

## Deer-Resistant Ornamental Plants for Your Garden

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Deer can wipe out your garden faster than almost any other pest. Two species common in Montana—the white-tailed deer and the mule deer—eat flowers and foliage in summer and browse on tender buds in winter. Even urban gardens are vulnerable to deer damage.

Through the years frustrated gardeners have tried different remedies to keep the pests away from their plants. Painting tree trunks with sulphonated linseed oil worked sporadically but the concoction couldn't be used on tender perennials and on the buds and thin shoots of trees. Hanging bars of heavily perfumed soap, items of old sweaty clothing, or linen bags filled with human hair from the tips of tree branches sometimes works for a week or so until the deer become accustomed to the scent. Unfortunately your festooned trees will look ridiculous. Dried blood or blood meal sprinkled around the garden border also works for a few days until the deer get used to the smell, but it must be reapplied after a heavy rain. Commercial rabbit repellents

affect deer too. Spray the plants as soon as new spring growth begins and at weekly intervals throughout the season. Some deer get used to the smell and bitter taste of the fungicide thiram, the active ingredient in the repellent, and will resume browsing.

A fence around the garden is a more permanent solution, but it must be at least eight feet high and slant outward from the protected area at a 45-degree angle. You may want to top it with another foot or two of electric fence, but this has the effect of turning your garden into a fortress and is exceedingly difficult to work pleasingly into the landscape.

Most of Montana is deer country and you'll fight a battle you cannot win if you insist on planting species the deer love to eat. The best way to solve your deer problems is to plant things deer don't prefer. There are many ornamental plants that will grow in our state that fall into this category. If you feel this limits your planting scheme intolerably, then place plants deer love to eat close to the

house and those they don't prefer farther out in the yard where the animals are more apt to wander. Unfortunately, I've had deer on my front porch. Remember, no plant is safe if the deer are hungry enough.

Following is a list of plants that generally grow well in our state and that deer will usually ignore if their natural food supply is sufficient. I've supplied the species where it is known, but many references list only the genus. In that case I've given the genus followed by "spp.," the abbreviation for the plural of "species." Some species of a particular genus will grow under our conditions; some will not. For example, according to the USDA Hardiness Zone rating, *Aquilegia canadensis*, the American columbine, is a Zone 2 plant and will grow here but *Aquilegia bertolonii*, the Alpinerock Columbine, a Zone 6 plant, won't. It's up to you to plant only those perennial species that are adapted to Zones 2 and 3 in eastern Montana gardens, Zones 3 and 4 in central Montana gardens, and Zones 4 and 5 in western Montana gardens.

## A Partial List of Deer-resistant Garden Plants

Botanical Name	Common Name	Botanical Name	Common Name
<b>Ground Covers</b>			
Ajuga reptans	Carpet Bugle	Liatris spicata	Spike Gay-Feather
Convallaria majalis	Lily-of-the-Valley	Lychnis coronaria	Rose Campion
Lamium spp.	Dead Nettle	Narcissus spp.	Daffodil
Pachysandra terminalis	Pachysandra	Pulmonaria spp.	Lungwort
Vinca major	Large Periwinkle	Rudbeckia spp.	Coneflower
Vinca minor	Periwinkle	Solidago spp.	Goldenrod
		Veronica officinalis	Speedwell
		Yucca filimentosa	Yucca
<b>Flowers</b>			
Achillea spp.	Yarrow		<b>Vines</b>
Aquilegia spp.	Columbine	Celastrus spp.	Bittersweet
Astilbe spp.	Astilbe	Clematis spp.	Clematis
Coreopsis spp.	Tickseed	Hedera helix baltica	Baltic Ivy
Dianthus spp.	Pinks	Lonicera spp.	Honeysuckle
Dicentra spp.	Bleeding Heart		<b>Shrubs</b>
Digitalis spp.	Foxglove	Amorpha canescens	Lead Plant
Echinacea spp.	Purple Coneflower	Berberis Koreana	Korean Barberry
Epimedium spp.	Epimedium	Berberis thunbergii	Japanese Barberry
Eupatorium purpureum	Bluestem Joe-Pye-Weed	Caragana arborescens 'Sutherland'	Sutherland Caragana
Geranium spp.	Cranesbill, Geranium	Caragana arborescens 'Lorbergi'	Fernleaf Caragana
Helleborus spp.	Hellebore	Caragana aurantiaca	Pygmy Caragana
Helianthus spp.	Sunflower	Caragana frutex	Russian Caragana
Iberis spp.	Candytuft	Caragana frutex globosa	Dwarf Russian Caragana
Iris spp.	Iris		
Lavendula spp.	Lavender		

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Botanical Name	Common Name	Botanical Name	Common Name
Caragana maximowicziana	Maximowicz Caragana	Rosa wichuraiana	Memorial Rose
Caragana pekinensis	Pekinese Caragana	Rosa 'Betty Bland'	Betty Bland Rose
Ceanothus velutinus	Snowbush Ceanothus	Rosa 'Haidee'	Haidee Rose
Cornus sericea	Red Osier Dogwood	Rhus trilobata	Fragrant Sumac
Cornus stolonifera	Osier Dogwood	Rhamnus cathartica	Common Buckthorn
Eleagnus angustifolia	Russian Olive	Sheperdia argentea	Buffaloberry
Eleagnus commutata	Silverberry	Spiraea spp.	Bridalwreath
Halimodendron halodendron	Siberian Salt Tree	Syringa villosa	Late Lilac
Juniperus chinensis	Chinese Juniper	Syringa vulgaris	Common Lilac
Juniperus chinensis 'Hetzii'	Hetz Juniper	Viburnum opulus	Highbush Cranberry
Juniperus communis 'Vase Shape'	Vase common Juniper	Yucca filamentosa	Adam's Needle
Juniperus horizontalis plumosa	Compact Andorra Juniper		<b>Trees</b>
Juniperus horizontalis 'Lividus'	Lividus Creeping Juniper	Acer platanoides	Norway Maple
Juniperus sabina 'Von Ehron'	Von Ehron Savin Juniper	Acer saccharinum	Silver Maple
Kolkwitzia amabilis	Beautybush	Betula papyrifera	Paper Birch
Lonicera spp.	Honeysuckle	Betula pendula	European White Birch
Philadelphus spp.	Mockorange	Crataegus spp.	Hawthorn
Prunus americana	American plum	Gleditsia tricanthos	Honey Locust
Prunus fruticosa	Groundcherry	Picea abies	Norway Spruce
Prunus tenella	Dwarf Russian Almond	Picea glauca	White Spruce
Rosa rugosa	Rugose rose	Picea pungens	Colorado Blue Spruce
Rosa virginiana	Virginia Rose	Pinus nigra	Austrian Pine
		Pinus mugho	Mugo Pine
		Pinus sylvestris	Scotch Pine
		Tsuga canadensis	Canada Hemlock



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