Herbaceous Perennials II & Water Garden and Wetland Plants
HORT 308/609 Spring 2018 Plant List 11

Assigned Readings for Plant List 11
Read the pages in your textbook associated with the family descriptions and individual taxa covered on Plant List 11 that was distributed in lab. These plant lists are also available on the course website.
http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/syllabi/308/home/frameset.htm

Herbaceous Perennials For Naturalizing / Wildflowers
- Many can be used as conventional perennials
- Some have challenges with dense monoculture plantings
- Some may be “sacrificial” for pollinators / wildlife attraction
- Naturalized and wildflower plantings may need initial irrigation and weed control
- Often interplanted with annuals to provide color during establishment of perennials

Asclepias tuberosa
Butterfly Weed
- Native 1’ - 2’ (3’) tall herbaceous perennial wildflower long cultivated ornamentally
- Erect, gangly in youth, fuller at maturity, 2+ years to establish
- Useful in USDA zones 3 – 9 (10a) with proper provenance
- Windswept umbels of small yellow, orange (most common), to red flowers followed by an interesting horned follicle
**Asclepias tuberosa**
*Butterfly Weed*

- Tap-rooted & hard to transplant
- Sunny well drained site, tolerates dry alkaline soils
- Aphids, sooty mold, & caterpillars can be problematic
- Sunny border, cottage & historical gardens, naturalizing, butterfly gardens, cut or dried flower

Butterflies on *Asclepius curassavica* may make it a “sacrificial” plant

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**Callirhoe involucrata**
*Wine-Cups*

- Texas native herbaceous perennial wildflower
- With proper provenance useful in USDA zones 4-9 (10)
- Sprawling 4” - 8” (12”) tall by 3’ - 4’ wide
- Tea cup-shaped poppy-like wine pink to red-purple flowers
- Lacking the canopy density to serve as a good groundcover

*C. involucrata* var. *lineariloba* has white or white & purple flowers & denser foliage

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- Soil adaptable with a well drained sunny location
- Drought avoider, irrigation delays onset of summer dormancy
- Naturalizing; perennial border; wildflower meadows; over a low wall; mixed species container plantings
- *C. involucrata* var. *lineariloba* has white or white & purple flowers & denser foliage
**Coreopsis lanceolata**
**Lanceleaf Coreopsis**
- Herbaceous native perennial, useful in USDA zones 4 to 9
- Rosette of foliage with thin floppy flower stalks to 3’ tall
- Composite heads, yellow, singles or doubles
- Peak bloom is in late spring (south) to mid-summer (north), sporadically thereafter in summer; pollinator attractants

**Ratibida columnifera**
**Mexican Hat**
- Herbaceous perennial (USDA z. 7 - 9) or self-seeding annual
- Upright oval mound to vase-shaped, fine textured foliage, 18” - 36” tall
  - Flowers with elongated disk, recurved rays
  - Yellow, orange, red, bronze, solid or bicolor
  - Rocket to Mexican hat appearance

**Coreopsis lanceolata**
**Lanceleaf Coreopsis**
- Full sun, wide variety of soils, can crowd others
- Perennial or mixed border or naturalizing, cut flowers, massing, wildflower plantings, greenroofs

**Ratibida columnifera**
**Mexican Hat**
- Native wildflower tolerant of numerous soil types
  - Survives drought but declines with summer drought stress; heat and alkaline soil tolerant; full sun for best flowering
- Naturalizing, transition landscapes, wildflowers, perennial border, cut flowers
**Ratibida columnifera**

**Mexican Hat**

- Bigger in Texas!

**Solidago spp.**

**Goldenrods**

- Wide ranging U.S. native genus from USDA z. 3 - 9; most any sunny spot
- Stiffly upright plants topped with showy bright yellow to golden panicles of small composite flowers
- Very reliable late summer to fall bloomer
- Weedy from seed & rhizomes
- Naturalizing; late season accent; perennial borders; wildflower mixes; cut flowers; rain gardens; most common is *S. canadensis*
- Unjustly blamed for late summer allergies that are the result of Ragweed pollen

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**Erythrina herbacea**

**Coral Bean**

- Rounded mound of erect sparse semi-woody branches
- Woody subshrub in z. 9b -13, herbaceous perennial z. 7 - 9a
- Recurved prickles on foliage; deciduous to semi-evergreen
- Long spike-like racemes of narrow tubular keeled dark pink to scarlet flowers; attracts hummingbirds

**Erythrina herbacea**

- Pods with highly poisonous scarlet seeds
- Full sun with well drained soil; very heat and drought tolerant; exhibits both soil and foliar salt tolerance; for xeric gardens
- Needs annual pruning; prickly foliage is a maintenance liability; barrier plantings
- Naturalizing; perennial borders; coastal landscapes; hummingbird / butterfly plant

