Splendid Seasons

Designed by Annie Barrow of Denver Botanic Gardens in collaboration with Northern Water

Created in collaboration with Denver Botanic Gardens and Northern Water, we're excited to introduce our new Splendid Seasons garden! Splendid Seasons brings color, interest, and pollinators to your yard all year long. The garden is designed with plants that are high color and low water. When planted with small rock mulch, known as squeegee, these plants will be show-stoppers and save you water. This garden is also our first 200 sq. ft. garden, perfect for larger, full sun areas of your yard.

- Full sun exposure (minimum of 6 hrs of direct sun per day)
- Planting maps cover 200 sq. ft.
- Blooms spring to fall
- Low water needs
- Hardiness maximum of 5,500 ft.

Individual Plant Information

AUTUMN SAPPHIRE SAGE - *Salvia reptans* 'Autumn Sapphire'

QTY. 5

Glossy green, willowy leaves all season long are topped with clouds of small, sapphire-blue flowers through autumn.

- Mature height 2-3'
  Mature spread 1-2'
- Full sun
- Very low (xeric) to low (dry) water needs
- Blooms late summer to early fall
- Attracts bees, birds, butterflies
- Resists deer, rabbits

CARE: Very low maintenance. Plant will stay most compact with little water in well-draining soils. Adaptable to clay, loam, or sandy soils.

BLONDE AMBITION BLUE GRAMA GRASS - *Bouteloua gracilis* 'Blonde Ambition'

QTY. 6

Displays elegant blue-green foliage with many chartreuse flowers that turn blonde as the season progresses.

- Mature height 2-3'
  Mature spread 1-2'
- Full sun
- Very low (xeric) water needs
- Blooms summer to fall
- Attracts birds
- Resists deer

CARE: This adaptable grass thrives in most soils except very heavy and very wet clay. Be sure to not let this grass sit in wet soils for long.

CHOCOLATE FLOWER - *Berlandiera lyrata*

QTY. 3

Native to the southwestern US, this bright yellow, daisy-like flower blooms at night and emits a distinct milk chocolate fragrance in the early morning hours.

- Mature height 1-2'
  Mature spread 12-18"
- Full sun
- Very low (xeric) water needs
- Blooms summer to fall
- Attracts bees, birds, butterflies
- Resists deer

CARE: This hardy and easy-to-care-for perennial is adaptable to a wide spectrum of conditions. However, it tends to prefer soil that is not amended and thrives best in full sun locations but will tolerate light shade. Once established, it requires very little water. If overwatered, it will become extra leggy. This plant can sprawl a bit.

DEEP BLUE LAVENDER - *Lavandula angustifolia* 'Hidcote'

QTY. 3

Scented, lavender-blue flowers on tight spikes thrust above aromatic gray foliage, creating an attractive, compact clump that stays green all year round.

- Mature height 15-20" Mature spread 15-20"
- Full sun
- Low (dry) water needs
- Blooms spring to fall
- Attracts bees
- Resists deer, rabbits

CARE: Low-maintenance plant needing little care. Once established, it only needs occasional watering. For dried flowers, cut flowers when first hint of color shows at the base of the spike, leaving about an inch of the green growth above the woody stem.

FALSE INDIGO - *Baptisia australis*

QTY. 3

Purple lupine-like flowers on long flower clusters stand atop the shrub-sized clump of clover-like blue-green foliage. A member of the legume family, the flowers are followed by attractive seed pods.

- Mature height 3-4' Mature spread 2-3'
- Sun to filtered shade
- Low (dry) water needs
- Blooms spring
- Attracts butterflies
- Resist rabbits

CARE: While it thrives best in full sun, it will tolerate part shade with poor or average well-draining soils. May take several years to fully establish its deep, extensive root system, therefore, once it's established, it's best not to transplant or move. This plant has a shrub-like look and habit.

FRINGED SAGE - *Artemisia frigida*

QTY. 3

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 6-8" Mature spread 12-18"
- Full sun
- Very low (xeric) water needs
- Resists deer, rabbits

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

GIANT SACATON GRASS - *Sporobolus wrightii*

QTY. 1

A large, bunch-forming grass native to the southwestern US with stems up to 6 feet tall and beautiful seedheads that can be 1-2 feet long. It turns golden in the fall and winter months for beautiful late-season interest.

- Mature height 3-6' Mature spread 2-3'
- Full sun
- Very low (xeric) to medium water needs
- Blooms summer
- Attracts birds
- Resists deer

CARE: A very drought-tolerant plant that, once established, does best with little to no supplemental watering.

