

FireWise Landscaping Plants



There is no such thing as a “fireproof” landscape (unless it is completely covered in concrete), but there are landscapes that are “Firewise” and can help prevent the spread of fire damage.

General concepts to keep in mind when choosing and planting Fire-Wise species are:

A plant's moisture content is the single most important factor governing its volatility. However, oil and resin content plus other factors in some species render them flammable even when the plant is well-watered.

1. Deciduous plants tend to be more fire resistant because their leaves have higher moisture content and their basic chemistry is less flammable. When deciduous trees are dormant, there is less fuel to carry fire through their canopies.
2. In some cases, there is a strong correlation between drought tolerance and fire resistance. For example, a plant may shed its leaves or needles during extreme drought. Other drought-tolerant species may have smaller leaves or thick, succulent leaves. These plants offer less fuel or have a higher moisture content, both of which help reduce fire hazard.
3. During extended periods of drought, when the risk of wildfires is highest, your plant choices and their placement in the landscape could make your home vulnerable to fire damage.
4. While we do want to encourage the use of shrubs and brush around the home, we don't want to encourage it right up against the home. Especially things that are extremely flammable.

5. Consider the following when choosing plants and laying out landscaping:

- ! Plants that's have a higher water content.
- ! Plants that don't tend to take fire from the ground towards windows or the roof, because these are the sensitive area in our homes.
- ! Avoid tall grasses like Pampas grass, because they have a tendency to dry out and become easily ignitable.
- ! Use the areas near your house for your hard scapes like rocks, fountains and walkways. These are a good barrier that the fire has difficulty jumping, unless you get high winds (forty mile per hour or higher).
- ! Mulch to conserve moisture and reduce weed growth. Mulch can be organic (wood chips or small bark pieces) or inorganic (gravel or rock). Avoid pine bark, pine needles, or other materials that can easily carry fire.



Plants should be planted and trimmed away from the house.

Plants marked with * on the Design Guidelines pre-approved list.
Deer resistance ('deer' column) - N=none, M=medium, H= high

Recommended large hardwood trees:

Common Name	Scientific Name	deer
Maple, Big-toothed or Red	<i>Acer grandidentatum</i> or <i>A. rubrum</i>	N
Mexican Sycamore	<i>Platanus mexicana</i> (more drought-tolerant)	H
Oak	<i>Quercus</i> (<i>Post-stellata</i> , Texas Red- <i>texana</i> , Shumard- <i>shumardii</i>)*	N
Pecan	<i>Carya illinoensis</i>	N
Plateau Black cherry	<i>Prunus serotina</i> var. <i>eximia</i>	N
Sugar Hackberry*	<i>Celtis laevigata</i>	M
Texas Ash*	<i>Fraxinus texensis</i>	N
Texas Pistache	<i>Pistacia texana</i>	M
Sycamore	<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>	H
Walnut, Black or Texas	<i>Juglans nigra</i> or <i>microcarpa</i>	N

Medium-sized trees could include:

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>deer</u>
Mexican Buckeye*	<i>Ungnadia speciosa</i>	M
Mexican Plum*	<i>Prunus mexicana</i>	N
Mexican redbud*	<i>Cercis canadensis var. mexicana</i>	M
Roughleaf Dogwood -	<i>Cornus drummondii</i>	N
Texas persimmon -	<i>Diospyros texana</i>	M
Texas redbud* -	<i>Cercis canadensis var. texensis</i>	M
Western soapberry -	<i>Sapindus drummondii</i>	H

Recommended small trees/shrubs are:

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>deer</u>
American beautyberry	<i>Callicarpa americana</i>	N
Anacacho Orchid	<i>Bauhinia congesta</i>	H
Black Dalea	<i>Dalea frutescens</i>	M
Dessert Willow	<i>Chilopsis linearis</i>	M
Elbowbush	<i>Forestiera pubescens var. pubescens</i>	M
Esperanza (Yellow bells)	<i>Tecoma stans</i>	M
Evergreen Sumac	<i>Rhus virens</i>	M
Fragrant Sumac	<i>Rhus trilobata (R. aromatica)</i>	M
Flame Acanthus	<i>Anisacanthus quadrifidus var. wrightii</i>	H
Texas Mountain Laurel	<i>Sophora secundiflora</i>	H

Recommended herbaceous perennials:

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>deer</u>
Black-eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	H
Blanketflower	<i>Gaillardia x grandiflora</i> (some Native)	M
Butterflyweed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	H
Columbine	<i>Aquilegia</i> (some Native)	M
Coreopsis - perennial species	<i>Coreopsis</i>	M
Englemann daisy	<i>Engelmannia peristenia</i>	N
Fleabane	<i>Erigeron</i> (some Native)	M
Lantana	<i>Lantana horrida</i> (some Native)	H
Lupine	<i>Lupinus</i> (some Native)	M
Primrose	<i>Oenothera</i> (some Native)	N
Penstemon	<i>Penstemon</i> (some Native)	N
Salvia, Sage	<i>Salvia</i> (some Native)	H
Shrubby boneset	<i>Ageratina havanensis</i>	M
Skullcap	<i>Scutellaria</i> (some Native)	H
Turk's cap	<i>Malvaviscus arboreus var. drummondii</i>	M
Yarrow	<i>Achillea</i> (some Native)	H

Also Recommended:

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>deer</u>
Agave	<i>Agave</i> (some Native)	H
Cactus	<i>Cactaceae</i> (some Native)	H
Nolina	<i>Nolinaceae</i> (some Native)	H
Yucca	<i>Yucca</i> (some Native)	H

Do not plant near the foundation:

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>deer</u>
Agarito	<i>Mahonia trifoliolata</i>	H
Ornamental Grasses	(native & non-native)	H
Possumhaw Holly	<i>Ilex decidua</i>	M
Yaupon Holly	<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>	M

AVOID the following:

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>deer</u>
Baldcypress	<i>Taxodium distichum</i> M (& Montezuma - <i>mucronatum</i>)	
Juniper (Cedar)	<i>Juniperus</i> (native & non-native)	H
Pampas grass	<i>Cortaderia selloana</i> H	
Pine	<i>Pinus</i> (native & non-native) H	
Upright rosemary	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> (all varieties)	H



Rosemary needs to be at least 3 feet from the foundation.

References: *Texas Parks & Wildlife's 'Passport to Texas – Fire-wise Landscaping' and 'Wildscapes – Plant Guidance for Edwards Plateau'*
Deer Resistance – www.wildflower.org/explore

For help with finding a landscape company, check the Vendor Notebook at the Monitor Desk in the Social Center and Cowan Creek Amenity Center.

Prepared by Members of the Firewise Group