

Creating Colorful Xeriscapes Part 2

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Factors to Consider When Putting Together Plant Combinations

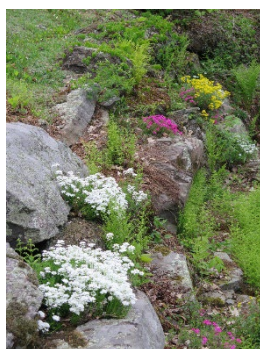
Make sure that the basic growing conditions preferred by the plants in the planting combination are a match. Here are the questions you should ask yourself before creating a plant combination:

- Do they like the same type of soil and soil pH?
- Are their watering requirements the same?
- Do they have the same sunlight needs?
- Consider plant vigor. Matching plants that have equal or compatible vigor is crucial when planning any plant combination, as you do not want one plant to overgrow another.

Design Considerations

Plant combinations are always more satisfying when using these basic design principles:

- When room allows, plant in groups of three or five plants of each species used in the combination. It makes for a more effective visual impact than planting one of each together.
- Be sure to check the best angle from which the combination will be viewed and arrange accordingly. If planted against a wall, tallest plants go to the back while the shortest ones are up front.
- Put plants together that bloom at the same time and chose complementary colors or similar hues of the same color.



Pink Creeping Phlox

Basket of Gold

Edging Candytuft

Early Spring

Pink Creeping Phlox (*Phlox subulata*)

- Also known as Moss Phlox, this dense evergreen groundcover is blanketed in flowers in April and May.
- Evergreen foliage is narrow, short and stiff. Reliable and low maintenance, it adapts well to dry, sandy soils.



- Flower colors also include white, lavender blue and bicolors.
- Mature height 4" to 6", spread 12" to 24". Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 7,500 ft., Zone 3

Basket of Gold (*Aurinia saxatilis*)

- Iridescent lemon-yellow flowers cover the grayish-green leaves from April through May.
- After bloom, clip back plants by 1/3 to keep a dense form and ensure abundant blooms each season.
- Does best in well-drained soil that is kept on the dry side. Plants grown in rich moist soil tend to rot.
- The foliage is evergreen, and provides great winter interest.
- Mature height 12" spread 24" to 36". Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 9,500 ft., Zone 4



Edging Candytuft (*Iberis sempervirens*)

- Edging Candytuft is often seen cascading over rocks and walls, or used as a groundcover.
- The glossy, evergreen foliage forms a tight rounded, mounding growth habit.
- Flat clusters of white flowers bloom April-June.
- Prune lightly right after blooming, but otherwise leave plants alone in fall and early spring.
- Mature height 12", spread 36". Full sun to part shade.
- Max. Elev. 10,000 ft., Zone 3



Spring – Early Fall

Paprika Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium* 'Paprika')

- Luscious apple-red and paprika colored flowers with sulphur yellow centers appear June – September.
- Finely textured, gray-green foliage creates a soft background for the tall flat flower heads.
- A proven performer in hot, dry situations with poor soil. Flower heads can be dried.
- Plants grown in rich soil tend to be tall and floppy. It thrives in average to poor soil that is well-drained.
- Mature height 24" to 36", spread 12" to 24". Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 9,500 ft. Zone 3



May Night Salvia (*Salvia sylvestris* × 'Mainacht')

- Perennial of the year for 1997, this clump forming compact Salvia produces dense, upright flower spikes May-June.



- Deep violet-blue flowers rise above gray-green foliage to a height of up to 2 feet.
- Bloom period can be extended all summer long with regular deadheading.
- This member of the mint family is very effective in combination with yellow flowering plants such as yarrow and Rudbeckia.
- Mature height 18" to 24", spread 12" to 18". Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 8,500 ft. Zone 4



Spring – Early Summer

Snow-in-Summer (*Cerastium tomentosum*)

- An indestructible choice for difficult sites, it is often grown in dry, sunny areas with poor soils.
- Plants form a low, fast-spreading mat of silvery-gray leaves.
- Small snow-white flowers appear and cover the entire plant from late spring to early summer.
- Plants should be clipped hard or mowed to 2 inches after blooming to maintain a tight growth habit.
- Mature height 4" to 8", spread 24" to 36"
- Full sun; deer resistant
- Max. Elev. 10,000 ft. Zone 2



Dwarf Alberta Spruce (*Picea glauca* 'Conica')