MAXIMILIAN SUNFLOWER - *Helianthus maximiliani*

QTY. 7

This warm season native has tall, leafy, and unbranched stems which 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 (xeric) water needs
- Blooms late summer
- Attracts bees, birds, butterflies
- 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.

PINELEAF PENSTEMON - *Penstemon pinifolius*

QTY. 5

This low, creeping penstemon features tubular, scarlet-orange flowers with yellow throats. The prolific blooms rest atop soft, green needle-like foliage, covering the plant throughout the midsummer months.

- Mature height 6-8" Mature spread 12-15"
- Full sun
- Very low (xeric) to medium water needs
- Blooms midsummer
- Attracts butterflies, hummingbirds
- Resists deer, rabbits

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.

VERMILION BLUFFS® MEXICAN SAGE - *Salvia darcyi 'PScarl'*

QTY. 5

Brilliant red spires attract hummingbirds late summer to fall. Best in full sun planted in well draining soil.

- Mature height 36-40"
  Mature spread 12-14"
- Full sun
- Very low (xeric) to medium water needs
- Blooms summer to fall
- Attracts bees, hummingbirds
- Resists deer

CARE: It loves heat and is slow to emerge in spring. Be sure to plant in well-drained soil. Remove extra mulch to allow air and drainage for this dry loving plant in summer.

SILVER SALVIA - *Salvia argentea*

QTY. 2

Large, bold, fuzzy, intensely silver foliage in a low rosette is topped by spikes of small, interesting, white-lobed flowers.

- Mature height 24-30"
  Mature spread 24-30"
- Full sun
- Very low (xeric) to low (dry) water needs
- Blooms summer
- Attracts bees
- Resists deer, rabbits

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

SUNSET HYSSOP - *Agastache rupestris*

QTY. 5

Bold spikes of sunset-orange flowers, which have a wonderful root beer aroma, are borne from August to frost. Native to the American Southwest, it will thrive in our hot, dry climate in sun or partial shade.

- Mature height 2-3'
  Mature spread 2-3'
- Sun to filtered shade
- Low (dry) water needs
- Blooms summer to fall
- Attracts hummingbirds
- Resists deer, rabbits

CARE: Water regularly for the first season to establish the root system. Make sure the soil is well drained; hyssops do not tolerate soil that is constantly wet. After it is established, it is very drought tolerant. Rock mulch (squeegee) is recommended instead of wood mulch. Avoid too much compost.

SWITCHGRASS - *Panicum virgatum*

QTY. 3

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
- Very low (xeric) to medium water needs
- Blooms late summer
- Attracts birds, butterflies

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

Plant Maintenance by Season

MAINTENANCE TASKS	PLANT
SPRING (AFTER FIRST GROWING SEASON)	
Cut back old growth or winter damage before new growth begins to show.	Autumn Sapphire Sage, Blonde Ambition Blue Grama Grass, Chocolate Flower, Deep Blue Lavender, False Indigo, Giant Sacaton Grass, Maximilian Sunflower, Pineleaf Penstemon, Vermilion Bluffs Mexican Sage, SIlver Salvia, Sunset Hyssop, Switchgrass
Divide mature plants in early spring every 3 years, as needed.	Blonde Ambition Blue Grama Grass, Fringed Sage, Giant Sacaton Grass, Pineleaf Penstemon, Switchgrass
SUMMER	
Deadhead spent flowers to encourage new blooms and/or minimize self-seeding.	Chocolate Flower
Pinch back tips by 1 inch to promote busy appearance and new blooms.	Maximilian Sunflower
Once established, deadhead before blooming to encourage compact growth.	Fringed Sage
Water sparingly once established.	Giant Sacaton Grass, Maximilian Sunflower, Vermilion Bluffs Mexican Sage, Sunset Hyssop
FALL	
Leave last round of blooms to self-seed and/or to provide food for birds.	Chocolate Flower, False Indigo, Maximilian Sunflower
Do not prune or cut back! Plant susceptible to winter damage if pruned. It's best to wait until spring.	Deep Blue Lavender, Fringed Sage, Sunset Hyssop

