Native grasses & groundcovers

in the residential landscape
Grasses

• Buffalo Grass (*Bouteloua dactyloides*)
• Cedar Sedge (*Carex planostachys*)
• Lindheimer’s Muhly (*Muhlenbergia lindheimeri*)
• Gulf Muhly (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*)
• Mexican Feathergrass (*Nassella tenuissima*)
• Yellow Indiangrass (*Sorghastrum nutons*)
• Inland Sea Oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*)
• Sideoats Grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*)
• Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*)
• * Devil’s shoestring/Ribbon grass (*Nolina lindheimeriana*)

* Actually a shrub, despite common name
Bouteloua dactyloides

Photo credits: Sally & Andy Wasowski
Buffalo Grass

Buffalograss
*Bouteloua dactyloides* (Nutt.) J.T. Columbus

Poaceae (Grass Family)

Perennial turfgrass—3-12 inches high
Very drought tolerant sod-forming turfgrass. Cultivars 609, Prairie, and Stampede are used for lawns and may be mowed or allowed to grow.

Attracts:
- Butterflies
- Birds

Water use:
Low, Medium

Light:
Sun

Soil moisture:
Dry

Deer resistance:
None

Blooms: JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

Warnings – none listed

Photo credits: Sally & Andy Wasowski; Joseph Marcus
Carex planostachys

Photo credits: Sally & Andy Wasowski
Cedar sedge

*Carex planostachys*

Cyperaceae (SedgeFamily)

Perennial, evergreen grass – 6” to 1’ high. Ornamental or accent plant. Found in nature under junipers or among taller grasses in meadows and prairies. May be used as part of herb layer under trees or shrubs in partial shade.

Water use:
Low

Light:
Part shade

Soil moisture:
Dry

Deer resistance:
Not provided

Warnings – none listed

Blooms: JAN  FEB  MAR  APR  MAY  JUN  JUL  AUG  SEP  OCT  NOV  DEC

Native Plant Information source: [http://www.wildflower.org/explore](http://www.wildflower.org/explore)  Photo credits: Sally & Andy Wasowski
Muhlenbergia lindheimeri

Photo credit: Sam C. Strickland
Lindheimer muhly
Big muhly
*Muhlenbergia lindheimeri*
Poaceae (Grass Family)

Perennial bunchgrass 2-5 ft with fountain shape and silvery seed heads. Ornamental native preferable to imported Pampas grasses. Use as screen in groups, accent, or singly as focal point. Does not need to be cut back in winter.

**Attracts:** Leaves used as nesting material by Birds

**Water use:** Medium

**Light:** Sun

**Soil moisture:** Moist

**Deer resistance:** High

**Blooms:**

Native Plant Information source: [http://www.wildflower.org/explore](http://www.wildflower.org/explore)  Photo credits: Sally & Andy Wasowski, Sam Strickland
Muhlenbergia capillaris

Photo credits: Sally & Andy Wasowski
Gulf Muhly
Hairy-awn muhly, Hair grass
*Muhlenbergia capillaris*
Poaceae (Grass Family)

1 12-3 ft., perennial grass with a distinctive seed head up to half as long as the entire plant. Purple spikelets create a deep pink feathery glow in the fall.
Requires high water use – not appropriate for xeriscape – good in meadow garden.

**Attracts:**

**Water use:**
High

**Light:**
Sun

**Soil moisture:**
Moist

**Deer resistance:**
High

**Blooms:**

No warnings.

Photo credits: Sally and Andy Wasowski, Bob Kamper
Nassella tenuissima

Photo credits: Sally & Andy Wasowski
Mexican Feathergrass

Finestem needlegrass, Mexican Wiregrass

*Nassella tenuissima*

Poaceae (Grass Family)

Perennial, grass-like, grows in clumps 1-3 ft. high. Has striking blooms in late summer early fall. Low maintenance. For best results, do not mulch heavily, ensure good drainage, and do not cut back during winter.