- A very dense, dwarf, cone-shaped spruce with short, dark green needles, which are soft to the touch.
- Slow growing, this evergreen needs protection from sun and winter winds.
- Makes a formal statement in the garden. A superb container specimen.
- Mature height and spread 6' to 8'. Partial sun.
- Max. Elev. 9,000 ft. Zone 2

Miss Kim Lilac (*Syringa patula* 'Miss Kim')

- This upright, compact lilac blooms later than others, extending the season for lilacs.
- It is the most fragrant of all lilacs (even more fragrant than roses!).
- The green foliage turns a deep burgundy red in the autumn months.
- Typically hardy to drought after root establishment, it will not bloom if it receives too much or too little water. Prefers a well-drained soil.
- Mature height and spread 5'. Full sun to partial shade; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 8,500 ft. Zone 3



Oriental Poppy (*Papaver orientale*)

- Crepe paper-like blooms more than 6" across with attractive black stamens appear May/June.
- Colors vary from true neon hues to gorgeous pastels.
- The bristly leaves turn brown in early summer and disappear entirely, reappearing in early fall.
- Since deadheading does not result in repeat blooming, you may choose to leave the flowers on the plant for the interesting seed pods that follow.
- Mature height 36", spread 18" to 24". Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 7,500 ft. Zone 4



Coral Bells (*Heuchera* spp.)

- Offering a dazzling array of foliage color, texture and shapes, Coral Bells will make a statement in your garden.
- Excellent for the shady or semi-shady border, their bright foliage color can brighten a bed like a flower.
- Excellent edging plants, they also feature dainty flowers held aloft on airy stems.
- Blooms late spring to early summer.
- Mature height 12" to 18", spread 24". Partial shade to full shade; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 8,000 ft. Zone 4



Purple Ice Plant (*Delosperma cooperi*)

- Ice Plants are an indispensable component of drought tolerant landscapes.
- *Delosperma* is a genus of approximately 100 species of succulent plants, common to southern and eastern Africa.
- This species blooms May through September with bright rosy-purple 2" diameter flowers.
- Flowers are daisy-like. The genus gets its name because the flowers and leaves seem to shimmer as if covered in ice.
- Mature height 2" to 4", spread 12" to 24". Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 7,000 ft. Zone 5



Summer - Fall

Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*)

- Showy, daisy-like purple flowers (up to 5" diameter) bloom throughout the summer on top of stiff stems.



- Plants usually rebloom without deadheading, but prompt removal of spent flowers improves appearance.
- Seed heads are attractive to birds in the winter. Coneflower freely self-seeds if seed heads are left in place.
- An adaptable plant that is tolerant of drought, heat, humidity and poor soil. Divide clumps every 4 years to maintain vigor.
- Mature height 36", spread 18" to 24". Full sun; deer resistant
- Max. Elev. 7,000 ft., Zone 3

Black-Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *sullivantii* 'Goldsturm')

- Perennial of the Year for 1999, this coneflower cultivar features large, daisy-like flowers (3" to 4" across).
- Deep yellow flowers with a dark brownish-black center appear singly on stiff branching stems July – October.
- Tolerates light shade, but does best in full sun. Deadhead to keep neat and prolong bloom.
- Easily grown in average, dry to medium, well-drained soil.
- Mature height 36" spread 16" to 24". Full sun; deer resistant
- Max. Elev. 9,000 ft., Zone 3



Summer

Coreopsis (*Coreopsis verticillata* spp.)

- Coreopsis are native American prairie and woodland plants.
- Their ruggedness and profuse blooms have made them popular with plant breeders, with over 100 types available.
- Most are clump forming, holding their daisy-like flowers on tall stems above the foliage.
- *C. grandiflora* – bright yellow flowers on tall stems bloom all summer.
- *C. verticillata* – fine thread-like leaves.
- Mature height 12" to 24" spread 18" to 20". Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 8,000 ft. Zone 4



English Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*)

- *Lavandula angustifolia* is the most widely cultivated species of lavender, of which there are 39 known species.



