leaf Mountain Mahogany (*Cercocarpus ledifolius*)

- Small, leathery, curled dark green leaves stay on the plant over the winter.
- Very small yellow flowers turn into white, feathery seed heads in late summer. The bark is a beautiful smooth, light gray.
- This shrub will grow well on sites with sandy or rocky soils. Extremely drought tolerant, it makes a good screen as well.



- It's important to prune curl-leaf mountain mahogany into the desired shape when young. Very little other maintenance required. Works well as a hedge.
- Mature height 10 to 30', spread 6 to 12', Zone 4
- Full sun; deer resistant Max. Elev. 9,000 ft.

Creeping Oregon Grape Holly (*Mahonia repens*)

- This native evergreen groundcover with holly-like leaves does well in shade gardens.
- Low spreading form displays bright yellow flowers in May followed by blue-black fruit clusters.
- Leaves turn shades of red in the fall and remain until new growth in the spring.
- Mature height and spread 12 to 18". Zone 5
- Full sun to partial shade, tolerant of most soils; Max. Elev. 10,000 ft.



PERENNIALS

Pussytoes (*Antennaria parvifolia*)

- Soft, gray foliage is one of the best ornamental features of this spreading ground cover.
- A low mat of woolly, silver-gray evergreen leaves produces short stalks with compact clusters of furry flowers.
- Blooms occur in early summer. The flowers resemble the toes of a cat.
- Male flowers are white and females are pinkish. This plant sends out runners just like strawberries.
- Mature height 2" to 3", spread 18" to 24". Zone 3
- Full sun; deer resistant. Max. Elev. 10,000 ft.



Fringed Sage (*Artemisia frigida*)

- Flower stems emerge from a tight tuft of very conspicuous, soft, silvery gray-green basal leaves.
- Fringed Sage occurs naturally on dry, gravelly hills in the west. Foliage is very aromatic – be sure to cut this plant back after bloom to keep it neat and compact.
- The silvery color and sweet sage scent of this plant make it a favorite with many even before it flowers.
- Mature height 12 to 24" and spread 16 to 24". Zone 3
- Full sun; Max. Elev. 10,000 ft.



Showy Milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*)

- Showy Milkweed is similar to Common Milkweed, but its pinkish-purple flowers have longer petals that taper more.
- Easily grown from seed, and may self-seed in the landscape if seed pods are not removed prior to splitting open. Once established, it is best to leave plants undisturbed because they develop deep taproots which make transplanting difficult.
- *Asclepias* are excellent nectar sources and are food for the larval stages of Monarch and Queen butterflies.
- Mature height 1 to 3' and spread 12 to 18". Zone 3
- Full sun; deer resistant. Max. Elev. 7,500 ft.



Chocolate Flower (*Berlandiera lyrata*)

- A 2004 Plant Select® introduction, this southwestern wildflower blooms from spring to frost.
- The daisy-like flowers have striking red striped undersides.
- A night bloomer, the flowers offer up their rich cocoa scent in the morning.
- Flowers close or drop as daytime temperatures rise and the fragrance recedes.



- Mature height 12" to 18", spread 18" to 24". Zone 4
- Full sun; deer resistant. The plant dies back to the ground in the winter; freely reseeds itself. Max. Elev. 7,000 ft.

Harebells (*Campanula rotundifolia*)

- This plant is native to the temperate Northern Hemisphere. It blooms June-September with blue-violet bell-shaped flowers.
- Harebell relates to the fact that this plant is sometimes found in areas inhabited by rabbits (hares). In Scotland it is popularly known as the Bluebells of Scotland.
- They appreciate morning sun, part afternoon shade. Plants need regular and even moisture. Deadhead spent flowers to encourage additional bloom.
- Mature height and spread 12". Zone 3
- Full sun; Max. Elev. 10,000 ft.

Blanket Flower (*Gaillardia aristata*)

- A member of the sunflower family, Blanket Flower is widespread across most of North America.
- Prefers a loose, sandy well-drained, low fertility soil. Deadhead to keep them blooming.
- Daisy-like flowers appear early summer to fall. The inch-long petals have yellow tips and dark red bases. These surround a disk which is the same color as the base of the petals.
- Mature height and spread 12" to 24". Zone 3
- Full sun; deer resistant. Max. Elev. 9,000 ft.