E. herbacea  
E. x bidwillii  
E. crista-galli  
E. crista-galli
**Lantana spp.**

- USDA zones 9 (8) - 13 herbaceous perennial or shrub; used as a summer annual in cooler zones
- 1’ Groundcover to 6’ tall rounded mound; formal, transition, naturalizing
- Dark glossy green aromatic (pungent?) foliage
- Verbena-like cymes of flowers, poisonous fruit
- Continuous spring to fall bloom, mostly in red/orange/yellow, some white, cream, pink, purple

**Malvaviscus arboreus var. drummondii**

- Suckering upright herbaceous perennial in USDA zones 8 – 10
- Dark green foliage, erect scarlet red flowers
  - Peak in late summer & fall; may be pink or white
  - Turbinate flowers attract hummingbirds
  - White flies, mealy bugs, sooty mold
- Sun to shade, leaves crinkle in sun; soil, salt, shade, and drought tolerant

**Lantana spp.**

- Almost any well drained site, takes heat, drought and salts
- Bedding, borders, containers, baskets, seashore plantings
- Species types or hybrids of *L. urticoides*, *L. camara* and/or *L. montevidensis*
- Spider mites, lantana lace bug, miners

**Giant Turk’s Cap**

- Used as seasonal hedge

**Malvaviscus arboreus var. mexicanus**

- Giant Turk’s Cap is taller (7’- 9’), has larger pendant flowers, and is less cold hardy (z. 9-13) than *M. arboreus var. drummondii*
**Oenothera speciosa**

**Evening Primrose**

- Summer (north) or spring (south) blooming herbaceous perennial useful USDA z. 6 (5) - 9
- Pink/white cup-shaped flowers, long bloomer
- One of best wildflowers, which has been tamed for the perennial border
- Aggressive, thrips problems, loose form
- Several other *Oenothera* are native to Texas & useful in regional landscapes

**Bog / Water Garden Plants**

- Valued for their ability to tolerate water logged soils, periodic flooding, and/or standing water
- Floating versus emergent water plants
- Anchored versus free floating plants
- Required for a healthy ecosystem in water features
- Few things have the universal human appeal of water features

**Water Gardens Can Also Add Motion And Sound To Garden Settings**

Fantastic wildflower, provides major show as Bluebonnets decline until *Coreopsis* & others kick in bloom
Containment May Be Important
With Hydrophilic Species

Bog / Wetland Species

- Variably flood tolerant:
  - Saturated soils or those constantly moist
  - Shallow flooding for brief to extended periods
- May be important in erosion control, estuary function, or wildlife habitat
- Rain gardens, detention / retention ponds, biofiltration, drainage swales
- Often aggressive in garden settings

Canna \times \textit{generalis}

- Herbaceous perennial, z. 8 (7) - 13, or summer tuber
- Large coarse textured tropical foliage from tuberous rhizomes
  - Pseudo-stems, 2' - 9', resemble small banana plant
- Attractive orchid-like or gladiolus-like flowers
  - Spikes, red, orange, yellow, pink, white, solid or bicolors, flushes spring to frost
  - Attracts hummingbirds

Canna \times \textit{generalis}

- Wide site adaptability, dry soils to standing water; pH adaptable
- Problems: leaf-rolling caterpillars, grasshoppers, yellow mottle virus
- Formal beds, backgrounds, bogs, water gardens, containers, tropical accent
**Colocasia esculenta**  
**Elephant’s Ear**

- Herbaceous perennial, z. 8 (7)-13, or summer “bulb”
- Clump of long stalked huge (to 6’) heart-shaped leaves from tuberous rhizomes
- Bold tropical effect; lush foliage

**Colocasia esculenta**  
**Elephant’s Ear**

- Can take sun only if lots of water is available
  - On moist well drained to boggy sites it can be invasive; problem along waterways
- Source of taro and poi, *Caution it must be properly prepared to be edible*

**Photobombing the Colocasia?**

**Cyperus alternifolius**  
**Umbrella Sedge**

- Herbaceous perennial, USDA z. 9(8)-13
- Pleasingly coarse textured rounded mound of 3’ to 6’ tall flower stalks topped with whorl of strap-like semi-evergreen leaf-like bracts
- Equally at home in water / bog gardens, perennial border, tropical accent, or as summer annual; cut arrangements
**Cyperus papyrus**  
**Egyptian Papyrus**
- Larger, 6’ to 8’ tall, but finer textured version of *C. alternifolius*
- Less cold hardy, semi-evergreen in USDA zone 9, evergreen in 10 - 13
- Bog, water, historical, or educational gardens; tropical screen
- Source of ancient papyrus scrolls
- Thought to be bulrush of the bible

