

# Recommended Plants For The Kerrville Area

Compiled and Special Thanks: John Coleman,  
Environmental Education Committee,  
and The City of Kerrville

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We have many blessings in Kerr Country – An enjoyable climate with distinct seasons, a rural setting with cultural amenities befitting a large city, tree-shrouded hills and valleys that explode in spring wildflowers and blaze in fall color, and much, much more. What we are not blessed with is an environment suitable for growing a wide variety of plants, including some that are very popular elsewhere. The reasons for this are:

**Soil.** Our topsoil is characterized as being shallow (as little as two inches above rock) and very alkaline. Yet, most of the plants available in the nursery trade do best in neutral to slightly acid soil, and thrive in the Houston/Dallas corridor and eastward. These plants, when planted in our alkaline soil, will sooner or later become chlorotic, evidenced by yellowing leaves with veins remaining green. This condition of stress, unless corrected by changing the soil ph, will ultimately result in plant failure.

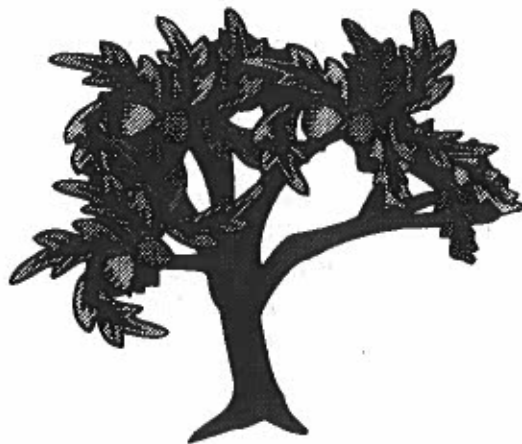
**Climate Extremes.** Our climate is highly variable, ranging in temperature from as low as minus 7 degrees to as high as 110 degrees. While these are absolute extremes, lows in the single digits and highs above 100 degrees are not uncommon. Rainfall is also highly variable, with a record low of 14 inches and a record high of 55 inches, averaging 31 inches per year. In some years there is no appreciable rain for many months – a drought, resulting in mandatory water conservation measures, including restrictions on landscape irrigation. Droughts are not unusual here-since they have occurred in three of the last six years before 2001. Therefore, landscape plants here must be able to survive high and low temperature extremes and severe droughts.

**Deer.** Kerr Country abounds in deer, which will eat and destroy many varieties of landscape plants. In fact, few plants can be considered deer-proof, because if deer get hungry enough, they will eat just about any plant, including some natives. If we wish to have long-lasting plants in our landscapes, we should plant deer-resistant plants-those that are low on a list of plants deer prefer to eat.

Plants that do not tolerate alkaline soil, or cannot survive our extremes of temperature, or last for months without rain, or are subject to browsing by deer will not live here very long. What plants then can live here? Obviously native plants, for they have long survived the area's harsh conditions. But also, there are a number of other, non-native plants that are sufficiently adaptive here as to resemble the natives in performance. Landscaping with both native and adaptive plants tends to provide more interesting and attractive landscapes.

The following list of recommended plants for landscaping in this area has been developed from various sources, including local growers, landscape designers and contractors, the Native Plant Society, and the Riverside Nature Center. Our hope is to assist the public in creating low-maintenance, drought-tolerant, long-lasting, and attractive landscapes.

LARGE TREES	NATIVE / ADAPTIVE	USUAL HEIGHT, FT.	FOLIAGE (1)	COMMENTS
Cedar Elm	Native	50	D	Upright growth habit, makes good shade tree
Chinese Pistache	Adaptive	45	D	Fantastic fall color, relatively fast grower, drought tolerant, insect/disease resistant
Cypress	Native	100	D	For moist areas, fall color
Montezuma Cypress	Near-Native	100	D	Cousin to River Cypress, faster grower
River Cypress	Native	100	D	For moist areas, fall color
Escarpment Black Cherry	Native	60	D	Spring flowers, golden orange fall color
Maple				
Big Tooth Maple	Native	45	D	Only maple for area, fantastic fall color
Shantung Maple	Adaptive	25	D	A Texas superstar™ tree, red fall color
Oak Trees				
Bur Oak	Near-Native	80	D	Large, beautiful tree
Chinquapin Oak	Native	50	D	Beautifully shaped shade tree
Lacey Oak	Native	45	D	Attractive blue/gray foliage
Mexican Oak	Adaptive	75	S	Semi-evergreen, fast growing
Texas Ash	Native	30	D	Strong, long life, good shade tree, attractive fall color
<b>NOTES:</b> 1) Legend: D = Deciduous, E= Evergreen, S = Semi-Evergreen				



