

PERENNIALS FOR DIFFICULT SITES

Barbara J. Bromley, Mercer Co. Horticulturist 2010 (rev)

Often we want to include perennial flowers on a site with difficult growing conditions. There is usually at least one plant that will tolerate even the most difficult conditions.

Many perennials prefer a sunny location and a deep, well drained but moisture retentive soil supplemented with organic matter, but this is not always available. The following is a list of some perennial flowering plants for less than ideal conditions. Cross-referencing will give plants that are tolerant of more than one difficult location, such as dry shade or hot and wet. Most plants have a special tolerance, such as drought tolerance, only after they have recovered from transplanting and are well established. Check reliable references (books, Master Gardener Helplines, internet) for the plant characteristics and site requirements of each of the individual perennials.

NOTE: The genus, (*italicized name*) but not species, is given for each of the listed plants. Because there are often many plants in a given genus, check references under both the common and botanical names.

DRY AREAS

Achillea-yarrow
Agastache sp – anise hyssop
Amsonia-blue-star
Anthemis-golden marguerite
Armeria-sea pink
Artemesia-wormwood
Asclepias-butterfly weed
Aubretia-purple rock cress
Aurinia-basket of gold
Baptisia-blue false indigo
Belamcanda-blackberry lily
Bergenia-leatherleaf bergenia
Boltonia-boltonia
Calamintha - calamint
Catananche-Cupid's dart
Centranthus-Jupiter's beard
Cerastium-snow-in-summer
Coreopsis-tickseed
Dianthus-pinks
Echinacea-purple coneflower
Echinops-globethistle
Eryngium-sea holly
Euphorbia-cushion spurge
Gaillardia-blanketflower
Geranium-crane's bill
Hemerocallis-daylily
Hosta-plantainlily, hosta
Iris-German bearded iris, rooftop iris
Kniphofia-red hot poker
Liatris-blazing star
Limonium-sea lavender
Oenothera-sundrops
Penstemon-beard tongue
Perovskia-Russian sage
Polygonum-Solomon's seal
Rudbeckia-black eyed Susan
Sedum-stonecrop
Solidago-goldenrod
Stachys-lamb's ear
Veronica-spike speedwell
Yucca-Adam's needle

WET AREAS

Acorus calamus-sweet flag
Angelica - angelica
Arisaema-Jack-in-the-pulpit
Aruncus-goatsbeard
Asclepias – swamp milkweed
Asarum-wild ginger
Aster-New England aster
Astilbe-false spirea
Astilboides - astilboides
Astrantia - masterwort
Brunnera-Siberian bugloss
Caltha-marshmarigold
Chelone-turtlehead
Cimicifuga-bugbane
Eupatorium-Joe Pye weed
Filipendula-queen-of-prairie
Galium-sweet woodruff
Helenium-sneezeweed
Hibiscus-rose mallow
Hosta-plantainlily, hosta
Iris-Japanese iris
Iris-yellowflag iris
Iris – blue flag iris
Ligularia – big-leaved ligularia
Lobelia-cardinal flower
Lobelia – great blue lobelia
Lysimachia-loosestrife
Mertensia-Virginia bluebells
Monarda –beebalm
Petasites japonica - fuki
Physostegia-obedient plant
Primula-primrose
Tradescantia-spiderwort
Trillium-wake robin
Trollius-globeflower

UNSTABLE SLOPES

Coronilla-crown vetch
Hemerocallis-daylily
Vinca-periwinkle, myrtle

SHADE AREAS

Alchemilla-lady's mantle
Anemone-anemone
Aquilegia-columbine
Aruncus-goatsbeard
Asperula-sweet woodruff
Astilbe-false spirea
Bergenia-leatherleaf Bergenia
Brunnera-Siberian bugloss
Caltha-marshmarigold
Campanula-bellflower
Ceratostigma-blue plumbago
Chrysogonum-goldenstar
Cimicifuga-bugbane
Convallaria-lily-of-the-valley
Dicentra-bleeding heart
Dicentra-Dutchman's breeches
Digitalis-foxglove
Dictamnus-gasplant
Filipendula-queen-of-prairie
Helleborus-Lenten rose
Heuchera-coral bells
Hosta-plantainlily, hosta
Iris-Siberian iris
Ligularia-ligularia
Liriope-lilyturf
Lobelia-cardinal flower
Lysimachia-loosestrife
Mertensia-Virginia bluebells
Polygonatum-Solomon's seal
Primula-primrose
Pulmonaria-lungwort
Trillium-wake robin
Trollius-globeflower