Rocky Mountain Penstemon (*Penstemon strictus*)

- Also known as Rocky Mountain Beardtongue, this long-lived plant thrives in most any well drained soil.
- The tall showy spikes of intense blue to purple flowers appear June-August.
- Spreading steadily via stolons to form large clumps, it naturalizes easily.
- This is one of the longest-lived, most easily grown of the Penstemons.
- Cut off flowering spikes after bloom; leave a few if reseeding is desirable.
- Mature height and spread 12" to 24". Zone 4
- Full sun; deer resistant. Max. Elev. 11,000 ft.



Prairie Coneflower (*Ratibida columnifera*)

- Also known as Mexican Hat or Thimble flower, this plant is native to most of North America.
- The mature seed head has a pleasant odor when crushed that is similar to anise or licorice.
- Wide oval petals can be all yellow, all red, or red edged with yellow.
- Attracts bees and butterflies with its flowers and birds with its seed. Unfussy about soil type.
- Mature height and spread 18" to 24". Zone 3
- Full sun, deer resistant. Max. Elev. 8,000 ft.



GRASSES

Indian Ricegrass (*Achnatherum hymenoides*)

- Indian Ricegrass is very drought tolerant and useful in land reclamation projects. It is intolerant of poorly drained soils.
- In the past, the grass was a staple food of Native Americans. Seed of the Ricegrass was gathered and ground into meal or flour and made into bread.
- The open, spangled appearance when in flower or fruit is very attractive, especially in backlight. The flower stalk is commonly used in dry flower arrangements.



- Mature height 4" to 24", spread 8" to 12". Zone 3
- Full sun. Max. Elev. 10,000 ft.

Side Oats Grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*)



- This native is noted for the distinctive arrangement of oat-like seed spikes which hang from only one side of its flowering stems.
- Narrow, bluish-gray leaf blades (to ¼" wide) typically form a dense clump.
- Foliage turns golden brown in autumn, sometimes also developing interesting hues of orange and red.
- Purplish-tinged flowers with orange to brownish red anthers appear on arching stems above the foliage in early to mid-summer.
- Mature height and spread 1½' to 3' Zone 4
- Full sun. Max. Elev. 8,000 ft.

Blue Grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*)



- Blue grama is a warm-season perennial native grass found throughout the Great Plains of the United States.
- Under proper management, it makes a great low maintenance lawn. This is a bunch forming grass.
- To prevent summer dormancy, provide 2 to 4" per growing month of combined irrigation and precipitation.
- Excessive irrigation and fertilization will promote weed and cool-season grass invasion.
- Mature height 10" to 16". Zone 3
- Full sun; well-drained soil preferred. Mow once a year in October. Max. Elev. 7,000 ft.

Buffalograss (*Buchloë dactyloides*)



- Buffalograss is another warm-season species that makes a great lawn substitute.
- It is a sod forming grass that takes more foot traffic than blue grama.
- Establish by seed, plugs or sod. Can be mowed or left natural; quality turf can be maintained with minimal irrigation.
- Improved cultivars Bison, Bowie, Plains and Topgun are best for seeded lawns. Legacy, Prestige and Turfalo are best for sodded lawns.
- Mature height 3" to 6". Zone 3
- Full sun; well-drained soil preferred. *Deer will eat this grass!* Max. Elev. 6,500 ft.

Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)



- Little Bluestem is a bunch grass that is native to 45 of the 50 states, making it the most abundant of native grasses.
- It is named for the lavender-blue tinge on the base of the flattened stems.
- The fine foliage and distinctive upright flowers change to red, orange, purple and tan late summer into fall.
- Flowers in zig-zag pairs appear on stems late July – September. Seed spikes are fringed with silky silvery-white hairs.
- Mature height 30" to 40", spread 2'. Zone 3
- Full sun; deer resistant. Max. Elev. 7,500 ft.