**Water use:**
Low

**Light:**
Sun, Part shade

**Soil moisture:**
Dry

**Deer resistance:**
High

**Blooms:**

Native Plant Information source: [http://www.wildflower.org/explore](http://www.wildflower.org/explore)  Photo credits: Sally & Andy Wasowski

**No warnings**
Sorghastrum nutans

Photo credits: Sally & Andy Wasowski
Yellow Indiangrass
Indian grass
*Sorghastrum nutans*
Poaceae (Grass Family)

An important species in the tallgrass prairie. From 3-8 ft. high, stays low most of the year, gets tall before bloom in early autumn. Best planted en masse or in wildflower meadow. Flowers are bright yellow in contrast with blue gray foliage.

Attracts:
Butterflies

Water use:
Medium

Light:
Sun, Part shade, shade

Soil moisture:
Dry, Moist

Deer resistance:
High

Blooms: JAN  FEB  MAR  APR  MAY  JUN  JUL  AUG  SEP  OCT  NOV  DEC

Native Plant Information source: [http://www.wildflower.org/explore](http://www.wildflower.org/explore)  Photo credits: Sally & Andy Wasowski
Chasmanthium latifolium

Photo credit: Joseph Marcus
Inland Sea Oats
Indian wood oats, Wild oats, River oats
*Chasmanthium latifolium*
Poaceae (Grass Family)

Perennial, grows 2-4 ft. high in clumps of grass. Flowers are large, oat-like spikes. Makes a solid mat and is often planted to stabilize sandy dunes.

**Water use:**
Medium

**Light:**
Part shade, Shade

**Soil moisture:**
Dry, Moist

**Deer resistance:**
High

**Blooms:**
JAN, FEB, MAR, APR, MAY, JUN, JUL, AUG, SEP, OCT, NOV, DEC

Native Plant Information source: [http://www.wildflower.org/explore](http://www.wildflower.org/explore)  Photo credits: Joseph Marcus, Sam C. Strickland
Panicum virgatum

Photo credits: Sally & Andy Wasowski
Switchgrass
Wand panic grass

Panicum virgatum
Poaceae (Grass Family)

Perennial clump grass 3-6 ft. high.
Purple stigmas during bloom season. Green leaves turn yellow in fall. Host for Delaware Skipper butterfly larva.

Water use:
Medium

Light:
Sun, Part shade

Soil moisture:
Dry, Moist

Deer resistance:
High

Attracts:
Butterflies
Birds

Blooms: JAN  FEB  MAR  APR  MAY  JUN  JUL  AUG  SEP  OCT  NOV  DEC

Warnings – none listed.

Native Plant Information source: [http://www.wildflower.org/explore](http://www.wildflower.org/explore) Photo credits: Sam Strickland, Sally & Andy Wasowski
Bouteloua curtipendula

Photo credits: Sally & Andy Wasowski
**Sideoats grama**  
*Bouteloua curtipendula*  
Poaceae (Grass Family)

Perennial warm season clumping grass 2-3 ft high.

State grass of Texas, mixes well with Spring wildflower plantings. Becomes tan in fall; sometimes basal foliage turns reddish or purple. Larval host for some Skipper butterflies; used by birds for nesting materials and grazed by mammals.

**Attracts:**
- Butterflies
- Birds

**Water use:** Medium

**Light:** Sun, Part shade

**Soil moisture:** Dry, Moist

**Deer resistance:** High

Warnings – none listed

**Blooms:**

Native Plant Information source: [http://www.wildflower.org/explore](http://www.wildflower.org/explore)  
Photo credits: Joseph Marcus, Sally & Andy Wasowski
Nolina lindheimeriana

Photo credits: Joseph Marcus
Devil’s Shoestring

Ribbon grass

*Nolina lindheimeriana*

Liliaceae (Lily Family)

Perennial shrub 1-3 ft. in height.

Ornamental and practical uses. Maintenance and care. Type of garden appropriate.

