DROUGHT TOLERANT PLANTS FOR THE RICHARDSON LANDSCAPE
Drought Tolerant Landscaping

The drought that North Texas has experienced for the past several years has introduced a new normal to the region, in which water conservation and limitations on watering will be a permanent part of how this vital resource is managed. With that in mind, Richardson residents and businesses should consider landscaping and trees that can withstand our local climate with little watering required.

As you will see in this guide, drought tolerant landscaping does not mean yards without color, without beauty or without greenery.

This publication can serve as a reference guide for selecting plants of all types: decorative flowers, shrubs, groundcover, and both ornamental and canopy trees. Recommendations are based on Texas A&M AgriLife Extension’s Earth-Kind database. The drought tolerant index that Earth-Kind uses is on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the most drought tolerant. The plants in this guide are rated as 7.5 and above and are well suited for the North Texas environment.

For questions about this guide, please contact:
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Additional resources:
Native or Drought-Tolerant Plants
Earth-Kind Landscape Index
aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/plantselector
Texas Smartscape
txsmartscape.com
Texas Superstar Plants
texassuperstar.com
Native Plant Society of Texas
npsot.org
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Center at Dallas
dallas.tamu.edu

Water Supply and Conservation
North Texas Municipal Water District
ntmwd.com
City of Richardson Water Conservation
cor.net/WaterConservation

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cor.net/WaterConservation
972-744-4220
PERENNIALS

grow and bloom over the spring and summer, die back every autumn and winter, and then return in the spring from their root-stock
AMERICAN BEAUTYBERRY
*Callicarpa americana*
- **Water:** Low
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Size:** 4–6 feet
- **Flowers:** White-Pink, Purple-Pink
- **Bloom Period:** Summer, Fall

BLACKFOOT DAISY
*Melampodium leucanthum*
- **Water:** Low
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Size:** 6–12 inches
- **Flowers:** White, Yellow
- **Bloom Period:** Spring, Summer, Fall

BLUE PLUMBAGO
*Plumbago auriculata*
- **Water:** Medium
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Size:** 2–4 feet
- **Flowers:** Light Blue
- **Bloom Period:** Spring, Summer, Fall

CORALBERRY
*Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*
- **Water:** Low
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Flowers:** Coral-Pink, Purple-Pink
- **Bloom Period:** Summer

DWARF POMEGRANATE
*Punica granatum*
- **Water:** Low
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Flowers:** Red-Orange
- **Bloom Period:** Spring, Summer, Fall
**EVENING PRIMROSE**
*Oenothera speciosa*
- Water: Low
- Heat Tolerance: High
- Size: 12–18 inches
- Flowers: Pale Pink, Dark Pink
- Bloom Period: Spring

**GIANT TURK’S CAP**
*Malvaviscus aboreus*
- Water: Low
- Heat Tolerance: High
- Size: 7–9 feet
- Flowers: Red, White
- Bloom Period: Spring, Summer, Fall

**PERENNIALS**

**MEXICAN HAT**
*Ratibida columnaris*
- Water: Low
- Heat Tolerance: High
- Size: 18–36 inches
- Flowers: Yellow, Red
- Bloom Period: Spring, Summer, Fall

**LANCELEAF COREOPSIS**
*Coreopsis lanceolata*
- Water: Low
- Heat Tolerance: High
- Size: 1–3 feet
- Flowers: Yellow
- Bloom Period: Spring, Summer

**LANTANA**
*Lantana spp.*
- Water: Low
- Heat Tolerance: High
- Size: 1–6 feet
- Flowers: White, Purple, Orange, Yellow, Pink, Red
- Bloom Period: Spring, Summer, Fall
PERENNIALS

**PASSIONFLOWER**
*Passiflora spp.*
- **Water:** Medium
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Size:** Up to 10 ft.
- **Flowers:** Blue-Purple, Red
- **Bloom Period:** Spring, Summer, Fall

**MEXICAN MINT MARIGOLD**
*Tagetes lucida*
- **Water:** Low
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Size:** 2–3 feet
- **Flowers:** Yellow
- **Bloom Period:** Summer, Fall

