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Drought-tolerant Plants (2020)

“Drought-tolerant,” as a category, can cover a range of ideas. On one hand, there are plants that have adapted to live on less water, and these thrive in situations in which the soil dries out thoroughly between deep-soaking rains (or hand-waterings, as the case may be). On the other hand, there are plants that, though they really only thrive and show their best with regular moisture, will *survive* periods of dryness, provided such periods are not of too great a duration. Choosing to grow more plants that truly have low water requirements is a proactive act of water conservation, as well as a reduction in the maintenance needed to have a pretty garden. Increasing the number of plants that can survive periods of drought, even though they might not flourish, can decrease the need (and expense) of replacing plants.

Even though a plant may be considered “drought-tolerant,” this really only applies if the plant is established (i.e., settled in its new home and sending out roots into the surrounding soil). Until then, watering is necessary unless there are regular rains and the ground stays moist. Usually, 4 to 6 weeks of hand-watering is enough to get most “drought-tolerant” plants set and going.

Achillea (Yarrow)
Agastache (Anise Hyssop)
Agave
Allium (Ornamental Onion)
Andropogon gerardii (Big Bluestem)
Armeria (Thrift)
Artemisia
Asarum (Wild Ginger) – dry shade
Asclepias tuberosa (Butterfly Weed)
Asparagus
Baptisia (False Indigo)
Bay Laurel
Bignonia (Crossvine)
Blackberry (Rubus)
Bougainvillea
Buddleja (Butterfly Bush)
Calamagrostis (Feather Reed Grass)
Calendula
Campsis (Trumpet Creeper)
Caryopteris (Bluebeard)
Celosia (Cock's Comb)
Centranthus (Jupiter's Beard)
Clematis (some varieties)
Coreopsis (some varieties)
Cortaderia (Pampas Grass)
Crape Myrtle (Lagerstroemia)
Delosperma (Hardy Ice Plant)
Dianthus (some varieties)
Dusty Miller
Echeveria

Echinacea (Coneflower)
Eragrostis spectabilis (Purple Love Grass)
Euonymus
Euphorbia (Spurge)
Festuca (Blue Fescue)
Gaillardia (Blanket Flower)
Gazania
Gaura
Gelsemium (Swamp Jasmine)
Geranium (Pelargonium)
Gomphrena
Gypsophila (Baby's Breath)
Hedera (English Ivy) – dry shade
Heliopsis (False Sunflower)
Helleborus – dry shade
Hemerocallis (Daylily)
Hosta – dry shade
Hypericum calycinum
Iris (Bearded)
Jasminum (Winter Jasmine)
Kniphofia (Red Hot Poker)
Lagerstroemia (Crape Myrtle)
Lantana
Lavender
Leonotis (Lion's Ear)
Leucanthemum (Shasta Daisy)
Liatris (Gayfeather)
Liriope (Monkey Grass)
Lonicera (Honeysuckle)
Loropetalum
Mandevilla

Mangave
Marigold
Marjoram, Sweet (Origanum maj. Compactum)
Melampodium
Mint (Mentha)
Miscanthus
Monardella macrantha
Muhlenbergia (Pink Muhly Grass)
Nandina
Nasella (Mexican Feather Grass)
Nepeta faassenii (Catmint)
Oenothera (Evening Primrose)
Ophiopogon (Mondo Grass)
Opuntia (Spineless Prickly Pear)
Oregano
Orostachys (Chinese Dunce Cap)
Othonna capensis
Pachysandra – dry shade
Panicum (Switch Grass)
Parthenocissus (Boston Ivy)
Passiflora (Passion Flower)
Pennisetum (Fountain Grass)
Penstemon (Beardtongue)
Peonies (Paeonia)
Perovskia (Russian Sage)
Phlox (*Intensia Series*, an annual)
Phlox subulata (Creeping Phlox)
Platycodon (Balloon Flower)
Polygonum (Silver Lace Vine)
Polystichum (Christmas Fern)
Portulaca (Purslane)
Prunella grandiflora (Self-Heal)
Raspberry (Rubus)
Rosemary
Roses
Rubus (Creeping Raspberry)
Rudbeckia
Salvia (most kinds)
Santolina
Schizachyrium (Little Blue Stem)
Sedum
Sempervivum (Hen and Chicks)
Solanum (Variegated Potato Vine)
Solidago (Goldenrod)
Sporobulus (Prairie Dropseed)
Stachys (Lamb's Ear)
Stokesia (Stokes' Aster)
Strawberries (Fragaria)
Thyme
Tiarella (Foamflower)
Verbena
Vinca (both annual & perennial)

Weigela
Wisteria
Yucca
Zinnia