RESOURCE central
CONSERVATION MADE EASY

Rocky Mountain Retreat

Designed by Kenton Seth of Paintbrush Gardens

Escape the sweltering heat and take it easy with this low-maintenance, 96 sq ft garden that showcases hardy perennials that thrive in Colorado. You'll be mesmerized by its winter appeal as well as its dynamic blossoming from early spring through fall with a vibrant display of blues, pinks, purples, whites and yellows.

- Full sun exposure (minimum of 6 hrs of direct sun per day)
- Planting maps cover 96 sq ft
- Blooms early spring to fall
- Low water needs
- Hardiness maximum of 6,500 ft

Individual Plant Information

AUTUMN JOY STONECROP - *Sedum* 'Autumn Joy'

QTY. 2

An umbrella of flowers change from soft pink in August to a coppery bronze seedhead in November, atop pale green, succulent like leaves.

- Mature height 18-24"
- Mature spread 12-18"
- Attracts bees, birds and butterflies
- Resists deer and rabbits

CARE: Older plants tend to split in the center if not divided. To keep the plant smaller and prevent it from flopping over, prune the tips 6-8" in late spring (this will also delay flowering).

BLUE AVENA GRASS - *Helictotrichon sempervirens*

QTY. 3

A clump forming grass that resembles tapering pieces of steel-blue linguine collected in a porcupine-like dome with golden panicles in summer.

- Mature height 2-3'
- Mature spread 18-24"
- Attracts butterflies
- Resists deer and rabbits

CARE: This highly adaptable grass is tolerant of sunbaked locations and poor soil of all varieties, and is ill-suited for shady, wet soils, which will lead to poor structure and floppy growth.

BLUE HAREBELL - *Campanula rotundifolia* 'Olympica'

QTY. 2

A loose rosette consisting of rounded basal leaves become linear as they climb wiry stems to the violet, bell-shaped flowers on top.

- Mature height 6-18"
- Mature spread 12-18"
- Attracts bees and hummingbirds
- Resists deer

CARE: Hardier than its delicate flower suggests, this plant performs well on rocky mountain slopes, dry meadows and prairies, and open woods, and tolerates a variety of soil conditions.

EUROPEAN PASQUE FLOWER - *Pulsatilla vulgaris*

QTY. 2

The harbingers of spring, Pasque Flowers boast starry, five-petaled, purple-flowers with fuzzy orange-yellow stamen.

- Mature height 6-12”
- Mature spread 8-12”
- Attracts bees
- Resists rabbits

CARE: Pasque Flowers are adapted to chalky and sandy soils at high elevations, and will not tolerate soggy soils. Overall, it likes to be left alone! Due to its long tap root, Pasque Flower resents transplanting or division. Goes dormant in summer - mark its spot with a stake to avoid accidentally digging it up.

EVERGREEN CANDYTUFT - *Iberis sempervirens*

QTY. 3

Candytuft provides us with a generous display of small, pure white flowers atop mounds of deep green, needle-like leaves.

- Mature height 8-12”
- Mature spread 18-24”
- Attracts bees and butterflies
- Resists deer and rabbits

CARE: Will seldom need division, but prune hard at least two-thirds of the way back every few years in the summer to keep it vigorous and fresh.

FRINGED SAGE - *Artemisia frigida*

QTY. 2

This strongly aromatic plant is covered in miniscule hairs giving it a soft, grey-green appearance. It will grow into a shiny pillow that remains all winter long.

- Mature height 6-15’
- Mature spread 18-24”
- Attracts butterflies
- Resists deer

CARE: This plant grows prolifically in the arid mountains and prairies of the Western US in poor quality soils and tolerates drought very well.

NATIVE BLANKET FLOWER - *Gaillardia aristata*

QTY. 4

The Native Blanket Flower boasts large daisies with reddish-brown/orange centers circled by ray flowers of yellow/bronze.

- Mature height 18-24”
- Mature spread 18-24”
- Attracts bees, birds and butterflies
- Resists deer and rabbits

CARE: Blanket Flowers appreciate a bit of pampering the first season, and then take off on their own. Avoid planting in rich, moist soils, which can make the plants floppy and shorten their life-span. Once established it is very low-maintenance, adaptable, and easy to grow.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN COLUMBINE - *Aquilegia caerulea*

QTY. 1

The Colorado state flower! It is noted for its large, rich violet flowers with white centers and long spurs mounted on arching stems over blue-green foliage.

