

Native Nectar

Designed by Jim Tolstrup High Plains Environmental Center



Keep your yard buzzing all year long with the Native Nectar garden! This pollinator-friendly collection of native plants will entice butterflies, bees, and birds to feast all season long. This garden offers a variety of unique xeric perennials, like Rose Milkweed, Lewis Flax, and Yellow Prairie Coneflower. Bees will dive into the cheerful and brilliant display of the tall Maximilian Sunflower, and butterflies will dance atop the Showy Fleabane.

- Full sun exposure (minimum of 6 hrs of direct sun per day)
- Planting maps cover 98 sq. ft.
- Blooms early summer to fall
- Low water needs
- Hardiness maximum of 6,500 ft.

Individual Plant Information

BIG BLUESTEM GRASS - *Andropogon gerardii*

QTY. 3



In early spring, the stems of this native grass are a beautiful blue-green, turning to coppery red tones in the summer.

- Mature height 4-6'
Mature spread 2-3'
- Full sun
- Low water needs
- Blooms summer
- Attracts birds
- Resists deer

CARE: This highly adaptable warm-season grass is easily grown in conditions that range from dry, well-drained soils to shady, fertile soils. However, if placed in highly fertilized, wet areas, the grass can become top heavy and fall over. Can be slow to establish.

BLUE FLAX - *Linum lewisii*

QTY. 3



Saucer-like, sky blue flowers on wiry stems rise from an airy clump of linear, dark bluish-green foliage.

- Mature height 1-2'
Mature spread 12-18"
- Full sun
- Low water needs
- Blooms late spring to midsummer
- Attracts bees, birds, butterflies
- Resists deer, rabbits

CARE: Thrives in open areas along ridges and dry slopes making it an ideal candidate for dry, open, sunny locations. It performs best in well-draining soils. Mulch with gravel or not at all. Since this plant has an extensive taproot it does not like to be transplanted or divided once established.

MAXIMILIAN SUNFLOWER - *Helianthus maximiliani*

QTY. 1



This warm-season native has tall, leafy, and unbranched stems that are adorned with charming and numerous 5-inch yellow flowers from late summer to first frost.

- Mature height 6-10'
Mature spread 18-24"
- Full sun
- Very low water needs
- Blooms late summer
- Attracts bees, birds, butterflies, moths
- Resists deer

CARE: It performs best in sunny locations and will not tolerate shade. Be sure not to overwater as this plant can become aggressive! To control the height and spread, keep watering to a minimum once established.

NATIVE BEE BALM - *Monarda fistulosa menthifolia*

QTY. 3



A flowering member of the mint family, its signature fountain-shaped blooms and aromatic foliage are reminiscent of mint and orange making it hard to forget.



Mature height 2-3'
Mature spread 18-24"



Full sun



Low water needs



Blooms midsummer



Attracts bees, birds, butterflies



Resists deer, rabbits



CARE: In general, this hardy perennial thrives best in moist-to-slightly dry soils in sunny, dry locations. If you'd like a bushier plant then cut back stem tips early in the season.

NATIVE BLANKET FLOWER - *Gaillardia aristata*

QTY. 1



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



Mature height 18-24"
Mature spread 12-18"



Full sun



Low water needs



Blooms midsummer



Attracts bees, birds, butterflies



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.

PRAIRIE YELLOW CONEFLOWER - *Ratibida columnifera*

QTY. 3



Its linear, bright green leaves create an airy clump with several slender stalks capped by yellow flowers with drooping rays surrounding a tall, brown center.



Mature height 18-24"
Mature spread 18-24"



Full sun



Very low water needs



Blooms summer



Attracts bees, birds, butterflies



Resists deer



CARE: Prairie Coneflower is very drought tolerant and undiscerning about soil types. It thrives in full, hot sun.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN PENSTEMON - *Penstemon strictus*

QTY. 3



The brilliant, midnight blue flowers form on stout stalks arising from narrow, glossy green leaves. This semi-evergreen variety is native to the Rockies.



Mature height 18-24"
Mature spread 12-18"



Full sun to part shade



Low water needs



Blooms early to midsummer



Attracts bees, butterflies, hummingbirds



CARE: Penstemon varieties prefer not to be overcrowded and prefer maximum heat and sun exposure. Avoid enriching the soil around these finicky plants — it will shorten their life span. This semi-evergreen can be slow to establish, so be sure to weed around it regularly to improve establishment.

ROSE MILKWEED - *Asclepias incarnata*

QTY. 2



Stiff green stems with opposite, linear to ovate thick leaves are topped with umbels of pink, crown-like flowers throughout the summer.



Mature height 4-5'
Mature spread 18-24"



Full sun



Medium water needs



Blooms summer



Attracts bees, birds, butterflies



Resists deer



CARE: Plants have deep taproots and are best left undisturbed once established. Grows well in well-draining soil as well as more damp soils.

SHOWY FLEABANE - *Erigeron speciosus*

QTY. 1



A thick clump of rich green foliage producing loosely branched stems with yellow-centered daisies surrounded by lavender-blue rays.



Mature height 18-24"
Mature spread 18-24"



Full sun



Low water needs



Blooms early to midsummer



Attracts bees, moths



CARE: This hardy perennial is undemanding and easy to grow.



Switchgrass forms elegantly tall, dense stands of green changing to deep red throughout the summer and ending the season as a burgundy wine color in the fall.