**SHOWY STONECROP SEDUM**
*Sedum spectabile*
- **Water:** Medium
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Size:** 1–2 feet
- **Flowers:** White, Bronze-Red
- **Bloom Period:** Summer

**PLAINS COREOPSIS**
*Coreopsis tinctoria*
- **Water:** Low
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Size:** 1–4 feet
- **Flowers:** Yellow, Red
- **Bloom Period:** Spring, Summer

**ROCKROSE**
*Pavonia lasiopetala*
- **Water:** Low
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Size:** 1–4 feet
- **Flowers:** Pink
- **Bloom Period:** Spring, Summer, Fall
smaller, often woody plants that provide color and variety to your landscape

**SHRUBS**

- **Pg 8** Agarito
- **Pg 8** American Elderberry
- **Pg 8** Century Plant
- **Pg 8** Chinese Fringe Flower
- **Pg 8** Chinese Photinia
- **Pg 9** Dwarf Wax Myrtle
- **Pg 9** Prairie Flameleaf Sumac
- **Pg 9** Red Yucca
- **Pg 9** Sweetbay Magnolia
- **Pg 9** Yucca
SHRUBS

**AGARITO**  
*Berberis trifoliolata*  
**Water:** Low  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Size:** 3–5 feet  
**Grow Period:** Spring, Winter

**AMERICAN ELDERBERRY**  
*Sambucus canadensis*  
**Water:** Low  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Size:** 3–10 feet  
**Grow Period:** Spring, Summer

**CENTURY PLANT**  
*Agave americana*  
**Water:** Low  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Size:** 5–10 feet  
**Grow Period:** Spring, Summer

**CHINESE FRINGE FLOWER**  
*Loropetalum chinense*  
**Water:** Medium  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Size:** 6–8 feet  
**Grow Period:** Spring, Winter

**CHINESE PHOTINIA**  
*Photinia serratifolia*  
**Water:** Low  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Size:** 15–20 feet  
**Grow Period:** Spring
**SWEETBAY MAGNOLIA**  
*Magnolia virginiana*  
**Water:** Medium  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Size:** 15–25 feet  
**Grow Period:** Spring, Summer, Fall

**YUCCA**  
*Yucca spp.*  
**Water:** Low  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Size:** 1–15 feet  
**Grow Period:** Spring, Summer

**PRAIRIE FLAMELEAF SUMAC**  
*Rhus lanceolata*  
**Water:** Low  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Size:** 10–15 feet  
**Grow Period:** Summer

**RED YUCCA**  
*Hesperaloe parviflora*  
**Water:** Low  
**Grow Period:** Spring, Summer

**DWARF WAX MYRTLE**  
*Myrica pusilla*  
**Water:** Low  
**Grow Period:** Spring

**SHRUBS**
protects soil from erosion and evaporation and helps to prevent weed growth.

**GROUND COVER**

- **Pg 11** - Asian Jasmine
- **Pg 9** - Liriope
- **Pg 11** - Big Periwinkle
- **Pg 9** - Monkey Grass
- **Pg 11** - Coral Honeysuckle
- **Pg 9** - Salvia/Sage
- **Pg 11** - Japanese Garden Juniper
- **Pg 9** - Verbena
Japanese Garden Juniper
Juniperus procumbens
Water: Low
Heat Tolerance: High
Exposure: Sun
Grow Period: Spring

Big Periwinkle
Vinca major
Water: Medium
Heat Tolerance: High
Exposure: Partial Sun, Shade
Grow Period: Spring, Summer, Fall

Groundcover

Coral Honeysuckle (Vine)
Lonicera sempervirens
Water: Low
Heat Tolerance: High
Exposure: Sun, Partial Sun
Grow Period: Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter

Asian Jasmine
Trachelospermum asiaticum
Water: Low
Heat Tolerance: High
Exposure: Sun, Partial Sun, Shade
Grow Period: Spring
MONKEY GRASS
Ophiopogon japonicus  
**Water:** Medium  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Exposure:** Partial Sun, Shade  
**Grow Period:** Summer

