

RGAs Gardening Fact Sheet #3: *Perennial Flowers* for Partial Sun to Full Sun

Gardening enhances our personal and community space. All plants, from trees to flowers, beautify our living area, provide edible food and offer environmental benefits ranging from the oxygen we breathe to creating summer shade to cool our homes. By growing plants, we better appreciate our natural environment and the ecological relationships between soil, water and climate. Gardening helps the young to the young-at-heart understand the responsible use and protection of our natural environment, as well as the impact we have on the "big picture" of environmental stewardship.

With support from the Conexus Credit Union's (CCU) Community Investment Program, the Regina Garden Associates (RGA) at the Regina Floral Conservatory aim to promote environmental stewardship through a series of gardening fact sheets, teaching appreciation of growing plants and basic gardening practices to the general public. Visit the Regina Floral Conservatory often and continue learning about gardening through our fact sheets.

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Perennial Flowers

Perennial flowers, or perennials, grow for more than two years; dieback over winter and in the next spring, new growth comes from the existing rootstock. Perennial flowers are typically sold in garden centres as potted plants.

It is possible to grow perennials from seed. Once established in the garden, many existing perennial plants can be further propagated by simple division and re-planting.

Partial Sun to Full Sun Gardening

Perennials need sunlight to carry out photosynthesis to survive and grow. However, the need for the length of direct sunlight varies by species. Gardeners have created general categories or "rules of thumb" for this exposure from full sun to partial sun/shade to full shade. When purchasing potted perennials at your garden centre, check the plant label for the rating of preferred light category for best growth. A full sun category is six+ hours of direct sunlight and full shade is less than four hours sunlight, usually present in the morning and filtered by tree canopy or structures like a building and fence. Partial shade and partial sun are similar categories with four to six hours of sunlight. Partial shade is four to six hours of sunlight in the morning and partial sunlight is four to six hours of sunlight in the afternoon. Under partial to full sun lighting, gardeners have the greatest number of choices for plant species/cultivar. This Gardening Fact Sheet suggests a selection of perennial flowers which are suited to growing in partial sun to full sun for southern Saskatchewan, Canada.

Importance of Plant Hardiness

Successfully growing perennials begins first by selecting plants having a hardiness to survive the local growing conditions. When purchasing potted perennials at a garden centre, check the plant tag and determine the plant hardiness rating. Based on long-term climatic data and plant survival, scientists in Canada and United States have created plant hardiness zone maps. In

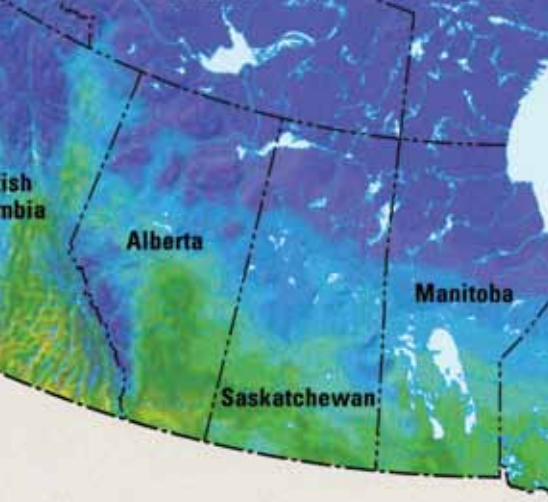
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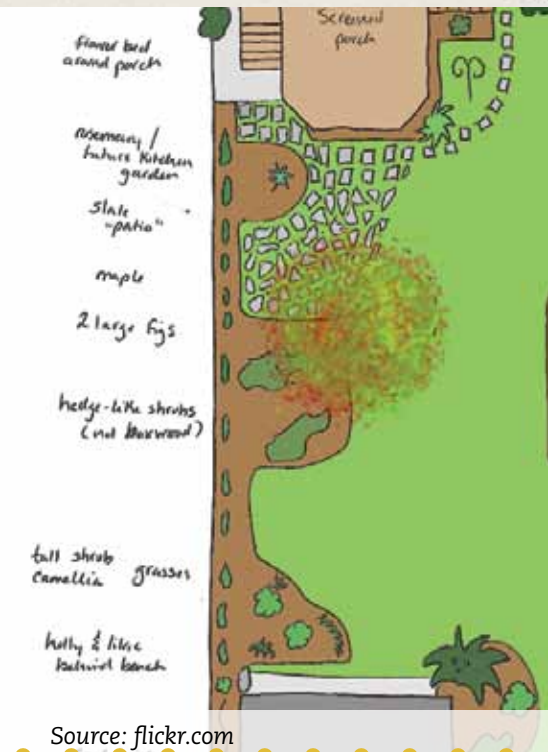
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Importance of Plant Hardiness (cont.)