Mature height 3-5'
Mature spread 18-24"

Full sun

Low water needs

Blooms late summer

Attracts birds, butterflies

CARE: Extremely drought tolerant and grows well in any type of soil.



Tall, green to bluish-green leafy stems form clumps that turn purple in the fall. Dark yellow to tan flowers are borne at the ends of the stems, above the foliage.

Mature height 3-5'
Mature spread 3-4'

Full sun

Low water needs

Blooms late summer to fall

Attracts birds

Resists deer

CARE: Indiangrass is a low-maintenance grass that likes medium to dry soil in full sun.

Plant Maintenance by Season

MAINTENANCE TASKS

PLANT

SPRING (AFTER FIRST GROWING SEASON)

Cut back old growth before new growth begins to show.

Big Bluestem Grass, Blue Flax, Maximilian Sunflower, Prairie Yellow Coneflower, Rocky Mountain Penstemon, Switchgrass, Yellow Indiangrass

Divide mature plants in early spring every 3 years, as needed.

Native Blanket Flower, Native Bee Balm, Prairie Yellow Coneflower, Showy Fleabane, Switchgrass, Yellow Indiangrass

SUMMER

Deadhead spent flowers to encourage new blooms and/or minimize self-seeding.

Native Blanket Flower, Native Bee Balm, Prairie Yellow Coneflower, Rose Milkweed, Showy Fleabane

Pinch back tips by 1 inch to promote bushy appearance and more blooms.

Maximilian Sunflower

FALL

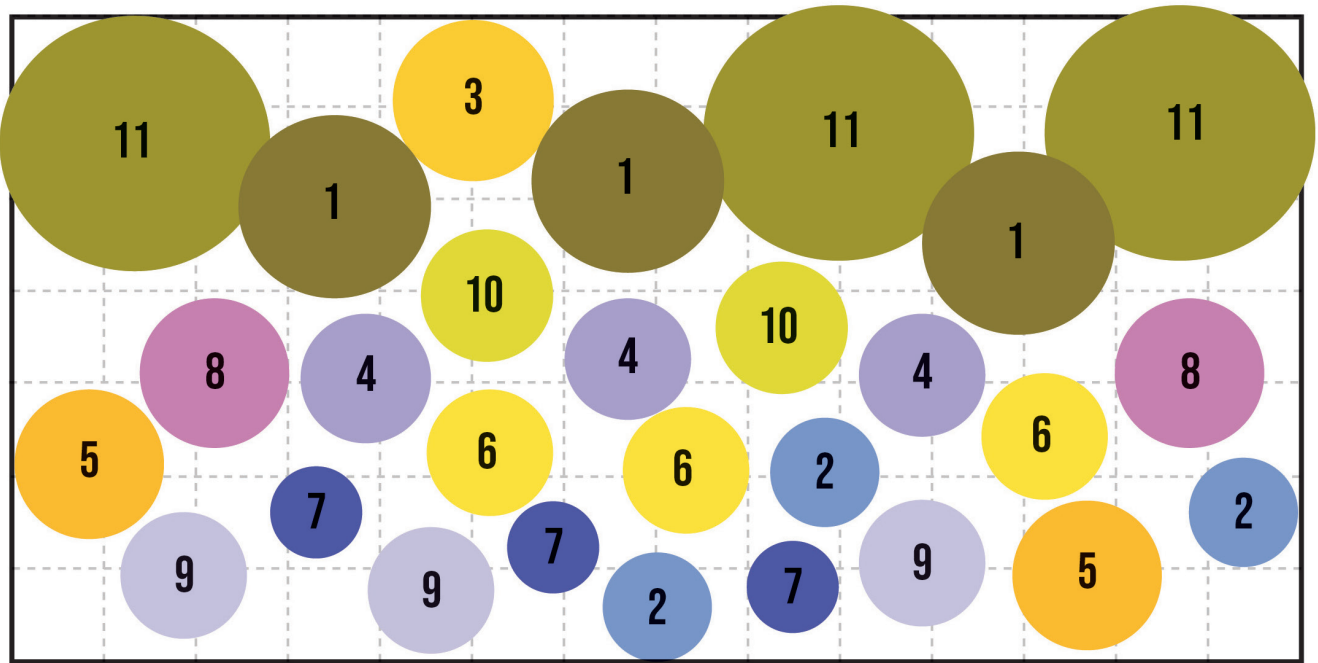
Leave last round of blooms to self-seed and/or to provide food for birds.

Blue Flax, Maximilian Sunflower, Prairie Yellow Coneflower, Rocky Mountain Penstemon

Deadhead to prevent self-seeding and spreading, if desired.

Native Blanket Flower, Native Bee Balm, Rose Milkweed, Showy Fleabane

Plant-by-Number Design Suggestion



7' x 14' rectangle
SUGGESTED FRONT SIDE OF GARDEN

Key

1. Big Bluestem Grass (Qty. 3)
2. Blue Flax (Qty. 3)
3. Maximilian Sunflower (Qty. 1)
4. Native Bee Balm (Qty. 3)
5. Native Blanket Flower (Qty. 2)
6. Prairie Yellow Coneflower (Qty. 3)
7. Rocky Mountain Penstemon (Qty. 3)
8. Rose Milkweed (Qty. 2)
9. Showy Fleabane (Qty. 3)
10. Switchgrass (Qty. 2)
11. Yellow Indian Grass (Qty. 3)

*1 box = 1 square foot
Map reflects bloom or showy
foliage colors.*