ORNAMENTAL TREES	NATIVE / ADAPTIVE	DEER RESISTANT	USUAL HEIGHT , FT	FOLIAGE (1)	COMMENTS
Bradford Pear	Adaptive	No	25	D	White spring blooms, red fall color, plant in good soil - not caliche
Crape Myrtle	Adaptive	No	Varies	D	Deciduous, smooth bark, summer flowers, various sizes & colors
Desert Willow	Native	Yes	30	D	Pink or burgundy Orchid-like flowers in summer, full sun
Eve's Necklace	Native	Yes	20	D	Good understory tree, pink spring flowers & interesting fruit seed pods
Holly					
Possumhaw	Native	Yes	15	D	Red berries remain after leaf drop
Weeping Yaupon	Hybrid of Native	Yes	15	E	Pyramidal habit, pendulous branches
Yaupon	Native	Yes	25	E	Excellent small specimen tree, red berries in winter
Lavender Tree (VITEX)	Adaptive	Yes	20	D	Blue flower spikes in summer
Loquat	Adaptive	Yes	20	E	Tropical look, moderately drought tolerant
Mexican Buckeye	Native	Yes	20	D	Multitrunk understory tree, pink blooms in spring
Mexican Plum	Native	No	20	D	Understory, white blooms in spring, will need supplemental water during drought
Rusty Blackhaw	Native	Yes	15	D	White flowers, blue/black fruit, understory tree, great fall color
Sumac					
Evergreen	Native	Yes	12	E	White flowers in late summer, red berries in fall.
Flame leaf	Native	Yes	20	D	Red fall color, suckers a lot
Texas Madrone	Native	No	30	E	Multi-trunk, understory, slow growing, red berries in fall.
Texas Mountain Laurel	Native	Yes	25	E	Purple spring flowers, watch for caterpillars, unusual bark
Texas Persimmon	Native	Yes	30	D	Smooth bark makes an interesting specimen, small black edible fruit
Texas Pistache	Native	Yes	20	E	Red berries in fall, multi-trunk
Texas Redbud	Native	Yes	20	D	Pink spring flowers, good understory tree, best if protected from west sun
Vasey Oak	Native	No	25	S	Good specimen tree for small areas, semi evergreen, Holly-like leaves
Wax Myrtle	Adaptive	Yes	12	E	Can tolerate wet areas, but also some what drought tolerant

PERENNIALS	DEER	NATIVE /	COLOR	BLOOM PERIOD	SIZE
COMMON NAME	RESISTANT	ADAPTIVE			
Bitterweed ( <i>Hymenoxys Scaposa</i> )	Yes	Native	Yellow	Spring to Fall	1'
Blackfoot Daisy ( <i>Melampodium leucanthum</i> )	Yes	Native	White	Spring to Fall	1'
Brown-eyed Susan ( <i>Rudbeckia goldsturn</i> )	Yes	Native	Yellow	Spring to Summer	2'
Butterfly Bush ( <i>Buddleia davidii</i> )	Yes	Adaptive	Purple/blue/ yellow	Spring to Fall	3 to 6'
Butterfly Weed ( <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i> )	Yes	Native	Orange	Summer to Fall	2 to 3'
Copper Canyon Daisy ( <i>Tagetes lemmonii</i> )	Yes	Adaptive	Yellow	Fall	3'
Coreopsis ( <i>Coreopsis sp.</i> )	Yes	Native	Yellow, orange	Spring to Fall	1 ft.
Damianita ( <i>Chrysactinia mexicana</i> )	Yes	Native	Yellow	Spring to Fall	2'
Daylily ( <i>Hemerocallis sp.</i> )	Yes	Adaptive	Many colors	Spring to Summer	1 to 3'
Fall Aster ( <i>Aster sp.</i> )	No	Native	Purple	Fall	3 to 4'
False Plumbaginoides ( <i>Ceratostigma plumbaginoides</i> )	No	Adaptive	Blue	Summer to Fall	2'
( <i>Gaura lindheimeri</i> )	Yes	Native	White/pink	Spring to Fall	3'
Hill Country Penstemon ( <i>Penstemon triflorus</i> )	Yes	Native	Magenta	Spring	1 to 2'
Hinckley's Columbine ( <i>Aquilegia hinkleyana</i> )	Yes	Native	Yellow	Early spring	18"
Indian Blanket ( <i>Gaillardia sp.</i> )	Yes	Native	Red,yellow	Spring to Fall	18"
Iris ( <i>iridaceae sp.</i> )	Yes	Adaptive	Various	Spring	2'
Lantana ( <i>Lantana sp.</i> )	Yes	Adaptive/ Native	Many colors	Spring to Fall	1 to 4'
Lily of the Nile ( <i>Agapanthus sp.</i> )	Yes	Adaptive	Blue/white	Summer	2'
Gaura					
Lindheimer Butterflies	Yes	Native	White/pink	Spring to Fall	3'
Mexican Mint Marigold ( <i>Tagetes lucida</i> )	Yes	Adaptive	Yellow	Fall	2'

