

Year Round Gardening

Really tough plants, for really tough places

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Gardening in Colorado can be challenging. Our high elevation, intense sunlight, low humidity, rapid and extreme weather changes can frustrate the best of gardeners.

These challenges are further compounded by our poor soils that restrict root growth (poor aeration), limiting plants' ability to replenish water loss brought about by the low humidity and wind. Adding more water to such soils further complicates the problem because the additional water reduces the amount of air in the soil, causing oxygen starvation to the roots.



Photo courtesy of Freddie Bogardus

Don't despair! Colorado's many days of sunshine also enable gardeners to grow some of the best flowers in the nation as the high light intensity produces strong-stemmed plants and brilliantly colored flowers. Your chance for successful gardening is further increased if you remember the adage, "right plant, right place." Free, online guidance for plant selection is available.

Plant Select[®], a nonprofit collaboration of Colorado State University, Denver Botanic Gardens and professional horticulturists, is the country's leading brand of plants designed to thrive in high plains and intermountain regions. They research and recommend plants that provide more beauty with less work so gardeners of all levels can achieve smart, stunning and successful gardens using fewer resources and with a more positive environmental impact. Plants chosen for program exhibit these attributes:

- Flourish with less water
- Thrive in a broad range of conditions
- Habitat-friendly
- Tough and resilient in challenging climates

- One of a kind/unique
- Resist disease & insects
- Long-lasting beauty
- Non-invasive

By using The Plant Finder on <http://plantselect.org/>, you can search for plants based on sun exposure, plant type, color and size, and attributes such as deer resistance, drought tolerant and pollinator friendly plants. Let Plant Select® help you choose the right plant for the right place for gardening success, and watch for the Plant Select® tags on plants when shopping at your favorite local garden center.

Here are some Colorado Master Gardeners favorite Plant Select® varieties that might be a good addition to a Pikes Peak garden:

CORAL CANYON® twinspur, <i>Diascia integerrima 'P009S'</i>	Lovely, soft pink, oval flowers from late spring to autumn frost. Easy to grow and heat tolerant.
CORONADO® hyssop, <i>Agastache aurantiaca</i>	Delicate looking yet hardy and unfussy.
Partridge feather, <i>Tanacetum densum ssp. Amani</i>	A great ground cover. Spreads quickly; beautiful fuzzy textured silver grey leaves; yellow summer flowers are a nice complement to the foliage.
Ruby Moon hyacinth bean, <i>Dolichos lablab 'Ruby Moon'</i>	Fast growing durable vine; beautiful purple flowers; sun to partial shade
TABLE MOUNTAIN® ice plant, <i>Delosperma 'John Proffitt'</i>	Easy to grow & low maintenance. Nice pop of color in the garden; heat tolerant; deer resistant; bees love it.

When you have questions, Colorado State University Extension has research based answers. The help desk is located at 17 N. Spruce Street. Hours are Monday to Thursday from 9 am – 12 pm, phone 520-7684 or email CSUmg2@elpasoco.com. Get answers to your horticulture questions any time day or night at ask.extension.org. For current garden tips visit www.facebook.com/ColoradoMasterGardeners.EPC