**Equisetum hyemale**  
**Horsetail**
- Upright herbaceous perennial, 2’ - 4’ (9’)
- Stiff unbranched segmented green stems, strong vertical element
- Distinct prehistoric / exotic appearance
- Tolerates standing water or dry sites
- Very aggressive, restrain rhizomes, z.7-13
- Useful as accent in florist’s arrangements, pot accents, bogs, water gardens

**Containment Can Be An Issue!**
- While natives by definition are not invasive, they can be aggressively weedy

**Iris pseudacorus**  
**Yellow Flag**
- Similar to Louisiana Iris, but may be larger, 3’ to 4’, and even more vigorous
- Surprisingly cold hardy (USDA z. 4 - 9), very heat tolerant, salt and poor drainage tolerant
- Soil adaptable, can become mildly weedy; adds vertical form
- Great in bog or water features
- Gorgeous yellow flowers in spring, one of our most reliable *Iris*, but single flush
**Marsilea macropoda**

*Water Clover*

- Evergreen to semi-evergreen herbaceous perennial, USDA zones 8 - 13, fern relative
- Handsome four-leaved clover-like foliage is a rich dark green color with frosting of hairs
- Effective large scale groundcover for wet soils or even shallow water / boggy areas
- Full sun to moderate shade; soil pH adaptable; performs well in the Hill Country
- Rejuvenation prune if plants become rag-tag
- Tends to overwhelm smaller species in mixed plantings

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**Emergent & Floating Water Garden Plants**

- Plants normally grow in water but may be of varying depths
- Plants with anchoring roots from few inches to 15 or 20 feet depths
- Free floating plants for any depth of water, but usually in calm or slow moving currents
- Oxygenators / submergents

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**Pontederia cordata**

*Pickerel Weed*

- Eastern USA native herbaceous perennial useful USDA z. 3-13; erect, emergent 1’ - 3’ (4’) above water
- Coarse arrow-shaped leaves
- Showy 6” to 8” terminal spikes of tiny purplish blue or white flowers
- Can be very weedy; spreads by rhizomes; difficult to eradicate
- Heat and wet soil OK, but not drought
- Naturalizing: bog and water gardens where containment is possible; pots/barrels; butterfly gardens

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**Typha angustifolia**

*Narrowleaf Cattail*

- Herbaceous perennial, z. 7 (6?) - 13, bog / water garden plant; wildlife!
- Creates dense impenetrable mass of unbranched cane-like stems to 8’ tall; containment is a major issue
- Vertical sword-like leaves to 7” long
- Aggressive, tolerates drought or standing water; strong vertical form
**Typha angustifolia**
Narrowleaf Cattail

- Bottle-brush flowers forming fuzzy stiff fruit
  - Resemble brown corndogs
  - Effective summer/fall
  - Fruit can be used in dried arrangements if treated to prevent seed dispersal
  - Biofiltration, rain gardens, wildlife food & habitat, soil stabilization, reclamation

Other species are hardy from USDA z. 3 to 13

**Nymphaea spp.**
Water Lilies

- Classic floating water plants, dark glossy green or variegated circular leaves
- Gorgeous 2" to 8" diameter floating to slightly emergent white, blue, purple, pink, yellow, red or bicolor flowers, spring - frost
- Strong horizontal element in water features

**Nelumbo spp.**
Water Lotus

- Can be thought of as a larger coarser version of water lilies
- Circular leaves 1' to 2' across, emergent from surface to several feet above the water; some species USDA z. 6 - 13
- Large 6" - 10" diameter yellow / pink flowers, spring / summer; seed pods used in floristry
- Can become a noxious weed
- Sacred symbol in some eastern religions
Eichhornia crassipes  
**Water Hyacinth**

- Raft-forming floating herbaceous perennial water plant
- Beautiful orchid-like flowers and handsome foliage
- **Restricted plant** in most warm climate regions due to invasiveness in still or slow moving water bodies
  - Can clog waterways in warm climates
  - Limited cold hardiness, z. 8b (8a) - 13, suppresses its invasive tendencies in colder climates where it is used as a summer annual; **restricted in Texas!**
  - Good example of the need for regional specificity in invasive species categorization / legislation

Pistia stratiotes  
**Water Lettuce**

- A **restricted** plant in Texas and much of Southeastern U.S.
- Floating evergreen perennial, z. 9 (8) - 13, formerly used in the Southern U.S. for its unique foliage & form in water gardens
- Sometimes still grown in northern regions where cold limits its invasive tendencies; there used as summer accents in pools, water features, and high light interiorscape pools
- Despite its common name of Water Lettuce, ingestion is reportedly poisonous; do not grow plants in restricted regions