- Despite its name, this variety is not native to England. Blooms July-August.
- A fragrant addition to the garden, this shrubby perennial can also be pruned into an informal hedge or used as edging.
- Deadheading after first bloom can encourage rebloom. Avoid pruning after late summer. Cut to 6" tall every 2-3 years.
- Mature height and spread 4'. Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 9,000 ft. Zone 4

Partridge Feather (*Tanacetum densum* ssp. *amani*)

- Finely divided fern-like leaves in intense silver-white carpet the ground on this low growing plant.
- Small golden button flowers appear a few inches above the mat in the summer.
- Useful for rock gardens and as a small scale groundcover in bright, sunny areas with good drainage.
- A 2010 Plant Select® introduction, this native of the mountains of Turkey does well in most soils and exposures.
- Mature height 6" to 12", spread 15" to 18". Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 8,000. Zone 4



Butterflies and Bees

Colorado Four O'Clock (*Mirabilis multiflora*)

- In its full afternoon glory, Colorado Four O'Clock has few rivals. A mature plant will have hundreds of magenta-pink flowers open at one time!
- This short grass prairie wildflower is one of the most xeric species with an enormous, deep-growing taproot.
- Plant it in any soil, even clay, where it will get plenty of sun and heat.
- Once established, it grows best when given very little extra irrigation.
- Mature height 15" to 18", spread 48" to 72". Full sun.
- Max. Elev. 7,500 ft., Zone 4

Missouri Evening Primrose (*Oenothera macrocarpa*)

- Missouri Evening Primrose blooms from May to August.



- Very large (3"-5" across), solitary, 4-petaled, mildly fragrant, bright yellow flowers open for only one day (late afternoon until the following morning).
- Flowers are followed by somewhat unique, winged seed pods (2-3" long). Narrow, lance-shaped leaves.
- Long-lived, it forms a huge underground tuber to keep itself going from year to year. Evening Primrose cascades nicely over rocks and retaining walls.
- Mature height and spread 1' to 2'. Full sun; deer resistant
- Max. Elev. 8,500 ft., Zone 3

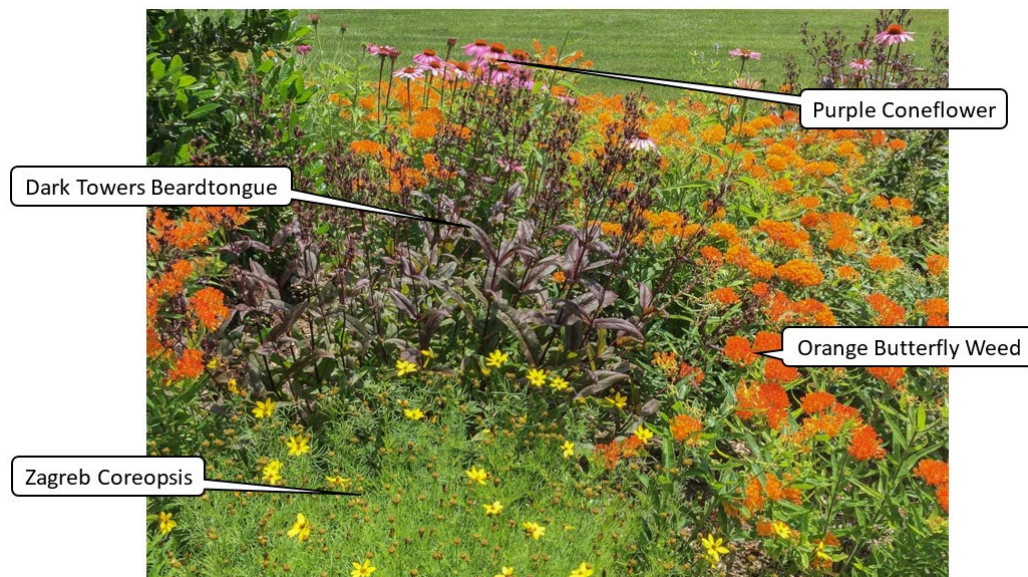
Prairie Sage (*Artemisia ludoviciana*)

- Grown for its magnificent silver white foliage, this fast spreading perennial adds contrast to the landscape and combines well with almost everything.
- Tiny, somewhat inconspicuous, yellowish-gray flower heads appear in dense panicles at the stem ends in summer. Flowers have little ornamental value.
- Foliage is aromatic when bruised.
- Plants perform poorly in moist to wet soils where they are susceptible to root rot.
- Mature height and spread 2' to 3'. Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 8,000 ft., Zone 4



Orange Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)

- A cultivar of Milkweed, this perennial thrives in poor, dry soils.
- Unlike many of the other milkweeds, this species does not have milky-sapped stems.
- Bright orange to yellow-orange flowers are a nectar source for butterflies and bees, and the leaves are a food source for Monarch Butterfly caterpillars.
- Mature plants may freely self-seed in the landscape if seed pods are not removed prior to splitting open.
- Mature height 12" to 30", spread 12" to 18". Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 6,500 ft., Zone 3



