



GREEN SPRING GARDENS

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ANNUALS, TENDER PERENNIALS, - TENDER BULBS, AND BIENNIALS FOR GARDENS IN THE WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA -

Annuals, tender perennials, tender bulbs, and biennials add bold splashes of color and texture to the garden. Many species have glorious blossoms with an astounding range of colors, but others have brilliant foliage or fruit. These plants play a supporting role in the garden - they do not provide a great deal of structure, but instead add an air of spontaneity. Most of these plants require full sun (6 hours or more of sunlight daily) and perform best in moist, well-drained soil.

Approximate Planting Times Outdoors in the Washington, D.C. Area:

- ❖ Tender plants - safest to plant after May 1 when all danger of frost is past – but most species can be planted a little earlier if no frost is expected. **Annuals below are tender unless otherwise noted.**
- ❖ Half-hardy annuals – usually planted after April 15
- ❖ Biennials and hardy annuals – can be planted before April 15
- ❖ Some hardy annuals are even planted in the fall, such as pansies and violets (planted at Green Spring through November).
- ❖ It is best to direct seed some species such as larkspurs, love- in- a- mist (*Nigella*), and lettuce poppy (*Papaver somniferum*). Seeding in the warmer part of the fall usually works best.

The species and cultivars listed below grow well in the ground in the Washington, D.C. area for home gardeners: a wider variety of plants perform well in containers, and some very large plants have been excluded from the list since they are best for large scale gardens. There is a section for each type of plant, and general information is placed at the top of each section. **Few of these species are native to Virginia: Virginia natives are marked with an asterisk (*).**

ANNUALS

True annuals complete their life cycle in one growing season - from seed to flower back to seed again, then death. Since they are not trying to put a significant portion of their resources underground as perennials do (perennials live three or more years), most annuals put their energies instead into flowering and producing seed. Consequently, their length of bloom is longer than most perennials. Annuals are divided into **tender, half hardy, and hardy annuals**. Some hardy annuals such as pansies are grown for their fall, winter, and spring flowers and are often removed in the summer heat. Most annuals are at the height of their glory in the summer and into the fall. Many plants grown in this region as annuals are perennials in their native habitats.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Comments
<i>Ageratum houstonianum</i>	Ageratum	Full sun
<i>Begonia</i> (Semperflorens Cultorum Group) – fibrous rooted	Begonia	Full sun to part shade; some gardeners prefer to grow as tender perennials & overwinter indoors in containers
<i>Beta vulgaris</i> cultivars with red, yellow, orange, or pink stems (red-stemmed ones are the showiest)	Swiss Chard Cultivars (red stemmed ones called Ruby Chard)	Full sun; in late March or early April direct seed or plant transplants (half hardy); leaves are edible
<i>Capsicum annuum</i>	Ornamental Pepper	Full sun; grown for fruit - fruit is edible but often hot for ornamental types
<i>Celosia argentea</i> – small-flowered forms best in our hot, humid climate	Celosia	Full sun; some reseeding
<i>Consolida ajacis</i>	Larkspur	Full sun; reseeds readily; hardy but seldom transplant plants – best to seed in fall. Naturalized in Virginia – keep away from natural areas.
<i>Cosmos sulphureus</i>	Cosmos	Full sun; tolerant of dry sites. Reseeds readily (can direct seed); half hardy. Loved by rabbits & deer. Note: <i>C. bipinnatus</i> does not perform as well in our area. Both species are naturalized in Virginia – keep away from natural areas.
<i>Euphorbia marginata</i> (‘Summer Icicle’ is shorter than the species)	Snow-On-The-Mountain	Full sun; reseeds readily; hardy - direct seeding easiest in fall or early spring; tolerant of dry sites. Native to central U.S. & naturalized in Virginia – keep away from natural areas.
<i>Gomphrena globosa</i> (<i>G. haageana</i> is a taller species)	Gomphrena, Globe Amaranth	Full sun; tolerant of dry sites.
<i>Helianthus annuus</i> (naturalized in Virginia – native further west; ‘Italian White’ bloomed the longest at Green Spring)	Sunflower	Full sun; hardy but prefers warm weather - can direct seed but much faster if transplanted. Cultivars with large seeds are edible; tolerant of dry sites; some reseeding. Primarily grown for cut flower use – blooms don’t last long.
<i>Impatiens capensis</i> * Note: non-native species are susceptible to downy mildew	Jewelweed	Tall species for naturalistic use in moist sites; best in light shade; reseeds readily & attracts hummingbirds. Generally not planted but found in natural areas.