HOT AREAS

Achillea-yarrow
Amsonia-bluestar
Artemisia-artemisia
Aruncus-goatsbeard
Asclepias-butterfly weed
Aubretia-purple rockcress
Aurinia-basket of gold
Baptisia-false indigo
Brunnera-Siberian bugloss
Catananche-Cupid's dart
Centranthus-Jupiter's beard
Cerastium-snow-in-summer
Chrysanthemum-mums
Cimicifuga-bugbane
Coreopsis-tickseed
Echinacea-purple coneflower
Echinops-globe thistle
Eryngium-sea holly
Euphorbia-spurge
Filipendula-queen-of-prairie
Gaillardia-blanket flower
Gypsophila-baby's breath
Hemerocallis-daylily
Hibiscus-rose mallow
Hosta-plantainlily, hosta
Liatris-gayfeather
Lychmis-campion
Monarda-beebalm
Oenothera-sundrops
Perovskia-Russian sage
Platycodon-balloon flower
Rudbeckia-black-eyed Susan
Salvia-sage
Sedum-stonecrop
Solidago-goldenrod
Stachys-lamb's ear
Stokesia-Stoke's aster
Yucca-Adam's needle

DEER PROBLEM AREAS (low to medium herd pressure, but a starving deer will eat nearly anything.)

Achillea -yarrow
Aconitum -monkshood
Allium -onion, garlic, chives
Alyssum-basket of gold
Amsonia-amsonia
Anaphalis -pearly everlasting
Anchusa -bugloss
Anemone -Japanese anemone
Angelica-angelica
Anthemis -marguerite
Aquilegia-columbine
Armeria-sea thrift
Artemisia -wormwood
Aruncus -goatsbeard
Asclepias-butterflyweed
Astilbe-false spirea
Aubretia -rock cress
Baptisia -false indigo
Bergenia -leatherleaf bergenia
Begonia -begonia
Boltonia-boltonia
Cactaceae-cactus
Calluna -heather
Campanula-tussock bellflower
Canna-canna
Centaurea-mountain bluet
Chelone-turtlehead
Cimicifuga -bugbane
Comptonia-sweet fern
Convallaria -lily-of-the-valley
Chrysanthemum-painted daisy, Shasta daisy, feverfew
Coreopsis -tickseed
Delphinium -larkspur
Dianthus -pinks, sweet William
Dicentra-bleeding heart
Dictamnus-gas plant
Digitalis -foxglove
Echinacea -purple coneflower
Echinops -globe thistle
Erica -heath
Erigeron -fleabane
Euphorbia -spurge
Geranium -crane's-bill
Gypsophila -baby's breath
Helleborus-Lenten rose
Hypericum -St. John's wort
Imperata-Japanese blood grass

Iris -iris (will eat buds)
Kniphofia-red hot poker
Lavandula-lavender
Liatris-blazing star
Lilium-tiger lily
Limonium-statice
Linum-blue flax
Lupinus -lupines
Lychnis-Maltese cross
Melissa-lemon balm
Mentha -mints
Mertensia-Virginia bluebells
Monarda-beebalm
Myosotis -forget-me-nots
Myrrhis-sweet cicely
Oenothera-sundrops, evening primrose
Origanum -marjoram
Paeonia -peonies (will eat buds)
Papaver-oriental poppy
Perovskia-Russian sage
Phalaris-ribbon grass
Phyllostachys-golden bamboo
Physostegia-obedient plant
Polemonium-Jacob's ladder
Potentilla -cinquefoil
Primula -primroses
Pulmonaria-lungwort
Ranunculus -buttercup, exc. *R. asiaticus*
Rosemarinus -rosemary
Rudbeckia -black-eyed Susan,
Salvia -sage, salvia
Saponaria -soapwort
Santolina-lavender cotton
Senecio-dusty miller
Stachys -lamb's ear
Stokesia-Stoke's aster
Tanacetum -tansy
Thalictrum -meadow rue
Thymus -thyme
Tradescantia-spiderwort
Trillium -trillium
Trollius -globeflower
Valeriana -valerian
Veronica-Hungarian speedwell
Viola -violets
Yucca-Spanish bayonet