- Mature height 18-24”
- Mature spread 12-18”
- Attracts bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds
- Resists deer and rabbits

CARE: Avoid heavy, soggy soil. Division is not recommended, mature plants do not like to be disturbed. If foliage becomes ragged during high heat, cut foliage back to 3 inches above ground and new leaves will grow in.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN PENSTEMON - *Penstemon strictus*

QTY. 3

This penstemon’s brilliant purple flowers form open spikes on stout stalks arising from narrow, glossy semi-evergreen leaves.

- Mature height 18-24”
- Mature spread 12-18”
- Attracts bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds
- Resists rabbits

CARE: This semi-evergreen plant will thrive in rocky, poor and disturbed soils. It can be slow to establish, so be sure to weed around it regularly to improve establishment.

SANTA FE ASTER - *Machaeranthera bigelovii*

QTY. 1

A Colorado native, this aster forms a bushy, multi-branched clump with fine, daisy-like flowers that are violet/purple during early summer to fall.

Mature height 1-3’

Mature spread 1-2’

Attracts bees

CARE: An extremely low-maintenance plant, as a prolific native plant to our region it will do poorly in over-fertilized, rich soils.

TENNESSE PURPLE CONEFLOWER - *Echinacea tennesseensis*

QTY. 4

Large, upswept, daisy-like purple flowers with showy, rose-colored rays above sturdy yet thin green stalks.

Mature height 24-30”

Mature spread 18-24”

Attracts butterflies and birds

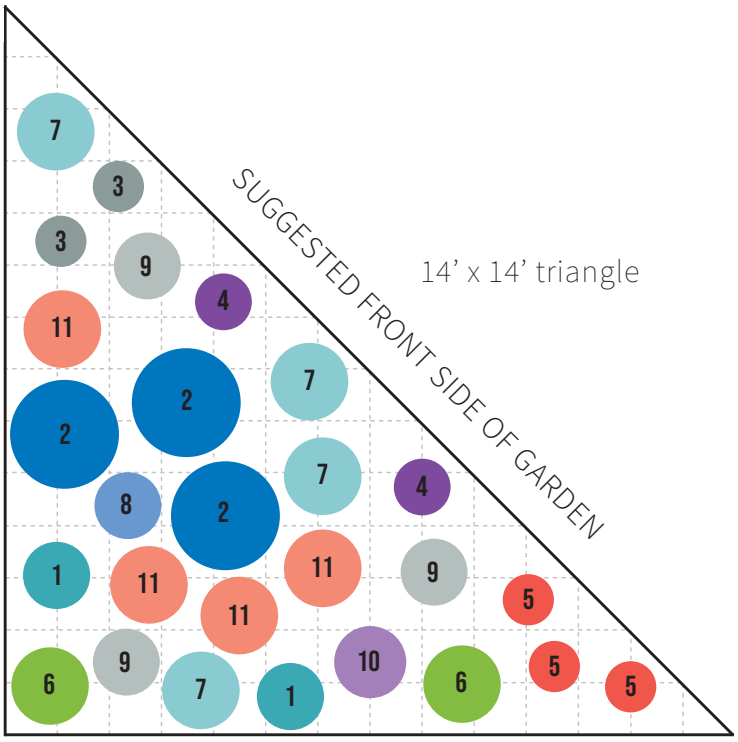
Resists deer

CARE: Avoid planting this variety near other varieties of coneflowers to prevent overcrowding. Division is not recommended due to long tap root.

Plant Maintenance By Season

MAINTENANCE TASKS	PLANT
SPRING (AFTER FIRST GROWING SEASON)	
Cut back old growth to 6 inches before new growth begins to show.	Rocky Mountain Penstemon
Cut back old growth to 2-3 inches before new growth begins to show.	Blue Avena Grass, Rocky Mountain Columbine, Tennessee Purple Coneflower
Divide mature plants in early spring every 3 years, as needed.	Autumn Joy Stonecrop, Blue Avena Grass, Blue Harebell, Fringed Sage, Native Blanket Flower, Rocky Mountain Penstemon, Santa Fe Aster
“Comb out” or remove dead foliage.	Blue Avena Grass, European Pasque Flower
SUMMER	
Once established, deadhead to encourage compact growth.	Evergreen Candytuft, Fringed Sage
Deadhead spent flowers to encourage new blooms and/or minimize self seeding.	Autumn Joy Stonecrop, Blue Harebell, Native Blanket Flower, Rocky Mountain Columbine, Rocky Mountain Penstemon, Santa Fe Aster, Tennessee Purple Coneflower
FALL	
Leave last round of blooms to self seed and/or to provide food for birds.	Autumn Joy Stonecrop, Tennesee Purple Coneflower, Rocky Mountain Columbine
Cut back to 6 inches in late fall.	Native Blanket Flower
Do not prune or cut back. Plant susceptible to winter damage if pruned.	Evergreen Candytuft, Fringed Sage, Rocky Mountain Penstemon, Santa Fe Aster