<i>Melapodium</i> 'Lemon Delight' & others	Melampodium	Full sun; tolerant of dry sites. Some reseeding.
<i>Nicotiana langsdorffii</i> <i>N. sanderae</i> (often sold as <i>N. alata</i> , one of its parents) <i>N. sylvestris</i>	Nicotiana, Flowering Tobacco	Full sun to light shade; some reseeding; an occasional plant is winter hardy; <i>N. sylvestris</i> described in some references as half hardy. Tolerant of dry sites.
<i>Nierembergia</i> 'Blue Mountain' (<i>N. hippomanica</i> hybrid) <i>N. scoparia</i> 'Purple Robe'	Nierembergia	Full sun; overwinters some years but commonly grown as an annual. Good for rock gardens due to small size & tolerant of dry sites.
<i>Nigella damascena</i>	Love-In-A-Mist	Full sun; reseeds readily; hardy - best to direct seed in fall. Naturalized in Virginia – keep away from natural areas.
<i>Ocimum basilicum</i> & cultivars	Sweet Basil	Full sun; tasty culinary herb. Can get downy mildew so rotate the areas it is planted in. Very sensitive to temperatures in the upper 30s.
<i>Papaver somniferum</i> Note: <i>P. rhoeas</i> (Corn Poppy) - harder to grow over time in our area yet naturalized in Virginia (hardy).	Lettuce Poppy	Full sun; some reseeding in moist sites; hardy – best to direct seed (preferably fall)
<i>Petunia hybrida</i>	Petunia	Full sun; some reseeding
<i>Salvia coccinea</i> & cultivars	Tropical Salvia	Full sun to light shade for moist sites; can be treated as tender perennials & propagated by cuttings; some reseeding
<i>Tagetes erecta</i> (both the shorter & the taller forms are now classified as this species) Note: <i>T. lemmonii</i> (Arizona Marigold) is a drought tolerant, marginally hardy perennial with October bloom – strong fragrance (plant in warm, protected sites – overwinters in some locations)	Marigold	Full sun; half hardy; tolerant of dry sites. Naturalized in Virginia – keep away from natural areas.
<i>Thymophylla tenuiloba</i> (<i>Dyssodia tenuiloba</i>)	Dahlbery Daisy, Golden Fleece	Full sun; some reseeding; native to southern U.S.; likes good drainage & tolerant of dry sites – best for rock gardens & slopes

<i>Torenia flava</i> 'Suzie Wong'	Wishbone Flower	Full sun to part shade
<i>T. fournieri</i> and cultivars		
<i>Viola tricolor</i> hybrids like the Sorbet & Penny cultivars – smaller flowers than pansies	Violet, Johnny-Jump-Up	Full sun; prefer cool weather - hardy; best to transplant in fall but can also plant in early spring
<i>V. wittrockiana</i>	Pansy	
<i>Zinnia angustifolia</i>	Zinnia	Full sun; tolerant of dry sites.
<i>Z. elegans</i> (tallest species)		
<i>Z. Profusion</i> and <i>Zahara</i> cultivars		