Canada, there are 8 zones further subdivided into “a” and “b” subcategories. In Canada, plant survival data is linked to minimum winter temperatures as well as other climatic factors like the frost-free period, summer rainfall, maximum temperatures, snow cover, January rainfall and maximum wind speed. This rating can be further modified by the microclimates created from a surrounding warmer urban area as well as site conditions like degree of snow cover and protection from wind. Southern Saskatchewan falls within the Canadian plant hardiness zones of 2a to 3b. It is possible to grow perennials rated at higher categories, but there will be a much higher risk that they will not survive on a year to year basis over time.



Source: flickr.com

Garden Design

A suggestion in the design process is to stake out and measure the planting area under consideration. At the minimum, it will inform you on matching the space requirements to plant characteristics for height and spread. Take some digital photos of the location and keep them handy for reference. Consider the orientation of the property, location of existing features like trees and the timing and extent of sunlight available. With this information, use graph paper to sketch a base plan from which you can consider your design options.

To help you consider, make a checklist of questions on your needs. For example, will the planting be a ground cover in full sun or partial sun? Are there preferences in the desired plant heights and plant spreads as well as the plant textures and foliage colours? Do you want a mass planting for a particular perennial flower? Do you seek overlapping bloom periods so as to have blooming through an entire growing season? How will the perennial flowers form part of the property’s larger picture of trees, shrubs, grasses and ferns existing or proposed?



Source: flickr.com

Choosing Perennial Plants

The following tables provide a selection of sun-loving hardy perennial flowers for zones 2a-3b. The plants are divided into ground cover and height categories for perennial edging and borders. You will see the plant description listed by common name as well as botanical Genus, a common method used by garden centres to organize their perennial flowers. Individual plant species/cultivars are described by mature flowering height, spread, texture, foliage colour, flower colour and bloom period. Where a Genus contains multiple cultivars that are suitable, a representative single cultivar is presented. All plant characteristics are sourced from Net PS Plant Finder Tool plant summaries. The tables are a starting point to further your research for photo images and additional growing information.

Other Resources

Online

Net PS Plant Finder Tool – Dutch Growers, Saskatoon: plants.dutchgrowers.ca/11040002

Perennials.com – Online Perennial Resource by Heritage Perennials of Valleybrook Gardens, Abbotsford, British Columbia.

Reference Texts

Hanbidge, Patricia and Laura Peters. *Perennials for Saskatchewan and Manitoba*.

Skinner, Hugh and Sara Williams. *Best Groundcovers & Vines for the Prairies*.

Toop, Edgar W. and Sara Williams. *Perennials for the Plains and Prairies*.

Valleau, John M., *Perennial Gardening Guide*.

Williams, Sara. *Creating the Prairie Xeriscape*.

Selection of Hardy Perennial Flowers Full Sun to Partial Sun



Lysimachia

Ground Cover

Genus	Common	Hardiness	Height	Spread	Texture	Foliage	Flower	Bloom Period
Artemisia	Silver Mound	1b	12"	18"	Fine	Silver	Yellow	July-Aug
Cerastium	Snow-in-Summer	2b	8"	24"	Fine	Green	White	June
Lysimachia	Creeping Jenny	2a	4"	24"	Fine	Yellow	Gold	June-July
Sagina	Irish Moss	3b	1"	12"	Fine	Green	White	May-July
Thymus	Mother of Thyme	2a	6"	18"	Fine	Green	Pink	June-July



Dianthus

Edging & Border Short Height of ≤ 12"

