

# Recommended Native Landscaping Plants for Metro Phoenix

*Please note, this list is a living document created by the Phoenix Chapter of the Arizona Native Plant Society and is periodically updated. The goal is to only include plants that are: 1) native to the Phoenix metro area, 2) beneficial to wildlife, 3) low-water-use, 4) relatively easy to care for, and 5) generally available at Phoenix area nurseries or Arizona seed suppliers.*

## About native plant landscaping:

Phoenix is located in the Sonoran Desert and is one of the most rapidly growing urban areas in the country. Native wildlife, such as birds, butterflies, bees, bats, and desert tortoises, depend on native plants for food, water, and shelter. But these vital resources are diminishing as Phoenix continues to grow.

Some wildlife species (such as monarch caterpillars) are specialists, meaning they depend on certain plant species for food (such as milkweed). By using native plants in landscaping, we can help support native wildlife, maintain the natural food web, and reestablish native habitats within developed areas.

Plus, there are other reasons why native plants make excellent landscaping plants. Since these species occur naturally in our area, they evolved to survive in our climate. Therefore, most native plants require little water and are low maintenance.

It is best to use a variety of plant types (such as trees, shrubs, cacti, milkweed, and perennials) and plant species in your landscaping. Doing so will help provide many different pollinators and wildlife species with the food, nectar, shelter, and nesting spaces they need to survive. It will also give your outdoor space shade and a variety of textures and colors. In addition, it enables you to have something blooming all year long!

Lastly, for the most benefit to wildlife, we advise against the use of insecticides and herbicides, as these will kill some of the wildlife species and plants that you are trying to support.

## Tips:

- When seeking out plants, try to identify or ask for them by their botanical (Latin) name. Many plants share common names, can go by more than one common name, or may be cultivars of these native species. (Cultivars are plant varieties produced through selective breeding, and thus may not have the same benefits to wildlife that the original native plant does.)

- See our [recommended nurseries list](#) for local retail nurseries that offer a selection of native landscaping plants. Some have more variety than others, and inventory changes frequently or may be seasonal. So, it is best to inquire with a few nurseries by phone or email to determine which one suits your needs.
  - Some plants (such as annuals, biennials, and perennials) may only be available as seeds. While this requires patience to wait for things to grow, it is an easy and affordable way to add a variety of native plants to your yard. See our [recommended seed supplier list](#) for options to purchase native seeds by mail or receive wildflower seeds for free through a local seed library.
  - Spring and fall plant sale fundraisers by botanical gardens and conservation organizations are also good sources of native landscaping plants and seeds. We post a list of these plant sales seasonally on the [Phoenix Chapter webpage](#).
  - Ask a friend for help! Maybe someone you know has seeds to share. Also, some plants (such as cacti) can be grown from cuttings.
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## Native Plant List for the Phoenix Metro Area

If a plant name is hyperlinked (in blue), click to view more details as well as photos on the Arizona Native Plant Society's [Plant List website resource](#) (if applicable) or other local websites.

**Plant name** = Generally available at local retail nurseries on our [recommended nurseries list](#) and/or through [local seed suppliers](#). (Call first to confirm inventory.)

\* = Hard to find at local nurseries, but not impossible if you search/call around.

! = Never or rarely sold as a potted plant at local nurseries; seek out seeds if unable to find plants.

+ = Unknown/Unlikely that this plant is available at local nurseries or seed suppliers. If you have input to share with us, please do by contacting [aznpsphoenix@gmail.com](mailto:aznpsphoenix@gmail.com).

### Milkweed

[Rush/Desert milkweed](#) (*Asclepias subulata*)

## Trees

[Desert willow](#) (*Chilopsis linearis*)

[Desert ironwood](#) (*Olneya tesota*)

[Foothills/Little-leaved palo verde](#) (*Parkinsonia microphylla*)

[Western honey mesquite](#) (*Prosopis glandulosa* var. *torreyana*)

[Velvet mesquite](#) (*Prosopis velutina*)

[Catclaw acacia](#) (*Senegalia/Acacia greggii*) \*

[Whitethorn acacia](#) (*Vachellia/Acacia constricta*) \*

## Large Shrubs / Small Trees

[Desert broom](#) (*Baccharis sarothroides*) \*

[Crucifixion thorn](#) (*Castela emoryi*) +

[Desert hackberry](#) (*Celtis pallida*)