PERENNIALS	DEER	NATIVE/	COLOR	BLOOM PEIOD	SIZE
COMMON NAME	RESISTANT	ADAPTIVE			
Mexican Oregano (Poliomentha longiflora)	Yes	Native	Pink	Summer	1 to 2'
Mexican Petunia (Ruellia brittoniana)	No	Adaptive	Blue/Pink Or White	Summer to Fall	3'
Dwarf Mexican Petunia (Ruellia brittoniana "Katie")	No	Adaptive	Blue/Pink or White	Summer to Fall	6" to 1'
Narcissus (Amaryllidaceae sp.)	Yes	Adaptive	White/yellow	Spring	1 1/2'
Powis Castle Artemesia (Artemesia pontica)	Yes	Adaptive	Silver foliage	N/A	3 to 4'
Purple Coneflower (Echinacea angustifolia)	Yes	Native	Purple/pink	Spring to Fall	2'
Rock Rose (Pavonia lasiopetala)	No	Native	Pink	Spring to Fall	3 to 4'
Russian Sage (Perovskia atriplicifolia)	Yes	Adaptive	Blue/lavender	Summer to Fall	3 to 4'
Sage (Salvia)					
Mealy Blue Sage (Salvia farinacea)	Yes	Native	Blue/purple	Spring to Fall	2'
Mexican Bush Sage (Salvia leucantha)	Yes	Adaptive	Blue/purple	Spring to Fall	3 to 4'
Scarlett Sage (Salvia coccinea)	Yes	Native	Red	Spring to Fall	2'
Skullcap					
Pink (Scutellaria suffrutescens)	Yes	Adaptive	Pink	Spring to Fall	1'
Purple (Scutellariawrightii)	Yes	Native	Purple	Spring to Fall	1'
Society Garlic (Tulbaghia violalea)	Yes	Native	Lavender	Spring to Fall	1'
Square-bud Primrose (Calyophys berlandieri)	No	Native	Yellow	Spring to Fall	1 to 2'
Turk's Cap (Malvaviscus arboreus)	Yes	Native	Red	Spring to Fall	3 to 5'
Verbena (Verbena sp.)	Yes	Native	Many colors	Spring to Fall	6" to 1'
Yarrow (Achillea millefolium)	Yes	Native	White/yellow	Spring to Summer	1 to 2'
Zexmania (Wedelia hispida)	Yes	Native	Orange	Late summer to Fall	1 to 2'

SHRUBS	DEER	NATIVE /	USUAL	Foliage	COMMENTS
	RESIS- TANT	ADAPTIVE	HEIGHT (FT)	(1)	
Abelia					
Dwarf Abelia	Yes	Adaptive	4	E	Medium evergreen with pink flowers in summer
Glossy Abelia	Yes	Adaptive	8	E	Large shrub with white flowers in summer
Acuba	Yes	Adaptive	4	E	Best with variegated leaves, shade
Agarita	Yes	Native	6	E	Holly-like foliage, red berries, yellow flowers in spring, needs good drainage
American Beautyberry	Yes	Native	5	D	Medium shrub, purple fruit in late summer, early fall
Bird of Paradise Bush	Yes	Adaptive	10	D	Large shrub or small tree spectacular red & yellow flowers in summer
Bridal Wreath Spirea	Yes	Adaptive	6	D	White spring flowers, sprawling growth
Cherry Sage	Yes	Native	3	S	Many colors, prune back in winter
Chile Pequin	Yes	Adaptive	2	D	Grows in sun or shade, hot peppers
Cholla Walking Stick	Yes	Native	5	E	Fast grower, pink flowers in May/June
Crape Myrtle	No	Adaptive	Various 2-30	D	Summer blooming, various colors
Eleagnus	Yes	Adaptive	8	E	Large dusty gray foliage, needs good drainage
Germander Dwarf	Yes	Adaptive	1	E	Compact, relative of natives
Flame Acanthus	Yes	Native	4	D	Orange/red flowers in summer and fall
Grey Leaf Cotonaster	Yes	Adaptive	5	E	Large sprawling shrub, dusty gray foliage, xeric
Holly					
Dwarf Burford	Yes	Adaptive	5	E	Compact, red berries in winter, might need iron & sulfur supplements
Dwarf Chinese	Yes	Adaptive	4	E	Compact round shape, red berries in winter, prickly leaves
Dwarf Yaupon	Yes	Dwf. Form of Native	3	E	Compact mounding, excellent heat and drought tolerance
"Mary Nell"	Yes	Adaptive	12	E	Upright, heavy berry producer, interesting foliage, may need acid/iron
"Nellie Stevens"	Yes	Adaptive	12	E	Upright, heavy berry producer, may need acid/iron
"Will Fleming" Yaupon	Yes	Hybrid of Native	12 to 15	E	Thin, columnal-shaped, compact, shrub

