



April 2009

Horticulture/Home/2008-01pr

Seasonal Splendor

(Planting for Color)

JayDee Gunnell, Horticulture Agent, Davis County Extension

Each season brings with it new colors and emotions. The goal of this fact sheet is to aid the homeowner in selecting plant material that will offer season-long interest in the landscape. Different colors can add variety, but too many may create chaotic color schemes that are aesthetically offensive. Consistency in a landscape is accomplished when the same color schemes are repeated.

When planting for color, it is good to remember some general rules. Cool colors, such as shades of green, blue, and soft pastels, blend well together and have a tendency to make an area seem larger in appearance. These colors also suggest calmness or tranquility. Warm colors, such as shades of red, orange, and yellow, jump out visually and act as colorful accents. These colors imply lively and inviting feelings.

Complementary colors are those colors that most optimally accentuate each other. Yellow is considered complementary to purple. Red is complementary to green. Orange is complementary to blue. White is one of those universal colors which can complement all of the other colors.

There are many different plants which can add seasonal splendor to a landscape. Many plants display an array of flower colors throughout the season. Some plants dazzle our senses by offering tantalizing textures while others put on a spectacular show in the autumn as their colorful leaves proclaim the end of the season. When planting for color, it is important to think of the importance of foliage effect along with flower color.

With literally thousands of options in choosing plant material, it can oftentimes be overwhelming to homeowners in deciding which plants to buy. Catalogs and magazines are great for getting ideas. It is also a good idea to visit the nurseries and garden centers

periodically throughout the year to see what plants are in bloom. Choosing a variety of plants with staggered bloom times, along with those that add unique textures and distinctive leaf colors can add seasonal interest to any landscape.

The following is a list of some of the more common perennial plants and their approximate bloom



times along with plants that offer variety to the landscape in the form of texture and seasonal leaf color.

For simplification purposes, plants with flower times during March through mid-May are grouped into spring flowering plants. Plants flowering from mid-May through mid-August are grouped into summer flowering plants. Plants flowering during mid-August through October are grouped into fall flowering plants.

While this fact sheet gives a general list of chronological color, some of the plants listed may cross-over into other seasons – often, deadheading or removing of the spent blossoms encourages re-bloom. As a general rule, however, most perennials will provide blossoms for the space of 3-4 weeks. As always, it is important to remember that Mother Nature is consistently in charge. Weather variations, along with other climatic changes, can influence bloom time as well as color intensity.

References:

Hannebaum, G. Leroy. (2002). Landscape Design: A Practical Approach, 5th Edition. New Jersey. Prentice Hall.

Dirr, A. Michael. (1997). Dirr's Hardy Trees and Shrubs: An Illustrated Encyclopedia. Portland, Oregon: Timber Press, Inc.

Valleau, M. John. (1998). Heritage Perennials: Perennial Gardening Guide, 3rd Edition. Abbotsford, British Columbia. Valleybrook International Ventures Inc.



Fountain Grass (*Pennisetum alopecuroides*)



'Grow-low' Sumac (*Rhus aromatica* 'Grow-low')



'Fanfare' Gaillardia (*Gaillardia x grandiflora* 'Fanfare')



Pasque Flower (*Pulsatilla vulgaris*)

Spring Color

<u>Plant</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Flower Color</u>
Chokecherry	tree	white*
Flowering Cherry	tree	white, pink
Flowering Crabapple	tree	white, pinks*
Flowering Pear	tree	white*
Flowering Plum	tree / shrub	pink*
Golden Chaintree	tree	yellow
Horse Chestnut	tree	white, pink
Magnolia	tree	white, pink
Redbud	tree	white, pink*
Serviceberry	tree / shrub	white*
Barberry	shrub	yellow*
Bridal Wreath Spirea	shrub	white
Broom	shrub	yellow, pink
Currant	shrub	yellow
Flowering Almond	shrub	pink
Forsythia	shrub	yellow
Japanese Kerria	shrub	yellow
Lilac	shrub	white, pink, purples
Mock Orange	shrub	white
Ninebark	shrub	white*
Oregon Grape Holly	shrub	yellow*
Privet	shrub	white
Quince	shrub	pink, red
Rose	shrub	various
Snowberry	shrub	white
Viburnum	shrub	white, pink*
Basket of Gold	perennial	yellow
Bleeding Heart	perennial	pink, white

<u>Plant</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Flower Color</u>
Candytuft	perennial	white*
Catmint	perennial	purple
Columbine	perennial	various
Coral Bells	perennial	white, pink*
Creeping Phlox	perennial	white, pink, purple
Dianthus	perennial	white, pink
Dutchman's Breeches	perennial	white
English Daisy	perennial	white, pink
'Firecracker' Penstemon	perennial	red
Flax	perennial	blue, white
Forget-me-not	perennial	white, pink, blue
Foxglove	perennial	white, purple
Iris	perennial	various
Pasque Flower	perennial	purple
Perennial Salvia	perennial	purple, white
Pigsqueak	perennial	pink*
Pineleaf Penstemon	perennial	orange, yellow, red
Rockcress	perennial	purple, white
Wasatch Penstemon	perennial	purple
Akebia	vine	purple, white
Japanese Honeysuckle	vine	yellow, white*
Wisteria	vine	purple, white
Creeping Thyme	ground-cover	pink*
Turkish Veronica	ground-cover	purple, blue
Vinca (Myrtle)	ground-cover	purple, blue*
Crocus	bulb	various
Daffodil	bulb	yellow, white
Hyacinth	bulb	purple, white
Tulip	bulb	various

* Indicates other ornamental features such as leaf color or fruit interest.