Butterflies and Bees

Zagreb Coreopsis (*Coreopsis verticillata* 'Zagreb')

- Bright yellow daisy-like flowers (1" to 2" diameter) appear singly in loose clusters in a profuse and lengthy late spring to late summer bloom.
- Shearing plants in mid-summer will promote a fall rebloom.
- Thread-like leaves lend a fine-textured and airy appearance to the plant.
- 'Zagreb' is more compact than the species and is a great plant for poor, dry soils.
- Mature height and spread 18". Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 8,000 ft., Zone 3



Dark Towers Beardtongue (*Penstemon* 'Dark Towers')

- Dark Towers Beardtongue is a tall hybrid Penstemon that blooms in late spring with large, light pink flowers that contrast nicely with the wine-red foliage.
- Tolerant of high heat and drought once established. Avoid wet, poorly-drained soils.
- Remove spent flowering racemes to prolong bloom.
- The ornamental foliage generally retains good color throughout summer and the plant forms decorative seed heads.
- Mature height 36", spread 18" to 24". Full sun; deer resistant; hardy to -40°.
- Max. Elev. 8,000 ft., Zone 3



Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*)

See Page 4



Orange Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)

See Page 7



Hummingbirds

Globe Thistle (*Echinops ritro*)

- Echinops are not thistles, despite their common name. Showy silvery-green foliage has a wooly appearance.
- Beginning in early summer, metallic blue spheres measuring 1 ½" across appear on tall branched stems.
- Flower heads continue through fall and are very attractive to bees and other pollinators.
- Prefers poor, well-drained soil, but will tolerate a wide range of soils. Deadhead to prevent self-sowing.



- Mature height 2' to 3', spread 3' to 4'. Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 7,500 ft. Zone 3

Hyssop/Agastache (*Agastache* spp.)

- Also known as Hummingbird Mint, this plant is essential to a pollinator friendly garden.
- This showy, fragrant group of plants prefers well drained soils with low fertility, and deep infrequent watering. All varieties tend to bloom July – October.
- 'Blue Fortune' – violet blue flowers, licorice scented. 'Sonoran Sunset' – dark pink flowers, bubble gum scented.
- 'Coronado Red' – Crimson red flowers darken as they mature. 'Sunset' – bronze-orange-purple flowers.
- Mature height and spread 15" to 36", depending on variety. Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 8,000 ft. Zone 4



Hummingbirds

Hummingbird Trumpet (*Epilobium canum* ssp. *garrettii* 'PWWG01S' Orange Carpet®)