TENDER PERENNIALS

Tender perennials are safest to plant outdoors when the danger of frost is past. Most are grown for their marvelous flowers, but some are grown for their foliage, such as the fragrant foliage of scented geraniums. Tender plants generally need to be overwintered indoors, but some species will survive mild winters so are best described as marginally hardy. Tender perennials are overwintered indoors as rooted cuttings or potted plants.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Comments
<i>Abutilon</i> × <i>hybridum</i> cultivars like 'Marion Stewart'	Abutilon	Full sun; 'Marion Stewart' is winter hardy some years with a heavy winter mulch; more vigorous cultivars tolerant of dry sites
<i>Alternanthera dentata</i> 'Rubiginosa', 'Wave Hill', & 'Purple Knight' (similar plants)	Purple-Leaved Alternanthera (larger leaves & taller)	Full sun; liked by deer & rabbits
<i>A. ficoidea</i> 'Red Threads' ('Calico' & 'Chartreuse' are good plants if other foliage colors are desired)	Red Threads Alternanthera (smaller leaves & shorter)	
<i>Coleus scutellarioides</i>	Coleus	Full sun to part shade in consistently moist sites; cultivars that are grown from seed are generally grown as annuals – generally not as showy as cutting-propagated cultivars
<i>Duranta erecta</i> 'Golden Edge' (<i>D. repens</i>)	Golden Edge Duranta	Full sun to light shade

<i>Evolvulus pilosus</i> 'Blue Daze'	Blue Daze Evolvulus	Full sun in sites with excellent drainage; tolerant of dry sites – good in rock gardens & waterwise gardens; water lightly when overwinter in pots (Green Spring uses small pots & a scree soil mix)
<i>Ipomoea batatas</i> cultivars grown for ornamental use including 'Ace of Spades', 'Blackie', & 'Margarita'	Ornamental Sweet Potato	Full sun; grown for showy foliage; tubers edible but not very sweet. Foliage loved by deer.
<i>Lantana camara</i> , hybrids, & - cultivars - 'Miss Huff' is the hardiest cultivar but not as showy as newer cultivars (overwinters many years – tall plant if keeps overwintering). 'Ham and Eggs' is also hardy many years.	Lantana	Full sun; tolerant of dry sites; some reseeding
<i>Pelargonium</i> 'Peacock', 'Dr. Livingstone' ('Skeleton Rose'), & 'Snowflake' - perform well in beds. <i>P. sidoides</i> is small, drought tolerant, & often overwinters.	Scented Geranium	Full sun; sometimes winter hardy from the roots but then variegated cultivars are no longer variegated; many other selections – grown mainly for foliage
<i>Pennisetum setaceum</i> 'Rubrum' (<i>Cenchrus setaceus</i>)	Purpleleaf Fountain Grass	Full sun; dig up before frost & overwinter indoors in containers.
<i>Pentas lanceolata</i> & hybrids	Pentas	Full sun; attracts butterflies
<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	Rosemary	Full sun; culinary herb; tolerant of dry sites; most cultivars are hardy in mild winters but not in very cold winters. Arp' & 'Hill Hardy' ('Madalene Hill') are the hardiest selections ('Prostratus' is not as hardy).
<i>Ruellia brittoniana</i> - tall form is the showiest	Ruellia	Full sun; does well in moist to periodically wet areas (don't crowd if want the best bloom). Overwinters in mild winters.
<i>Salvia</i> - Marginally winter hardy species & cultivars in our area: (overwinter at least some years in well-drained sites): <i>S. chamaedryoides</i> <i>S. coahuilensis</i> (Green Spring has a hybrid that appears to be the above 2 species)	Mexican Blue Salvia Coahuila Salvia	Full sun in well-drained sites; most are tolerant of dry sites. Most of these marginally hardy plants benefit from a winter mulch, but don't use a heavy winter mulch on <i>S. chamaedryoides</i> , <i>S. coahuilensis</i> , & their hybrid (subshrubs – short, woody perennials).