[Hopseed bush](#) (*Dodonaea viscosa*)

[Anderson wolfberry](#) (*Lycium andersonii*) \*

[Berlandier's wolfberry](#) (*Lycium berlandieri*) \*

[Arizona desert-thorn](#) (*Lycium exsertum*) \*

[Fremont's desert-thorn/Wolfberry](#) (*Lycium fremontii*) \*

[Sugar sumac/bush](#) (*Rhus ovata*) \*

[Jojoba](#) (*Simmondsia chinensis*)

[Arizona rosewood](#) (*Vauquelinia californica*) \*

[Graythorn/Lotebush](#) (*Ziziphus obtusifolia* var. *canescens*) \*

## Small / Medium Shrubs

[Wright's beebrush/Oreganillo](#) (*Aloysia wrightii*) !

[Triangleleaf bursage](#) (*Ambrosia deltoidea*)

[White bursage](#) (*Ambrosia dumosa*) \*

[Four-wing saltbush](#) (*Atriplex canescens*) \*

[Parish's goldeneye](#) (*Bahiopsis parishii*) \*

[Sweetbush/Chuckwalla's delight](#) (*Bebbia juncea*) !

[Pink fairy duster](#) (*Calliandra eriophylla*)

[Gregg's mistflower](#) (*Conoclinium greggii*) \*

[Indigo bush](#) (*Dalea pulchra*) \*

[Brittlebush](#) (*Encelia farinosa*)

[Turpentine bush](#) (*Ericameria laricifolia*) \*

[Flattop/California buckwheat](#) (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) \*

[Wright's buckwheat](#) (*Eriogonum wrightii*) \*

[Bladdermallow](#) (*Herissantia crispa*) +

[Desert rosemallow/hibiscus](#) (*Hibiscus coulteri*) !

[Rock rosemallow/hibiscus](#) (*Hibiscus denudatus*) !

[Desert lavender](#) (*Hyptis/Condea emoryi*)

[Chuparosa](#) (*Justicia californica*)

[Creosote bush](#) (*Larrea tridentata*)

[Arizona honeysuckle](#) (*Lonicera arizonica*) \*

[Shrubby deervetch](#) (*Acmispon/Lotus rigidus*) \*

[Desert globemallow](#) (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*)

[American threefold](#) (*Trixis californica*) !

## Perennials

[Shrubby Indian mallow](#) (*Abutilon abutiloides*) !

[Palmer's Indian mallow](#) (*Abutilon palmeri*) !

[Desert marigold](#) (*Baileya multiradiata*)

[New Mexico thistle](#) (*Cirsium neomexicanum*) !

[Sacred datura](#) (*Datura wrightii*) !

[Blue dicks/Desert hyacinth](#) (*Dichelostemma capitatum*) !

[Fall tansy-aster](#) (*Dieteria asteroides* var *glandulosa*) !

[Pelotazo](#) (*Abutilon incanum*) !

[Spreading fleabane](#) (*Erigeron divergens*) !

[Blackfoot daisy](#) (*Melampodium leucanthum*)

[Adonis blazingstar](#) (*Mentzelia multiflora*) !

[Desert wishbone](#) (*Mirabilis laevis*) +

[Tufted evening primrose](#) (*Oenothera caespitosa*) \*

[Hooker's evening primrose](#) (*Oenothera elata*) !

[Firecracker penstemon](#) (*Penstemon eatonii*)

[Parry's penstemon](#) (*Penstemon parryi*)

[Desert/Canyon penstemon](#) (*Penstemon pseudospectabilis*) !

[Superb penstemon](#) (*Penstemon superbus*)

[Odora](#) (*Porophyllum gracile*) !

[Whitestem paperflower](#) (*Psilostrophe cooperi*) +

[Desert/Coues' senna](#) (*Senna covesii*)

[Goodding/Desert verbena](#) (*Glandularia/Verbena gooddingii*) \*

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## Annuals / Biennials

[Purple owl's-clover](#) (*Castilleja exserta*) !