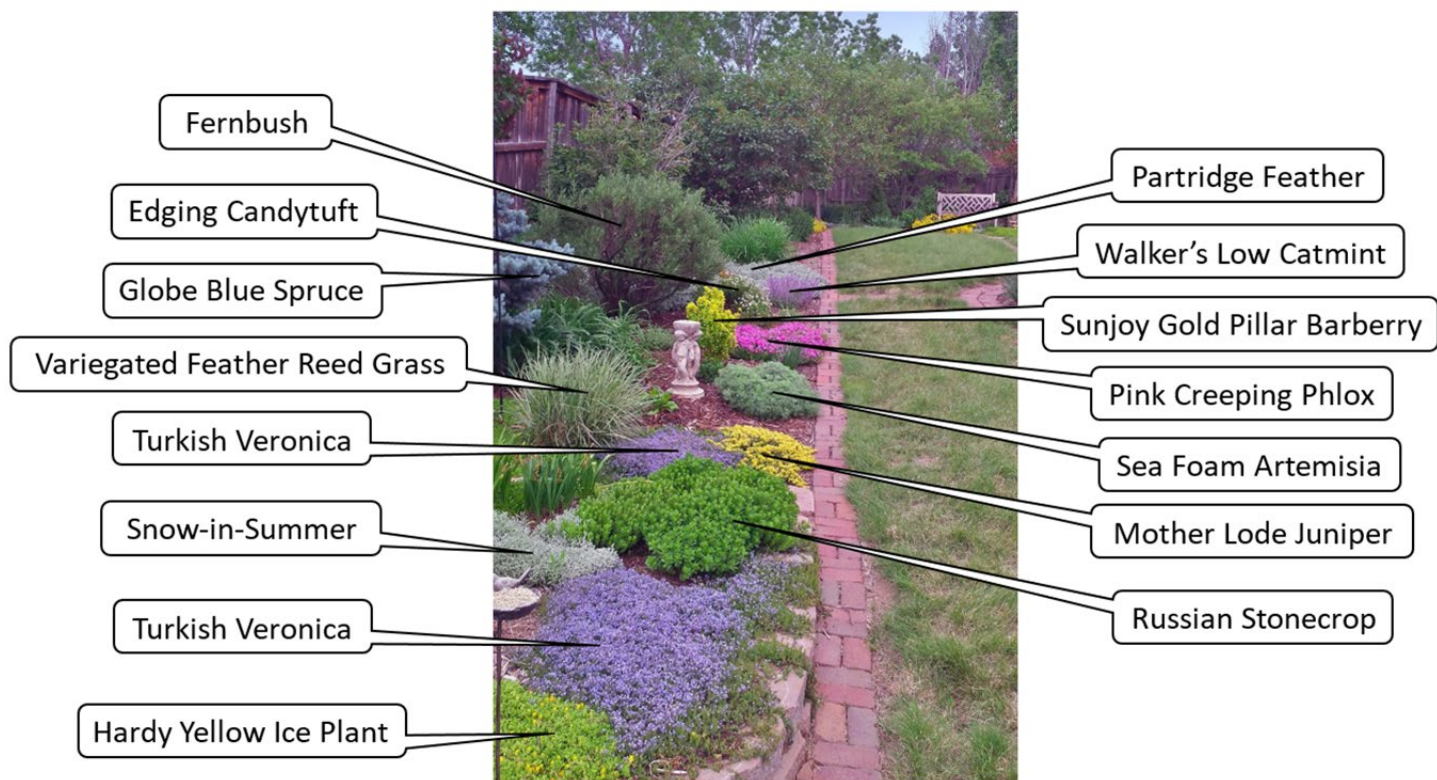
- A 2001 Plant Select® introduction, this vigorous groundcover is perfect for slopes or cascading over walls.
- Bright orange, trumpet-shaped flowers bloom from July through October.
- Regular watering during bloom keeps the flowers coming. Very attractive to hummingbirds! Prefers compost enriched soil with good drainage.
- Forms a loose mat of low growing bright green foliage when not in bloom. Prefers some afternoon sun.
- Mature height 4" to 6", spread 18" to 24". Full sun to partial shade; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 9,000 ft. Zone 5



Blanket Flower (*Gaillardia* spp.)

- A member of the sunflower family, Blanket Flower is widespread across most of North America.
- Daisy-like flowers are produced from early summer to fall in shades of red, orange, yellow and peach.
- The petals of some varieties are frilled, while others have a unique, tubular shape.
- Prefers a loose, sandy well-drained, low fertility soil. Deadhead to keep them blooming.
- Mature height and spread 12" to 24". Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 8,500 ft. Zone 3





East Side Border

Hardy Yellow Ice Plant (*Delosperma nubigenum*)

- This is a succulent, mat-forming species that has the best winter hardiness of the ice plants currently in cultivation.
- Foliage is covered with small but bright yellow flowers (to 3/4" diameter) from late May to Early July.
- The jelly bean-like foliage turns from bright green to red in the fall, and retains that color until spring.
- A great choice for hot dry areas, this is exceptional as a groundcover, in the rock garden or as edging.
- Mature height 2", spread 20". Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 7,500 ft. Zone 4



Turkish Veronica (*Veronica liwanensis*)

- A 1997 Plant Select® introduction, this vigorous fast growing plant thrives in poor soils.
- It forms a thick green carpet of round, glossy evergreen leaves.
- As the weather warms in April/May, the plant is covered with bright cobalt blue flowers that persist through June.
- With a little extra water, it can rebloom lightly in summer. This "Stepable" groundcover is great between stepping stones.
- Mature height 1" to 2", spread 18". Full sun to partial shade; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 8,500 ft. Zone 4



Snow-in-Summer (*Cerastium tomentosum*)

See Page 3



Variegated Feather Reed Grass (*Calamagrostis* × *acutiflora* 'Overdam')

- This sport of 'Karl Foerster' Feather Reed Grass has striking creamy white stripes with green variegation along the length of its leaves.
- The clumping foliage reaches 24" to 36", with airy seed heads up to 5' in height.
- Sterile seeds do not produce unwanted seedlings.
- Fall color is a rich gold.
- 'Overdam' should be cut back at the end of winter to allow for new growth and late spring flowering.
- Mature height and spread 24" to 36". Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 7,000 ft. Zone 4.



