



COLORADO NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Suggested Native Plants for Horticultural Use on the Front Range of Colorado

Colorado has a wealth of native plants, colorful wildflowers, grasses, shrubs and trees, which are well adapted to our variable climate, soils, temperatures and elevations. The Colorado Native Plant Society (CONPS) recommends the use of native plants in landscaping, both because of their adaptability and because Colorado has a unique regional horticulture worth promoting and protecting. Native plants, especially local ecotypes, contain the “history” of the area in their genes and will survive that especially cold, wet spring or unusually hot, dry year. Local ecotypes, from near the area to be planted, will also maintain more “natural” sources of food for local wildlife and insect species. There are several display gardens on the Front Range that feature plants native to Colorado. Please check in your area and visit them for ideas.

It is always better to buy native Colorado seeds or transplants from a local producer. Seed gathering is not allowed on certain public lands (i.e. national parks) and a special use permit is required for other public lands (i.e. national forests). For sources of container-grown plants, check Colorado nurseries. More natives are being grown all the time and as the demand increases, so will the supply. If you don't see something you want, ask for it.

Guidelines for Obtaining Native Species

- Check with local nature centers or experts for recommendations.
- Buy from reputable nurseries.
- Buy seeds/plants from your local area.
- Ask about the origin of the seeds/plants you buy.
- Read labels on “wildflower” mixes to verify they are local species.
- Ask for plants by their scientific name as common names may vary.

The species lists that follow are primarily for landscaping along the Front Range of Colorado, east of the Continental Divide. Included are recommended and generally available wildflowers, grasses, small/medium shrubs and large shrubs/small trees as well as some basic habitat information.

The Horticulture and Restoration Committee welcomes additional information regarding the use of natives. Please send your comments to Horticulture and Restoration Committee, CONPS, P.O. Box 200, Fort Collins, CO 80522, or e-mail Committee Co-Chairs Lisa Tasker, lisatasker@earthlink.net or Kathy Damas, DamasKa@ci.boulder.co.us.

Check the CONPS website for additional information and updates at <http://www.conps.org>.