Summer Color

<u>Plant</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Flower Color</u>
Catalpa	tree	white
Elderberry	tree / shrub	white*
Golden Raintree	tree	yellow
Hawthorn	tree	white, pink*
Japanese Tree Lilac	tree	white

<u>Plant</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Flower Color</u>
Gaillardia	perennial	orange, red, yellow
Gaura	perennial	white, pink, red
Goldenrod	perennial	yellow
Hollyhock	perennial	various
Hosta	perennial	purple, white*

Linden	tree	yellow (fragrant)
Purple Robe Locust	tree	purple, pink
Silk tree (Mimosa)	tree	pink
Smoke Tree	tree / shrub	pink*
Bluemist Shrub	shrub	blue, purple
Bumald Spirea	shrub	pink, white*
Butterfly Bush	shrub	white, purple
Hydrangea	shrub	blue, pink, white*
Potentilla	shrub	yellow, white, orange
Rose Mallow	shrub	pink, white, red
Rose of Sharon	shrub	white, pink, purple
Yucca	shrub	cream-white*
Agastache	perennial	orange, pink, purple
Artemesia	perennial	white*
Black-eyed Susan	perennial	yellow
Bridges' Penstemon	perennial	red, orange
Coreopsis	perennial	yellow, pink
Cranesbill Geranium	perennial	purple
Daylily	perennial	various
Delphinium	perennial	blue, white, pink
Evening Primrose	perennial	yellow, white

Husker Red' Penstemon	perennial	white*
Ice Plant	perennial	pink, yellow*
Jupiter's Beard	perennial	pink
Lavender	perennial	purple, pink
Lupine	perennial	purple, pink, white
Mexican Primrose	perennial	pink
Peony	perennial	various
Pike's Peak' Penstemon	perennial	purple
Pincushion (Scabiosa)	perennial	purple, pink
Poppy	perennial	various
Purple Coneflower	perennial	purple, pink, white
Red Hot Poker	perennial	red, orange, yellow
Red Rocks' Penstemon	perennial	rose, pink, white
Russian Sage	perennial	purple
Russian Stonecrop	perennial	yellow*
Santolina	perennial	yellow*
Shasta Daisy	perennial	white
Siberian Iris	perennial	purple, blue, white
Yarrow	perennial	various (pastels)
Clematis	vine	various
Trumpet Vine	vine	orange, yellow
Canna Lily	rhizome	various

* Indicates other ornamental features such as leaf color or fruit interest.

Fall Color

<u>Plant</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Leaf Color</u>
Amur Maple	tree	red
Autumn Purple' Ash	tree	purple
Bald Cypress	tree	orange
Bigtooth Maple	tree	pink, red, orange
Crabapples	tree	various
Flowering Pear	tree	red, orange, purple
Ginkgo	tree	yellow
Green Ash	tree	yellow
Honeylocust	tree	yellow
Larch	tree	yellow
Northern Red Oak	tree	red, orange
Norway Maple	tree	yellow
Quaking Aspen	tree	yellow
Red Maple	tree	red
Serviceberry	tree / shrub	orange, red
Sumac	tree / shrub	red, orange, yellow

<u>Plant</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Leaf Color</u>
Swedish Aspen	tree	yellow, orange
Sweetgum	tree	orange, red
Washington Hawthorn	tree	orange, red
Zelkova	tree	bronze, orange, red
Burning Bush	shrub	red, hot pink
Cotoneaster	shrub	red, orange
Red-twig Dogwood	shrub	purple
Viburnum	shrub	red, orange, purple
William Penn' Barberry	shrub	bronze, orange, red
'Autumn Joy' Sedum	perennial	pink*
Aster	perennial	purple, pink, white*
Garden Mum	perennial	various*
Japanese Anemone	perennial	pink, white*
Boston Ivy	vine	red, orange, yellow
Virginia Creeper	vine	red

*Indicates flower color.

Winter Interest

Plant	Type	Interest
Arborvitae	tree	evergreen
Blue Atlas Cedar	tree	evergreen
Blue Spruce (dwarf cultivars)	tree	evergreen
Bosnian Pine	tree	evergreen
Crabapples	tree	persistent fruit
Deodar Cedar	tree	evergreen
Juniper	tree	evergreen
Paperbark Maple	tree	bark
River Birch	tree	bark
Scotch Pine	tree	evergreen
White Fir	tree	evergreen
Boxwood	shrub	evergreen
Creeping Junipers	shrub	evergreen

Plant	Type	Interest
English Laurel	shrub	evergreen
Japanese Eonymus	shrub	evergreen
Japanese Yew	shrub	evergreen
Mugo Pine	shrub	evergreen
Photinia	shrub	evergreen
Red-twig Dogwood	shrub	twigs / branches
Winter Creeper Eonymus	shrub	evergreen
Yucca	shrub	foliage
Feather Reed Grass	ornamental grass	texture
Fountain Grass	ornamental grass	texture
Hardy Pampas Grass	ornamental grass	texture
Maiden Grass	ornamental grass	texture
English Ivy	vine	evergreen

Utah State University is committed to providing an environment free from harassment and other forms of illegal discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age (40 and older), disability, and veteran's status. USU's policy also prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in employment and academic related practices and decisions.

Utah State University employees and students cannot, because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or veteran's status, refuse to hire; discharge; promote; demote; terminate; discriminate in compensation; or discriminate regarding terms, privileges, or conditions of employment, against any person otherwise qualified. Employees and students also cannot discriminate in the classroom, residence halls, or in on/off campus, USU sponsored events and activities.

This publication is issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Noelle E. Cockett, Vice President for Extension and Agriculture, Utah State University.