SALVIA/SAGE  Salvia spp.  
**Water:** Low  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Exposure:** Sun, Partial Sun  
**Grow Period:** Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter

VERBENA  Verbena spp.  
**Water:** Medium  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Exposure:** Sun, Partial Sun  
**Grow Period:** Spring, Summer, Fall

LIRIOPE  Liriope muscari  
**Water:** Low  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Exposure:** Sun, Partial Sun, Shade  
**Grow Period:** Summer
smaller trees that often flower during the year, providing color and other aesthetic benefits to your yard

ORNAMENTAL TREES

Pg 14  Ashe Juniper

Pg 15  Desert Willow

Pg 14  Chinese Photinia

Pg 15  Mexican Plum

Pg 14  Common Crape Myrtle

Pg 15  Rocky Mountain Juniper

Pg 14  Copperbark Crape Myrtle

Pg 15  Rough-Leaf Dogwood
**ORNAMENTAL TREES**

**CHINESE PHOTINIA**
*Photinia serratifolia*
- Water: Low
- Heat Tolerance: High
- Exposure: Sun, Partial Sun
- Height: 15–20 feet
- Canopy Width: 10–15 feet
- Grow Period: Spring

**COPPERBARK CRAPE MYRTLE**
*Lagerstroemia fauriei*
- Water: Low
- Heat Tolerance: High
- Exposure: Sun
- Height: 15–25 feet
- Canopy Width: 15–25 feet
- Grow Period: Summer

**ASHE JUNIPER**
*Juniperus ashei*
- Water: Low
- Heat Tolerance: High
- Exposure: Sun
- Height: 15–20 feet
- Canopy Width: 15–20 feet
- Grow Period: Spring, Winter

**COMMON CRAPE MYRTLE**
*Lagerstroemia indica*
- Water: Low
- Heat Tolerance: High
- Exposure: Sun
- Height: Most are 10–15 feet
- Canopy Width: Most are 8–12 feet
- Grow Period: Spring, Summer
**Mexican Plum**
*Prunus mexicana*
- **Water:** Low
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Exposure:** Sun
- **Height:** 15–20 feet
- **Canopy Width:** 20–25 feet
- **Grow Period:** N/A

**Desert Willow**
*Chilopsis linearis*
- **Water:** Low
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Exposure:** Sun
- **Height:** 15–20 feet
- **Canopy Width:** 15–20 feet
- **Grow Period:** Spring, Summer, Fall

**Rough-Leaf Dogwood**
*Cornus drummondii*
- **Water:** Low
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Exposure:** Sun, Partial Sun
- **Height:** 15–20 feet
- **Canopy Width:** 20–30 feet
- **Grow Period:** Spring
large trees provide shade to your yard

**CANOPY TREES**

- Common Bald Cypress (Pg 17)
- Pond Cypress (Pg 17)
- American Elm (Pg 17)
- Cedar Elm (Pg 17)
- Lacebark Elm (Pg 17)
- Winged Elm (Pg 18)
- Bur Oak (Pg 18)
- Chinkapin Oak (Pg 18)
- Escarpment Live Oak (Pg 18)
- Post Oak (Pg 19)
- Shumard Oak (Pg 19)
- Texas Red Oak (Pg 19)
- Willow Oak (Pg 19)
- Chinese Pistachio (Pg 19)
**POND CYPRESS**
*Taxodium ascendens*
- **Water:** Medium
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Exposure:** Sun, Partial Sun
- **Height:** 45–55 feet
- **Canopy Width:** 10–20 feet
- **Grow Period:** Spring

**COMMON BALD CYPRESS**
*Taxodium distichum*
- **Water:** Low
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Exposure:** Sun
- **Height:** 50–70 feet
- **Canopy Width:** 25–40 feet
- **Grow Period:** Spring, Winter