Water use:

Low

Light:

Sun, Part shade

Soil moisture:

Dry

Deer resistance:

High

Blooms: JAN, FEB, MAR, APR, MAY, JUN

Native Plant Information source: [http://www.wildflower.org/explore](http://www.wildflower.org/explore) Photo credits: Joseph Marcus
Groundcovers

- Gregg Dalea (*Dalea Greggii*)
- Silver Ponyfoot (*Dichondra argentea*)
- Horseherb (*Calyptocarpus vialis*)
- Snake herb (*Dyschoriste linearis*)
Dalea Greggii

Photo credit: Bob Kamper
Gregg Dalea
Gregg’s Prairie Clover
*Dalea Greggii*
Fabaceae (PeaFamily)

Perennial, annual – height
Ornamental and practical uses. Maintenance and care. Type of garden appropriate.

**Light:**
Sun, Part shade

**Water use:**
Low, Medium, High

**Soil moisture:**
Dry

**Deer resistance:**
Moderate

**Attracts:**
Butterflies
Bees

**Blooms:**
![Month Icons]

Native Plant Information source: [http://www.wildflower.org/explore](http://www.wildflower.org/explore)  Photo credits: Harry Cliffe, Paul Cox
Dichondra argentea

Photo credit: Bob Kamper
Silver Ponyfoot

*Silver ponysfoot*

*Dichondra argentea*

Convolvulaceae (Morning-Glory Family)

Perennial groundcover. Striking silver foliage with metallic appearance in the sun. Requires well drained soil. Will freeze back during winter and should be cut back before new growth in the spring. In addition to dense ground cover, is a good choice for falling over rocks or hanging basket.

### Light:
- Sun, Part shade

### Water use:
- Medium

### Soil moisture:
- Dry

### Deer resistance:
- High

### Blooms:

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<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
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Native Plant Information source: [http://www.wildflower.org/explore](http://www.wildflower.org/explore)  
Photo credits: Bob Kamper
Calyptocarpus vialis

Photo credits: Sally & Andy Wasowski
Horseherb
Straggler daisy, Hierba del caballo, Lawnflower
*Calyptocarpus vialis* Less.
Asteraceae e (Aster Family)

Perennial groundcover—height under 1 ft.
Recommended as a groundcover in shady areas such as under oak trees. Will bloom year round in warm areas. May be mowed. Attracts small butterflies such as skippers and sulphurs.

**Attracts:**
Attracts small Butterflies

**Water use:**
Low, Medium

**Light:**
Sun, Part shade, Shade

**Soil moisture:**
Dry, Moist

**Deer resistance:**
??? Not specified

**Blooms:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>JAN</th>
<th>FEB</th>
<th>MAR</th>
<th>APR</th>
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Native Plant Information source: [http://www.wildflower.org/explore](http://www.wildflower.org/explore) Photo credits: Sally & Andy Wasowski
Dyschoriste linearis

Photo credits: David Worthington
Snake herb
Plokadots, Narrowleaf dyschoriste
*Dyschoriste linearis*
Acanthaceae (Acanthus Family)

Perennial herb about 1 – 3 ft. high.
Ornamental pale lavender to purple flowers in Spring and late Summer. Dies back to root in winter and may be mowed or trimmed to encourage Spring growth.

**Attracts:**
Butterflies

**Water use:**
Low

**Light:**
Sun

**Soil moisture:**
Moist, Wet

**Deer resistance:**
Minimal

**Blooms:**
- JAN
- FEB
- MAR
- APR
- MAY
- JUN
- JUL
- AUG
- SEP
- OCT
- NOV
- DEC

Native Plant Information source: [http://www.wildflower.org/explore](http://www.wildflower.org/explore)  
Photo credits: Joseph Marcus, David Worthington
Sources and Resources

- Native Plant Information source: http://www.wildflower.org/explore
- Photo credits: LadyBird Johnson Wildflower Center Collection. Except Bob Kamper photos.
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Common Name

Other names

*Scientific Name*

Latin name (plant Family)

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Perennial, annual – height

Ornamental and practical uses. Maintenance and care. Type of garden appropriate.

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Water use:

Low, Medium, High

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Light:

Sun, Part shade, Shade

---

Soil moisture:

Dry, Moist, Wet

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Deer resistance:

None, Moderate, High

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BLOOMS:

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

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Warnings – if toxic, thorns, etc.

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Native Plant Information source: http://www.wildflower.org