SHRUBS	DEER	NATIVE / Adaptive	USUAL	Foliage (1)	COMMENTS
COMMON NAME	Resistant	Adaptive	Height (ft.)		
Honeysuckle <i>Lonicera albiflora</i>	No	Native	4	S	White blooms in spring, red berries in fall, hard to find in nurseries
Italian Jasmine	Yes	Adaptive	5	E	Sprawling, with yellow spring flowers
Japanese Ligustrum	No	Adaptive	20	E	Very tall shrub for screening
Japanese Yew	Yes	Adaptive	14	E	Tall, and graceful needs shade, may need supplemental water in summer
Juniper	Yes	Adaptive	Various	E	Many varieties, sizes and growth habits, tough
Mexican Silk Tassel	Yes	Native	10	E	Purplish berries into winter, sun to part shade, xeric
Nandina					
Compact	Yes	Adaptive	3 to 5	E	Resembles standard
"Gulf Stream" Nandina	Yes	Adaptive	2 to 4	E	Very compact, attractive hybrid of compact Nandina
Nana	Yes	Adaptive	2	E	Morning sun only, needs good soil, no berries
Standard	Yes	Adaptive	6 to 8	E	Layered look, red/bronze foliage in winter, red berries
Oleander	Yes	Adaptive	10	E	Summer bloomer, red is most cold hardy, poisonous
Prickly Pear Cactus	Yes	Native	3	E	Yellow flowers, rosy purple fruit, prickless variety also
Red Leaf Barberry	Yes	Adaptive	5	D	Bronze foliage spring to fall, dwarf available also
Red Yucca	Yes	Adaptive	3	E	Red flower spikes, dark green grass-like leaves, xeric
Rosemary Upright	Yes	Adaptive	5	E	Medium to large round shrub, xeric, light blue flowers in spring
Spring Bouquet Viburnum	Yes	Adaptive	6	E	Pinkish white flowers in spring, morning sun best
Texas Barberry	Yes	Native	4	E	Holly-like foliage, yellow flowers in spring, yellow blushed with red berries bronze foliage in fall
Texas Sage (Compact)	Yes	Native	5	E	Lavender flowers, several varieties exist, very Xeric (Drought tolerant)
Texas Sotol	Yes	Native	3	E	White flower spikes, xeric
Wax Myrtle Dwarf	Yes	Adaptive	6	E	Can tolerate wet areas but somewhat drought tolerant
Yucca	Yes	Native	Varies	E	Several different varieties and sizes, very xeric

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ORNAMENTAL GRASSES	BOTANICAL NAME	COLOR	BLOOM PERIOD	SIZE
COMMON NAME				
Pampas Grass	Cortaderia selloana	White	Summer to Fall	5 to 8'
Maiden Grass	Miscanthus sinensis	Copper	Summer to Fall	4 to 5'
Purple Muhly Grass	Muhlenbergia Filipes	Violet/Tan	Summer to Fall	2 to 3'
Lindheimer's Muhly Grass (Native)	Muhlenbergia Lindheimeria	Straw	Summer to Fall	3'
Bear Grass (Native)	Nolina texana	White/Straw	Summer to Fall	1'
Blue Fescue	Festuca glauca	Blue Foliage	N/A	6 to 12'
Side Oats Grama (The State Grass of Texas)	Bouteloua Curtipendula	Purple Tinted	Spring to Fall	1 to 2'
Note: All Ornamental Grasses are deer resistant				