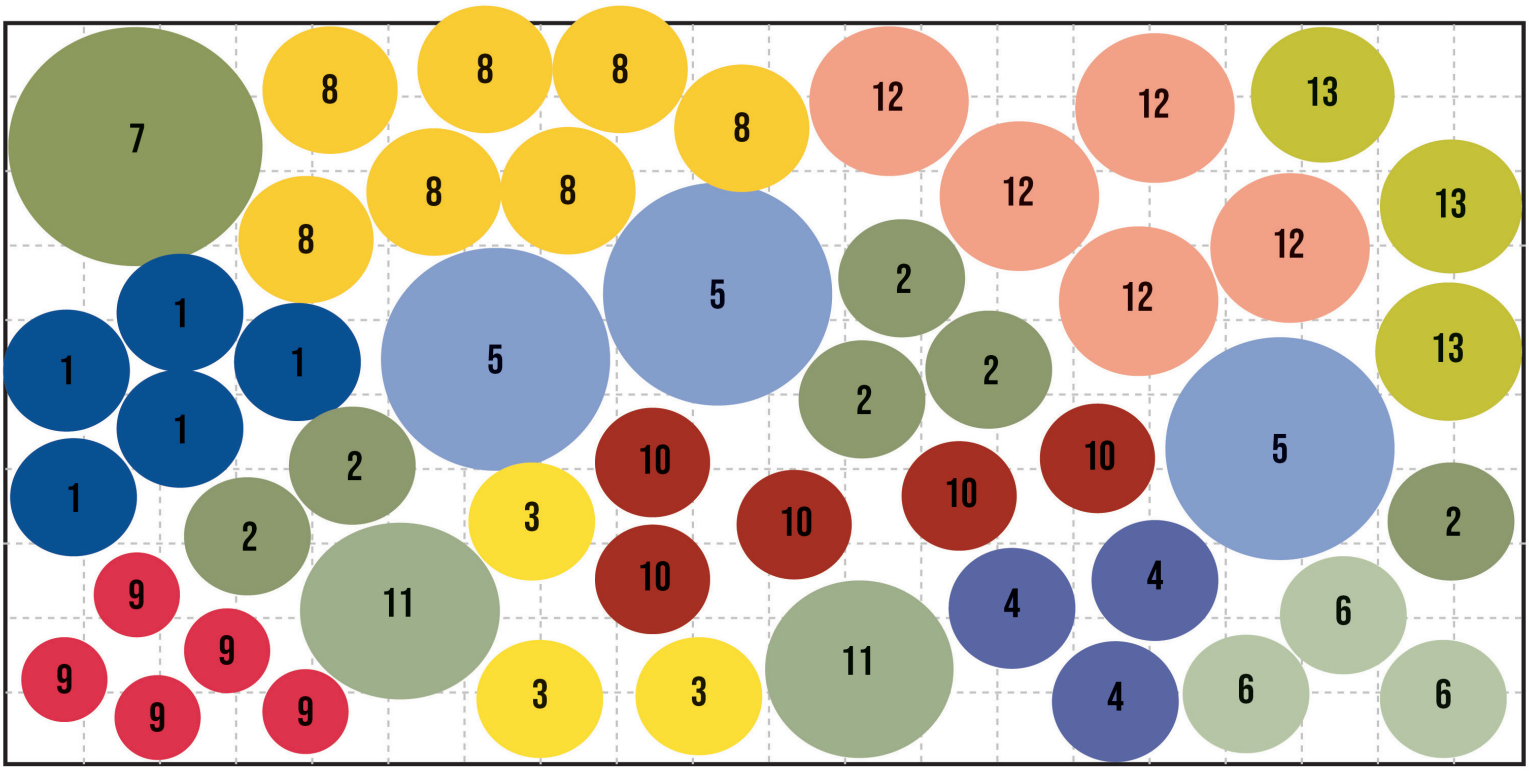
Plant-by-Number Design Suggestions

Key

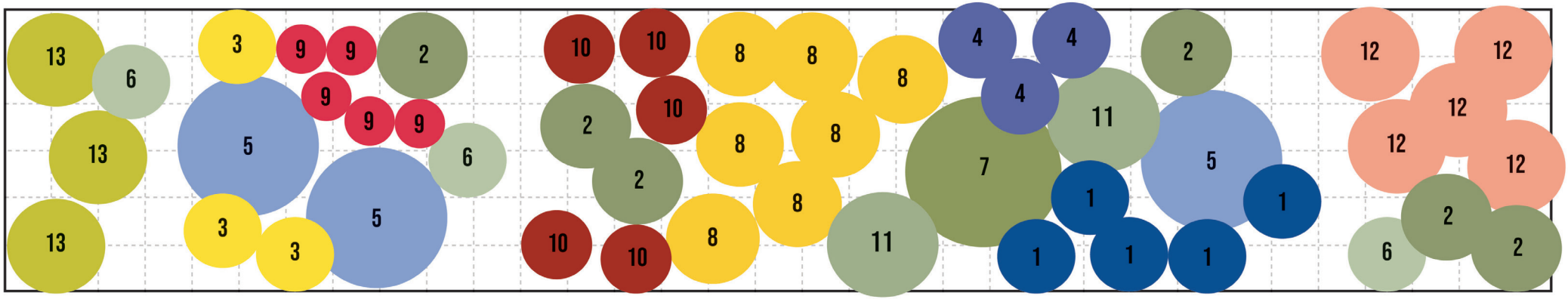
1. Autumn Sapphire Sage *(Qty. 5)*
2. Blonde Ambition Blue Grama Grass *(Qty. 6)*
3. Chocolate Flower *(Qty. 3)*
4. Deep Blue Lavender *(Qty. 3)*
5. False Indigo *(Qty. 3)*
6. Fringed Sage *(Qty. 3)*
7. Giant Sacaton Grass *(Qty. 1)*
8. Maximilian Sunflower *(Qty. 7)*
9. Pineleaf Penstemon *(Qty. 5)*