<p><i>Salvia darcyi</i> (overwinters most years) (‘Silke’s Dream’ is a hybrid between this species & <i>S. microphylla</i> – less hardy)</p>	Darcy’s Salvia	
<p><i>S. elegans</i> & ‘Golden Delicious’ (at least some plants overwinter most years) <i>S. farinacea</i> & cultivars</p>	Pineapple Salvia	<i>S. elegans</i> is tolerant of dry sites but looks better under moist conditions.
<p><i>S. ‘Indigo Spires’</i> (prefers moist sites. Overwinters in warmer years in good locations.)</p>	Mealycup Salvia	<i>S. farinacea</i> is sometimes winter hardy but often grown as a half hardy annual.
<p><i>S. ‘Indigo Spires’</i> (prefers moist sites. Overwinters in warmer years in good locations.)</p>	Indigo Spires Salvia	
<p><i>S. involucrata</i> ‘Bethellii’ & <i>S. puberula</i> ‘El Butano’ (<i>S. involucrata</i> according to some botanists) – usually at least some overwinter</p>	Roseleaf Salvia	
<p><i>S. leucantha</i> & ‘Midnight’ (‘All Purple’) – cultivar is hardy some years in protected locations – less hardy than most of the above</p>	Mexican Bush Salvia	
<p><i>S. ‘Phyllis’ Fancy</i> (also called ‘Phyllis Fancy’)</p>	Phyllis Fancy Salvia	
<p><i>S. ‘Purple Majesty’</i></p>	Purple Majesty Salvia	Likes moist sites.
<p>Tender <i>Salvia</i> in our area (have not overwintered): <i>Salvia</i> ‘Anthony Parker’</p>	Anthony Parker Salvia	
<p><i>S. miniata</i></p>	Belize Salvia	
<p><i>S. splendens</i> ‘Van Houttei’ (wine-colored flowers); other cultivars include ‘Caribbean Coral’ (orange flowers) & ‘Paul’ (purple flowers)</p>	Van Houtte Salvia	Seed-grown cultivars of <i>S. splendens</i> much shorter & not as showy New cultivars with hybrid parentage are being tested including <i>S. ‘Amistad’</i> & <i>S. ‘Mystic Spires Blue’</i> – hardiness is unknown.
<p><i>Stachytarpheta jamaicensis</i> (<i>S. indica</i>)</p>	Blue Porterweed	Full sun; tolerates poorly drained soils; attracts butterflies

TENDER BULBS

Tender bulbs are safest to plant outdoors when the danger of frost is past. Most are grown for their flowers, but a few are grown for their foliage. Tender plants generally need to be overwintered indoors, but some species will survive mild winters so are best described as marginally hardy. Some tender bulbs are dug up before the first hard frost and overwintered indoors as potted plants, while others can be dug up after the first hard frost and stored indoors. In addition, listed tender bulbs are actually tubers, corms, or rhizomes in botanical terms; none of these tender bulbs go dormant in the summer like many hardy bulbs do.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Comments
<p><i>Canna</i> species, hybrids, & cultivars (virus free plants only)</p> <p>Note: winter hardy in many years with a thick winter mulch in well-drained sites</p> <p>Naturalized in NC – keep away from natural areas</p>	Canna	<p>Plants without canna virus disease need to be obtained from quality nurseries – Green Spring has greatly reduced canna numbers due to this disease. See http://www.canna-collection.org.uk/canna-virus.html for pictures and information.</p> <p>Full sun; tolerate wet & dry sites; can dig up after first hard frost to overwinters indoors. If overwintered indoors as cleaned rhizomes – Green staff once placed in vermiculite in slightly opened plastic bags in the basement of the Historic House (temperatures should not fall below 40 degree F) – can pot up in March for planting outdoors, or plant rhizomes directly in the ground in late April or early May</p>
<p><i>Colocasia esculenta</i> & cultivars including ‘Black Magic’ (large leaves)</p>	Elephant Ear	<p>Full sun to light shade in moist to wet sites. Dig up cultivars before hard frost & overwinter indoors as potted plants.</p> <p>Dig up species type after the first hard frost & store indoors (less commonly grown). Species type is sometimes winter hardy with a thick winter mulch.</p>
<p><i>Hedychium coronarium</i></p> <p>H. ‘Peach Delight’</p> <p>(‘Elizabeth’ is beautiful but blooms best the 2nd year after planting outdoors – but less hardy than the above)</p>	Ginger Lily	<p>Full sun to light shade; tolerate heavy soil or periodically wet sites during the growing season; best to dig up a few plants before first hard frost to overwinter indoors as potted plants. Plants have a better chance of overwintering if a thick winter mulch is applied in late November & left on until late March (best in sites that aren’t poorly drained or too wet)</p>

