

Questions and Answers

by Sherry Fuller

Q. Deer eat so much of our landscaping. What can we plant that they don't like?
Florence Retell, Pinedale, WY

Q. Please give me a list of perennials and annuals that deer won't eat.
Emma Barret, Boulder, CO

A. Deer can devastate a garden or landscape and trying to keep them away can be frustrating. What deer eat varies according to season, place, and how hungry deer are. Sometimes deer will taste a plant, then leave it alone.

Deer may eat plants they ordinarily wouldn't like if they have been recently planted or stressed in other ways. The plants listed below are usually not deer favorites.

Deer Resistant Plants

TREES

Abies, fir
Acer Negundo, box elder
Celtis, hackberry
Crataegus, hawthorn
Eleagnus angustifolia, Russian olive
Fraxinus, ash
Gleditsia, honey locust
Juglans, walnut
Picea, spruce
Pinus edulis, pinon pine
Populus, cottonwoods
Prunus virginiana, chokecherry
Pseudotsuga menziesii, Douglas fir
Rhus, sumac
Robinia pseudoacacia, black locust
Salix, golden willow
Sorbus, mountain ash

SHRUBS

Amelanchier, serviceberry
Anorpha, leadbush
Berberis, barberry
Caragana, pea shrub
Chaenomeles, flowering quince
Chamaebatiaria, fernbush
Cotinus, smokebush
Cotoneaster, cranberry and Peking
Cowania, cliffrose
Elaeagnus, autumn olive
Euonymus atropurpurea, burning bush
Fallugia, Apache-plume
Forsythia
Holodiscus, rock spiraea
Mahonia, Oregon grape
Philadelphus, mock orange
Physocarpus, ninebark
Potentilla, cinquefoil
Prunus, Nanking and sand cherry
Ribes, currant, gooseberry
Spiraea
Syringa, lilac
Yucca glauca, soap tree yucca

VINES

Clematis paniculata, sweet autumn clematis
Polygonum aubertii, silver-lace vine
Wisteria

ANNUALS

ageratum
alyssum
bachelor's-button
California poppy
canna
celosia
cosmos
Dahlberg daisy
dusty-miller
four-o'clock
Gerber daisy
lantana
larkspur
lobelia
Marguerite daisy
marigold
Mexican sunflower
nasturtium
nierembergia
salvia
sanvitalia
scaveola
scented geranium
snapdragon
stative
strawflower
sunflower
tuberous begonia
vinca

PERENNIALS

Achillea, yarrow
Aconitum, monkshood
Agastache
Arneria, thrift
Aster
Astilbe, false spiraea
Arabis, purple rock cress
Aurinia, basket-of-gold
Campanula, bellflower

Centaurea, bachelor's-button
Centranthus Fuber, red valerian
Chrysopsis, green-and-gold
Cerastium, snow-in-summer
Chrysanthemum leucanthemum, -oxeye daisy -often considered a noxious weed
Coreopsis
Delphinium
Dicentra, bleeding-heart
Digitalis, foxglove
Echinacea, purple coneflower
Erysimum, fleabane daisy
Euphorbia, cushion spurge
Gaillardia, firewheels
Galium odoratum, sweet woodruff
Geranium, hardy geranium
Gypsophila, baby's-breath
Hemerocallis, daylily
Helianthemum, sun rose
Hesperis, sweet rocket
Iris

Kniphofia, red-hot-poker
Lamium
Liatris, gay-feather
Limonium, statice
Lupinus, lupine
Lychnis coronaria, rose campion
Mertensia virginica, Virginia bluebells
Monarda, bee balm
Myosotis, forget-me-not
Nepeta, catmint
Pachysandra
Papaver orientale, Oriental poppy
Paeonia, peony
Perovskia, Russian sage
Phlox subulata, creeping phlox
Potentilla verna, creeping cinquefoil
Ratibida, prairie coneflower
Rudbeckia, black-eyed Susan
Salvia saxifraga, rockfoil
Scabiosa, pincushion flower
Solidago, goldenrod
Stachys, lamb's-ears
Thermopsis, goldenpea
Tradescantia, spiderwort
Verbena
Veronica

BULBS

Allium, flowering onion
Colchicum, autumn crocus
Crocus
Fritillaria imperialis, crown-imperial
Galanthus, snowdrops
Muscari, grape hyacinth
Narcissus, daffodil and narcissus
Scilla, Siberian squill

ORNAMENTAL GRASSES

Calamagrostis, feather reed grass
Erianthus, ravenna grass
Festuca, blue fescue
Helictotrichon, blue oat grass
Imperata, Japanese blood grass
Miscanthus, maidenand silver grass
Pennisetum, fountain grass

HERBS

Deer eat few herbs, apparently liking more bland food. They do browse basil, parsley and cilantro.

dill
feverfew
lavender
mint
oregano
rue
sage
santolina
tansy - often considered a noxious weed
thyme

FOOD PLANTS

Deer eat almost all vegetables, berries plants and fruit trees. They don't seem to like artichokes, rhubarb and potatoes.