10. Vermilion Bluffs Mexican Sage *(Qty. 5)*
11. Silver Salvia *(Qty. 2)*
12. Sunset Hyssop *(Qty. 5)*
13. Switchgrass *(Qty. 3)*

1 box = 1 square foot

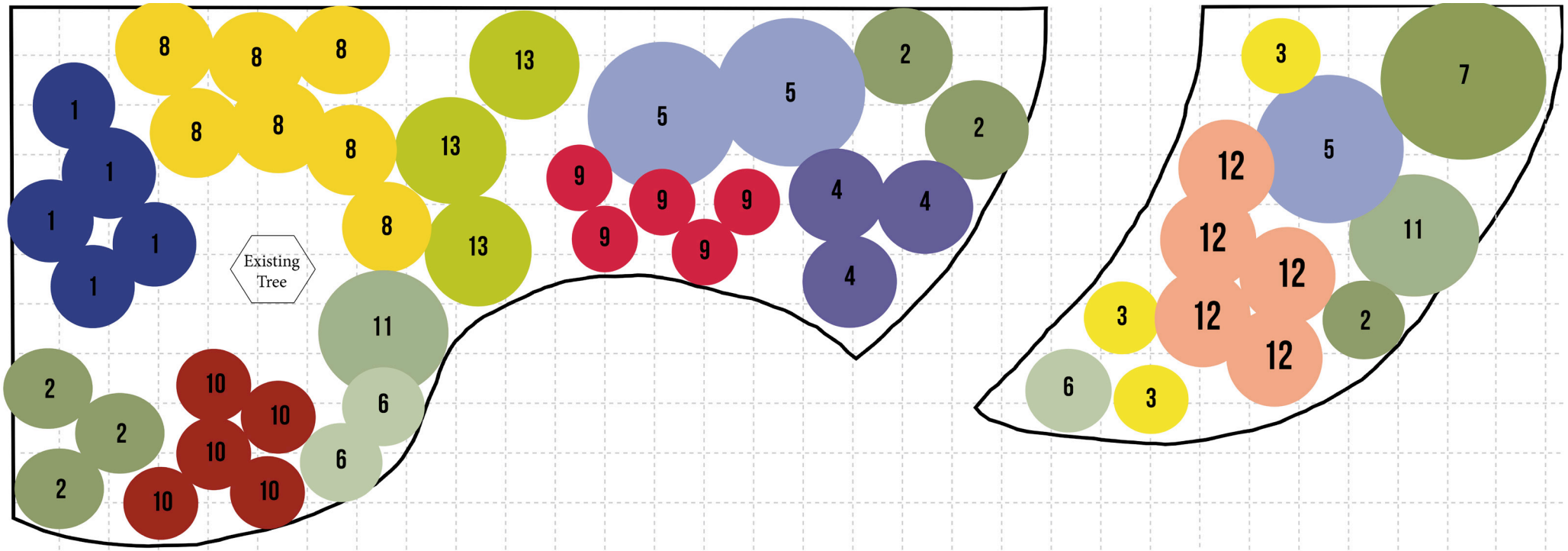
Maps reflect showy bloom or foliage color.



10' x 20' rectangle
SUGGESTED FRONT SIDE OF GARDEN



6' x 33' rectangle
SUGGESTED FRONT SIDE OF GARDEN



11' x 30' rectangle with organic edge, path & optional tree