[Desert pincushion](#) (*Chaenactis stevioides*) !

[Mexican gold poppy](#) (*Eschscholzia californica* ssp. *mexicana*) !

[Blanketflower/Firewheel](#) (*Gaillardia pulchella*) !

[Common sunflower](#) (*Helianthus annuus*) !

[Arizona poppy/Summer poppy](#) (*Kallstroemia grandiflora*) !

[Gordon's bladderpod](#) (*Lesquerella/Physaria gordonii*) !

[Coulter's lupine](#) (*Lupinus sparsiflorus*) !

[Tahoka daisy](#) (*Machaeranthera tanacetifolia*) !

[Distant phacelia](#) (*Phacelia distans*) !

[Tepary bean](#) (*Phaseolus acutofolius*) !

[Devil's claw](#) (*Proboscidea parviflora*) !

[Desert chicory](#) (*Rafinesquia neomexicana*) !

[Desert chia](#) (*Salvia columbariae*)!

[Parralena/Golden dyssodia/Dogweed](#) (*Thymophylla pentachaeta*) !

[Silverpuffs](#) (*Uropappus lindleyi*) +

[Cowpen daisy](#) (*Verbesina encelioides*) !

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## Vines

[Southwestern pipevine](#) (*Aristolochia watsonii*) !

[Arizona grape ivy](#) (*Cissus trifoliata*) \*

[Old man's beard/Virgin's bower](#) (*Clematis drummondii*) \*

[Slender janusia](#) (*Cottisia gracilis*) +

[Coyote/Finger-leaved gourd](#) (*Cucurbita digitata*) +

[Buffalo/Coyote gourd](#) (*Cucurbita foetidissima*) !

[Milkweed vine](#) (*Funastrum cynanchoides*) +

[Hartweg's climbing milkweed](#) (*Funastrum heterophyllum*) +

[Snapdragon vine](#) (*Maurandya antirrhiniflora*) \*

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## Grasses

[Purple three-awn](#) (*Aristida purpurea*)

[Spidergrass](#) (*Aristida ternipes*) +

[Cane beardgrass](#) (*Bothriochloa barbinodis*) +

[Needle grama](#) (*Bouteloua aristidoides*) +

[Sixweeks grama](#) (*Bouteloua barbata*) +

[Sideoats grama](#) (*Bouteloua curtipendula*)

[Blue grama](#) (*Bouteloua gracilis*)

[Squirreltail](#) (*Elymus elymoides*) !

[Fluffgrass](#) (*Dasyochloa pulchella*) !

[Tanglehead](#) (*Heteropogon contortus*) +

[Curly mesquite](#) (*Hilaria belangeri*) +

[Tobosa grass](#) (*Hilaria mutica*) +

[Big galleta](#) (*Hilaria rigida*)

[Bull grass](#) (*Muhlenbergia emersleyi*)

[Littleseed muhly](#) (*Muhlenbergia microsperma*) +

[Bush muhly](#) (*Muhlenbergia porteri*) +

[Deer grass](#) (*Muhlenbergia rigens*)

[Desert needlegrass](#) (*Pappostipa speciosa*) +

[Slim tridens](#) (*Tridens muticus*) +



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## Cacti & Succulents

[Saguaro](#) (*Carnegiea gigantea*)

[Buckhorn cholla](#) (*Cylindropuntia acanthocarpa*) \*

[Teddy bear cholla](#) (*Cylindropuntia bigelovii*) \*

[Chain-fruit cholla](#) (*Cylindropuntia fulgida*) \*

[Christmas cholla](#) (*Cylindropuntia leptocaulis*) \*

[Engelmann's hedgehog cactus](#) (*Echinocereus engelmannii*) \*

[Compass/California barrel cactus](#) (*Ferocactus cylindraceus*)

[Fishhook barrel cactus](#) (*Ferocactus wislizeni*) \*

[Ocotillo](#) (*Fouquieria splendens*)

[Graham's fishhook cactus](#) (*Mammillaria grahamii*) \*

[Texas/Engelmann's prickly pear](#) (*Opuntia engelmannii*)

[Banana yucca](#) (*Yucca baccata*) \*

[Soaptree yucca](#) (*Yucca elata*) \*

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