

Pine River Library Program in a Bag:

Xeriscaping



Visit www.prlibrary.org/xeriscaping to watch a special half an hour presentation on Xeriscaping by Darrin Parmenter, County Extension Director and Horticulture Agent for the CSU Extension - La Plata County. You will also find links to Extension handouts about Xeriscaping there. The library would be happy to print out any of the handouts for you if you'd like physical copies.

More information on the seeds included:

GREEN DOT BAG: Betty's Borders Mix

Betty's Borders is a wildflower seed mix from Southwest Seed (www.southwestseed.com) It works well in a wide range of elevations - 4,000' to 8,000' feet. It is a combination of annuals and perennials to give you color the first year with the annuals and in subsequent years with the perennials. It is a drought tolerant mix so it can perform without a great deal of supplemental water (although you get more blooms with additional water.)

Details:

- Zone: 5, 6, and 7
- Height: 12" - 36"
- Flower Seeds: Aspen Daisy, Bachelor Button, Blackeyed Susan, Blanket Flower, Indian Blanket Flower, Greenthread, Lewis Flax, Plains Coreopsis, Purple Coneflower, Purple Prairie Clover, Red Mexican Hat, and Scarlet Flax
- Sun/Shade Tolerance: 1 - Very Sunny
- Cool/Warm: Cool
- Min. Precipitation: 12" - 15" Minimum
- Native/Introduced: Native
- Annual/Perennial: Mixed
- Planting Rate: .25#/1000 sq ft.
- Cold Hardiness: Hardy

RED DOT BAG: Mexican Red Hat

This flower is so named because the flowers with their central brown disks protruding 1/2 to 2 inches above the red petals streaked with yellow resemble the colorful sombreros worn during fiestas. Mexican Red Hat is also known as Prairie Coneflower; (however, on this website the plant that we call Prairie Coneflower is the variety with solid yellow flowers. Both belong to the same species and share the same characteristics). Besides its drought tolerance, Mexican Red Hat has many qualities to recommend it in a low-maintenance xeriscape garden: it is deer resistant, easy to grow from seed, fast growing, tolerates a wide range of soil types, and withstands competition. Mexican Red Hat usually blooms in its second year and attracts both bees and butterflies.

Details:

- Latin Name: *Ratibida columnifera*
- Zone: 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8
- Height: Medium
- Sun/Shade Tolerance: 1 - Very Sunny
- Min. Precipitation: Drought Tolerant
- Seeds Per Pound: 500,000
- Native/Introduced: Native
- Annual/Perennial: Perennial
- Blossom Color: Red
- Bloom Period: Summer
- Planting Rate: 2-4 lbs/acre



YELLOW DOT BAG: Western Yarrow

Likes full sun and is best planted in open areas. Sufficient sunlight makes the flowers more colorful. However, in hot summers you may need to shade the plant to avoid sunburn. Western yarrow can also survive in a shady place, but it will get leggy.

Soil

Western yarrow tolerates poor soil conditions but prefers fertile, well-drained sandy soil. It likes weakly acidic soil with a pH of 5.5-8. The soil depth should be at least 20 cm for it to grow well. If the soil is too rich and wet, western yarrow tends to get floppy or have overgrown stems.

Planting

Western yarrow can be planted directly in a garden, or planted in a flower pot first and then moved to a garden after maturing. Sow seeds in spring; germination temperatures between 15 - 20 °C work best. If planted in a garden, make sure plants are 20 - 30 cm apart. Its roots are very developed and can grow vigorously, so we need to leave enough space for its growth.

Water

Western yarrow needs little extra watering and usually relies on natural rainfall. However, when the weather is dry and the garden receives less than 2.5 cm of rainfall in a week, you need to give it extra water. Too much water makes it grow tall and unattractive. Use well-drained soil, as accumulated water can easily cause root rot.

Fertilizer

Western yarrow needs little fertilizer; too much fertilizer causes excessive growth. Apply organic fertilizer 1-2 times in the spring growing season. It is best not to apply too much nitrogen fertilizer, because it affects flower color.

References:

- www.picturethisai.com
- www.conservationgardenpark.org/plants
- www.allaboutgardening.com/blue-flax
- www.southwestseed.com

ORANGE DOT BAG: Blue Flax

Plant Type: Perennial

Family: Linaceae

Genus: Linum

Species: Linum perenne

Native Area: Europe

Hardiness Zone: USDA 5-9

Season: Spring-Summer

Exposure: Full Sun

Maturity Date: 2-5 years

Plant Spacing: 12-18 inches

Height: 1-2 feet

Watering Requirements: Moderate

Pests: Slugs, Snails, Aphids

Maintenance: Low

Soil Type: Well-draining

Attracts: Pollinators

Plant With: Drought Tolerant Plants

Don't Plant With: Moisture Needy Plants

BLUE DOT BAG: Rocky Mountain Penstemon

Plant Type: Perennial

Plant Family: Scrophulariaceae

Plant Description: Beautiful, spring blooming perennial native to the western United States. Grows from a basal rosette with spoon shaped leaves. Upright stems bear lance-shaped leaves. Bears tall spikes of abundant blue to purple flowers in late spring to early summer. Attractive foliage holds its own when out of bloom. Very drought tolerant. Needs well-drained soils.

Plant Attributes:

Mature Size: 24" tall x 36" wide

Pollinator Friendly: Yes

Foliage Colors: Green

Bloom Colors: Blue, Purple

Bloom Seasons: Early Summer, Late Spring

Bloom Period: May - Jun

Growing Conditions:

Hardiness Zone: 3 to 8

Light Requirement: Full Sun (6+ hrs sun)

Irrigation Requirement: Low (1/2" every 10-14 days)