Globe Blue Spruce (*Picea pungens* 'Glauca Globosa')

- 'Glauca Globosa' is a dwarf, globe-shaped blue-needled Blue Spruce cultivar with a distinctive flattened top.
- Slow growing (2 to 3" a year); powder blue needles provide year round interest.
- Provide consistent water in the first 2 to 3 years to develop best drought tolerance. Prefers a well-drained dry soil.
- Makes an outstanding specimen plant - use as a focal point in a shrub border, rock garden or as a low hedge.
- Mature height 3' to 5', spread 4' to 6'. Full sun for best color; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 8,000 ft. Zone 3.



Edging Candytuft (*Iberis sempervirens*)

See Page 2

Fernbush (*Chamaebatiaria millefolium*)

- A 2006 Plant Select introduction. This little known Colorado native makes a great specimen or hedge.
- Showy flower spikes in mid-summer resemble those of lilacs from a distance, but close up resemble a single rose.
- Foliage has a fern-like appearance with a greenish-gray color.
- A great plant for enhancing the garden's habitat value as the flowers are highly attractive to native bees. Thrives in poor soils and dry conditions.
- Mature height and spread 4' to 5'. Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 7,500 ft. Zone 4



Partridge Feather (*Tanacetum densum* ssp. *amani*)

See Page 6

Walker's Low Catmint (*Nepeta* × *faassenii* 'Walker's Low')

- This easy-to-grow perennial thrives in harsh landscapes. Many varieties available.
- Hardy and long lived, *Nepeta* prefers average, well-drained soils. Blooms late April through September.
- To promote continued blooms, shear flower spikes after initial flowering.
- Great plant for a pollinator garden. Gray-green foliage is attractive throughout the growing season.
- Mature height 10" to 48", spread 12" to 36". Full sun to partial shade; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 8,500 ft. Zone 4



Sunjoy® Gold Pillar Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii* 'Maria')

- Sunjoy Gold Pillar is a Japanese barberry cultivar that is noted for its bright yellow foliage, which retains good golden yellow color all summer (no greening) and will not scorch.
- Distinctive columnar habit adds an elegant vertical line to gardens.
- New growth emerges reddish turning to gold. Excellent orange-red color in fall.
- Hardy to -30 degrees, this deciduous shrub is tolerant of alkaline and clay soils.
- Mature height 3' to 4', spread 2' to 3'. Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 8,500 ft. Zone 4



Pink Creeping Phlox (*Phlox subulata*)

See Page 1



Seafoam Artemisia (*Artemisia versicolor* 'Seafoam')

- A 2004 Plant Select® introduction, this vigorous groundcover is grown for its curlicue silver foliage.
- Plant it in hot, sunny areas under taller plants like Russian Sage or Moonshine Yarrow.
- Remove flower spikes to maintain the compact shape – the leaves are the main attraction.
- Prefers well-drained, low fertility soils. Requires no supplemental irrigation once established.
- Mature height 8" to 12", spread 18 to 24". Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 7,500 ft. Zone 4



Mother Lode Juniper (*Juniperus horizontalis* 'Mother Lode')

- Bright, golden-yellow foliage in spring and summer softens with burgundy plum undertones in winter.
- Extremely low and ground hugging. Creeping branches root as they grow along the ground.
- Adaptable to a wide range of soil conditions, but prefers a dry, sandy soil.
- Tolerant of hot dry conditions; an excellent groundcover which is very low maintenance.
- Mature height 4", spread 4' to 10'. Full sun to light shade; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 8,500 ft. Zone 3



Russian Stonecrop (*Sedum kamtschaticum*)

- This drought tolerant stonecrop has clusters of star-shaped flowers blooming in late spring.
- Pleasing foliage all season - scalloped with glossy deep-green fleshy, spoon-shaped leaves. Forms a dense mat that is tinged with red tones in autumn.
- Perfect for planting on the edge of stone walls, live roofs or a massed groundcover as it gently drapes over edges.
- Grows well in sandy or gravelly soils.
- Mature height 4", spread 12". Full sun; deer resistant.
- Max. Elev. 8,000 ft. Zone 3