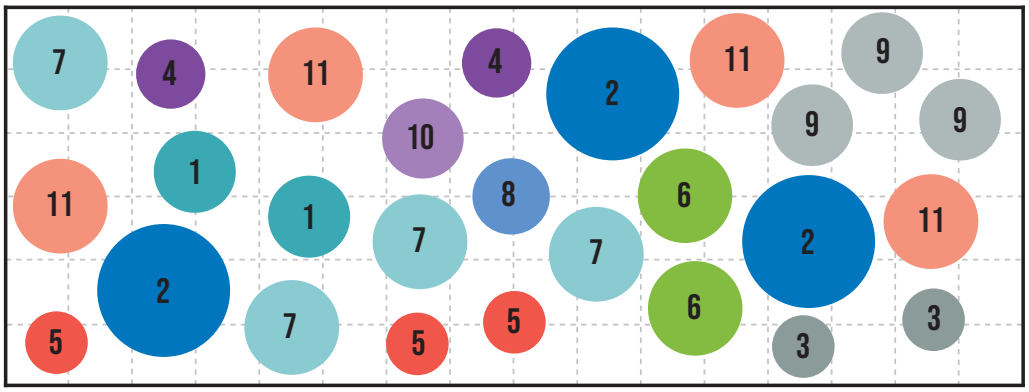
Plant by Number Design Suggestions



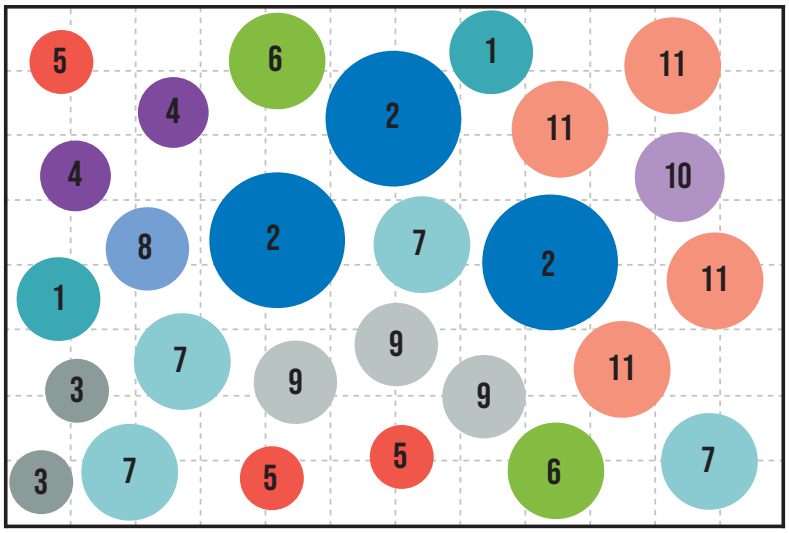
Key

1. Autumn Joy Stonecrop *(Qty. 2)*
2. Blue Avena Grass *(Qty. 3)*
3. Blue Harebell *(Qty. 2)*
4. European Pasque Flower *(Qty. 2)*
5. Evergreen Candytuft *(Qty. 3)*
6. Fringed Sage *(Qty. 2)*
7. Native Blanket Flower *(Qty. 4)*
8. Rocky Mountain Columbine *(Qty. 1)*
9. Rocky Mountain Penstemon *(Qty. 3)*
10. Santa Fe Aster *(Qty. 1)*
11. Tennesse Purple Coneflower *(Qty. 4)*

1 box = 1 square foot



6’ x 16’ rectangle
SUGGESTED FRONT SIDE OF GARDEN



8’ x 12’ rectangle
SUGGESTED FRONT SIDE OF GARDEN