<i>Xanthosoma sagittifolium</i> (large leaves) Note: some gardeners also like 'Lime Zinger'	Bluestem Taro, Blue Taro	Full sun to light shade in moist sites; dig up before first hard frost to overwinter indoors as potted plants. Connoisseur plants.
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BIENNIALS

Biennials are plants that complete their life cycle in two years. The first year they usually produce only leaves; they overwinter, flower, set seed, and die the second year. Some biennials can be short-lived perennials, especially if they are not allowed to set seed. Biennials are hardy plants, so they can be planted before April 15 and are sometimes planted in the fall to encourage bloom the following spring or summer.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Comments
<i>Angelica gigas</i>	Korean Angelica	Full sun (moist site) to light shade; some reseeding in moist sites - mulch lightly or not at all to allow reseeding.
<i>Argemone polyanthemos</i> (native to central & western U.S.)	Crested Pricklypoppy	Full sun; prefers warm weather so best to plant after May 1; tolerant of dry sites; some reseeding; sometimes acts as an annual or a perennial. Can persist for years in good sites.
<i>Cynara cardunculus</i>	Cardoon	Full sun in large sites; can be grown as an annual if using for foliage effect. Grown as a biennial or short-lived perennial if flowers desired (but not always winter hardy: needs well-drained soil in winter).
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i> & cultivars like 'Alba'	Foxglove	Full sun to light shade; reseeds readily in moist sites. Naturalized in West Virginia – keep away from natural areas.
<i>Phacelia bipinnatifida</i>*	Fern-Leaved Phacelia	Full sun in moist sites to part shade; reseeds readily
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>* & cultivars such as 'Indian Summer' & 'Prairie Sun' (species type is best for naturalistic use & for wildlife gardening)	Black-Eyed Susan	Full sun to light shade; reseed readily; can be short-lived perennials as well
<i>R. triloba</i>*	Three-Lobed Coneflower	

Not recommended Due To Invasive Potential (Both Are Naturalized in Virginia):

Hesperis matronalis (Dame's Rocket) – biennial or short-lived perennial. Reseeds readily.

Lunaria annua (Money Plant) & 'Alba Variegata' – usually a biennial; reseeds heavily in gardens (especially the species).

Invasive Species Available in the Nursery Trade With Heavy Reseeding (on the *Invasive Alien Plant Species of Virginia* list (http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/documents/invlist.pdf):

Perilla frutescens (Beefsteak Plant) – green foliage for the species. Purple-leaved Perilla (*Atropurpurea*) is more commonly used in gardens.

Scientific Names Of Plants - Current Names Are From:

- **Encyclopedia of Life** (<http://eol.org/>) – institutional partners include Harvard University, the Missouri Botanical Garden, the Smithsonian Institution, and The Field Museum.
- **Tropicos** from the Missouri Botanical Garden (<http://tropicos.org/>)

If a second scientific name is given, it is usually an old name that is still seen in some references or used by some nurseries. However, the above databases do not always agree on names.

Other References:

Flora of Virginia. Alan Weakley, J. Christopher Ludwig, and John Townsend. 2012. BRIT Press. Botanical Research Institute of Texas.

The **Kemper Center for Home Gardening Plantfinder** at the Missouri Botanical Garden is an excellent reference for plant names, gardening information, and photographs (<http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/plantfinder/plantfindersearch.aspx>). It features ornamental plants in their Kemper Center display gardens.

The Lady Bird Wildflower Center at the University of Texas in Austin has developed the **Native Plant Information Network** for native plants (www.wildflower.org/explore/).

USDA PLANTS Database (<http://plants.usda.gov/>) - this database focuses on plants native to the U.S. and to U.S. Territories and Protectorates, as well as naturalized non-natives and invasives. It is also used to determine distribution within Virginia by county.

*Developed by Brenda Skarphol, Curatorial Horticulturist
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