LAWN GRASSES	COMMENTS
Bermuda (Common)	Non-native but acts like one. Will go dormant during drought and green up again with rain. Takes more water than Buffalo grass to stay green. Somewhat subject to housing chiggers. Some hybrids (ex. 419 Bermuda) make a better lawn than common. Biggest problem of all Bermudas is that they spread by underground rhizomes, therefore virtually impossible to keep out of beds.
Buffalo Grass	Native, spreading, most drought tolerant, requires less care than others.
St. Augustine	Spreading non-native. Best variety here is Raleigh. Best planted in filtered to part shade. Least drought tolerant of all grasses in full sun. Subject to die back in cold weather. Numerous disease & insect problems.
Zoysia	Spreading non-native, number of varieties. Best is Jamur, which looks like a dwarf St. Augustine. Best in filtered or partial shade. More cold & drought tolerant, fewer insect problems than St. Augustine.



GROUND COVERS	BOTANICAL NAME	DEER Resistant	NATIVE / Adaptive	Foliage (1)	COMMENTS
"Harbor Dwarf" Nandina	Nandina "Harbor Dwarf"	Yes	Adaptive	E	Red/bronze color in fall
Ajuga	Ajuga reptans	No	Adaptive	E	Best in shade, blue/purple flowers
Asian Jasmine	Trachelospermum asiaticum	No	Adaptive	E	Makes dense 'carpet'
Blue Shade	Ruellia Caroliniensis	No	Adaptive	D	Blue petunia-like flowers spring to fall, part sun to shade
English Ivy	Hedera helix	Yes	Adaptive	E	Shade loving vine
Green Santolina	Santolina virens	Yes	Adaptive	E	Drought tolerant, green lacy foliage, yellow flowers
Grey Santolina	Santolina chamaeoparissus	Yes	Adaptive	E	Drought tolerant, gray lacy foliage and yellow summer flowers
Gregg Dalea	Dalea Greggii	Yes	Native	D	Beautiful silvery blue foliage, purple flowers May to Sept. very xeric
Liriope	Liriope muscari	No	Adaptive	E	Grass-like, variegated and giant varieties exist
Mondo/Monkey grass	Ophiopogon japonicus	Yes	Adaptive	E	Narrow grass-like foliage for shade, dwarf variety too
Moss Pink / Thrift	Phlox subulata	Yes	Adaptive	D	Pink/blue flowers in early spring
Prostrate Juniper	Juniperus horizontalis	Yes	Adaptive	E	Rugged, several varieties, will not tolerate wet sites, not for shade
Prostrate Rosemary	Rosemarinus officinalis	Yes	Adaptive	E	Drought tolerant, blue flower, marginal in unusual cold
River Fern	Dryopteris normalis	Yes	Native	D	Needs shade and moist soil
Southern Wood Fern	Thelypteris kunthii	Yes	Native	D	Needs shade and moist soil
Trailing Silver Germander	Teucrium cossonii	Yes	Adaptive	E	Creeping, blue silver foliage, purple flowers in spring
Vinca	Vinca major	Yes	Adaptive	E	Loose airy evergreen, blue flowers, shade, occasional caterpillars

VINES	BOTANICAL NAME	DEER	NATIVE / Adaptive	Foliage (1)	COMMENTS
Carolina Jessamine	Gelsemium sempervirens	Yes	Adaptive	E	Yellow spring flowers, watch for leaf spot
Confederate Jasmine	Trachelosperum jasminoides	No	Adaptive	E	Fragrant spring flowers, don't plant on north side
Coral Honeysuckle	Lonicera sempervirens	No	Native	S	Coral/red flowers except in winter
Crossvine	Bignonia Capreolata	No	Native	S	Red/yellow tubular flowers in spring
English Ivy	Hedera helix	Yes	Adaptive	E	Shade, can be used as a ground
Lady Banksia rose	Rosa banksia	No	Adaptive	S	Spring blooming white or yellow, quite drought tolerant, huge-can be trained to shrub form
Trumpet Vine	Campsis Radicans	Yes	Native	D	Orange/red tubular flowers in summer suckers a lot
Virginia Creeper	Parthenocissus quinquefolia	Yes	Native	D	Clings to walls easily, red/orange fall color
Wisteria	Wisteria sp.	No	Adaptive	D	Aggressive vine, blue flowers in spring, may need acid/iron

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