Genus	Common	Hardiness	Height	Spread	Texture	Foliage	Flower	Bloom Period
Armeria	Duseldorf Pride Sea Thrift	2a	8"	8"	Fine	Green	Fuchsia	May-June
Campanula	Blue Clips Bellflower	2a	8"	8"	Fine	Green	Blue	June-Aug
Dianthus	Maiden Pinks	2a	10"	18"	Fine	Green	Red	June-July
Geranium	Cranesbill Geranium	2b	12"	18"	Medium	Green	Fuchsia	May-July
Penstemon	Rondo Mixed Beard-Tongue	3a	12"	24"	Fine	Green	Purple	June-July
Phlox	Emerald Blue Moss Phlox	2a	4"	18"	Fine	Green	Lavender	May-June
Pulsatilla	Easter Pasque Flower	2a	8"	8"	Fine	Green	Purple	May



Echinops

Edging & Border Medium Height of > 12" - 39"

Genus	Common	Hardiness	Height	Spread	Texture	Foliage	Flower	Bloom Period
Achillea	Summer Pastels Yarrow	2a	18"	24"	Fine	Green	Rose-Pink	June-Sept
Alchemilla	Lady's Mantle	2a	18"	18"	Medium	Lime	Yellow	June-July
Anemone	Windflower	2b	15"	18"	Fine	Green	White	May-June
Campanula	Clustered Bellflower	2a	24"	18"	Coarse	Green	Purple	June-July
Centaurea	Cornflower	3a	30"	24"	Medium	Green	Pink	June-July
Chrysanthemum	Morden Cameo Chrysanthemum	3a	24"	24"	Fine	Green	White	Aug-Oct
Echinacea	Magnus Coneflower	3a	36"	24"	Medium	Green	Fuchsia	July-Sept
Echinops	Blue Globe Thistle	2a	36"	24"	Coarse	Green	Blue	June-Sept

Selection of Hardy Perennial Flowers Full Sun to Partial Sun

Edging & Border Medium Height of > 12" - 39" (cont.)

Genus	Common	Hardiness	Height	Spread	Texture	Foliage	Flower	Bloom Period
<i>Euphorbia</i>	Cushion Spurge	3a	18"	24"	Medium	Green	Yellow	May-june
<i>Gaillardia</i>	Goblin Blanket Flower	2a	16"	12"	Fine	Green	Orange	June-Sept
<i>Hemerocallis</i>	Stella D'Oro Daylily	2b	18"	18"	Fine	Green	Gold	June-Sept
<i>Iris</i>	Snow Queen Siberian Iris	2a	32"	24"	Fine	Green	White	May-June
<i>Leucanthemum</i>	Shasta Daisy	3a	32"	24"	Fine	Green	White	June-Aug
<i>Liatris</i>	Kobold Blazing Star	2a	24"	12"	Fine	Green	Violet	July-Sept
<i>Linum</i>	Perennial Flax	2a	30"	12"	Fine	Green	Blue	July
<i>Lupinus</i>	Russel Pink Lupine	2b	36"	16"	Fine	Green	Pink	June-July
<i>Monarda</i>	Marshal's Delight Beebalm	2b	36"	32"	Medium	Green	Pink	July-Aug
<i>Paeonia</i>	Sarah Bernhardt Peony	2a	36"	36"	Medium	Green	Pink	June-July
<i>Papaver</i>	Brilliant Poppy	2a	30"	24"	Fine	Green	Red	June-July
<i>Phlox</i>	Laura Garden Phlox	3a	30"	24"	Medium	Green	Purple	June-Sept
<i>Rudbeckia</i>	Black-Eyed Susan	3a	30"	24"	Medium	Green	Orange	July-Sept
<i>Sedum</i>	Autumn Joy Sedum	2b	24"	24"	Coarse	Green	Pink	Aug-Sept
<i>Stachya</i>	Lamb's Ears	2b	24"	18"	Medium	Grey	Pink	June
<i>Veronica</i>	Red Fox Speedwell	2a	16"	12"	Medium	Green	Pink	June-July

Border Tall Height of > 39"+

Genus	Common	Hardiness	Height	Spread	Texture	Foliage	Flower	Bloom Period
<i>Delphinium</i>	Astolat Larkspur	2a	60"	18"	Fine	Drk Green	Purple	June-July
<i>Eupatorium</i>	Joe-Pye Weed	2b	84"	48"	Coarse	Green	Rose	Aug-Sept
<i>Lillium</i>	Red Tiger Lily	2a	48"	24"	Medium	Green	Red	July
<i>Lychnis</i>	Maltese Cross	2a	48"	24"	Coarse	Green	Red	June-July



Papaver



Stachya



Liatris



Lychnis