**AMERICAN ELM**
*Ulmus americana*
- **Water:** Low
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Exposure:** Sun
- **Height:** 60–80 feet
- **Canopy Width:** 50–90 feet
- **Grow Period:** Spring, Winter

**LACEBARK ELM**
*Ulmus parvifolia*
- **Water:** Low
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Exposure:** Sun
- **Height:** 30–50 feet
- **Canopy Width:** 30–40 feet
- **Grow Period:** Summer, Fall

**CEDAR ELM**
*Ulmus crassifolia*
- **Water:** Low
- **Heat Tolerance:** High
- **Exposure:** Sun
- **Height:** 40–70 feet
- **Canopy Width:** 40–70 feet
- **Grow Period:** Summer
CHINKAPIN OAK
Quercus muehlenbergii
Water: Low
Heat Tolerance: High
Exposure: Sun
Height: 50–60 feet
Canopy Width: 50–60 feet
Grow Period: Spring

WINGED ELM
Ulmus alata
Water: Low
Heat Tolerance: High
Exposure: Sun, Partial Sun
Height: 30–60 feet
Canopy Width: 25–45 feet
Grow Period: Spring

ESCARPMENT LIVE OAK
Quercus fusiformis
Water: Low
Height: 20–35 feet
Canopy Width: 25–40 feet
Grow Period: Spring

BUR OAK
Quercus macrocarpa
Water: Low
Height: 60–80 feet
Canopy Width: 40–60 feet
Grow Period: Spring
WILLLOW OAK  
**Quercus phellos**  
**Water:** Medium  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Exposure:** Sun  
**Height:** 60–80 feet  
**Canopy Width:** 40–60 feet  
**Grow Period:** Spring

POST OAK  
**Quercus stellata**  
**Water:** Low  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Exposure:** Sun  
**Height:** 40–60 feet  
**Canopy Width:** 40–60 feet  
**Grow Period:** Spring

SHUMARD OAK  
**Quercus shumardii**  
**Water:** Low  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Exposure:** Sun  
**Height:** 50–60 feet  
**Canopy Width:** 40–50 feet  
**Grow Period:** Spring

TEXAS RED OAK  
**Quercus texana**  
**Water:** Low  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Exposure:** Sun  
**Height:** 30–50 feet  
**Canopy Width:** 30–50 feet  
**Grow Period:** Spring

CHINESE PISTACHIO  
**Pistacia chinensis**  
**Water:** Low  
**Heat Tolerance:** High  
**Exposure:** Sun  
**Height:** 30–40 feet  
**Canopy Width:** 40–50 feet  
**Grow Period:** Spring
Turf Lawns

Each species of grass has its own ideal growing conditions—soil type and depth, shade tolerance, amount of traffic it will tolerate, the level of maintenance required, and the amount of irrigation needed.

Warm season grasses turn straw-colored at the first frost and may go dormant in the winter in Texas. While some species of grass are well adapted to the North Texas climate (bermudagrasses and buffalograss, for instance), others such as St. Augustine may require a significant amount of supplemental water and are not considered drought tolerant. Grasses listed below are considered the most adapted to the Richardson area.

The table below includes information about warm season grasses from AggieTurf, the Texas A&M University Turfgrass Program. Visit aggieturf.tamu.edu for more information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bermudagrass</th>
<th>Buffalograss</th>
<th>Zoysiagrass</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shade Tolerance</td>
<td>Very low to low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate to high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Requirement</td>
<td>Moderate to low</td>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drought Tolerance</td>
<td>Very good to excellent</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Very good</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traffic Tolerance</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate to high</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cold Tolerance</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Moderate to high</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disease Potential</td>
<td>Low to moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low to moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mowing Frequency</td>
<td>3 to 7 days</td>
<td>7 to 14 days (if mowed)</td>
<td>5 to 10 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mowing Height</td>
<td>1 to 2 inches</td>
<td>2.5 to 3 inches</td>
<td>.5 to 2 inches</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leaf Texture</td>
<td>Fine</td>
<td>Fine</td>
<td>Medium to fine</td>
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