

Dry Soil: Annual Foliage Plants

| Botanical Name | Common Name | Height | Comments |
|---|--|--------|--|
| <i>Amaranthus caudatus</i> | love-lies-bleeding | 2-4' | Colorful foliage, trailing rope or chenille-like flowers; <i>A. tricolor</i> has brightly colored foliage. |
| <i>Dichondra argentea</i> 'Silver Falls' 'Emerald Falls' | dicondra | 1-4' | Trailing with small round grey leaves; tolerates part sun. |
| <i>Duranta erecta</i> 'Golden Edge' | variegated pigeonberry | 24" | Crisp variegated green and cream foliage; tolerates part sun and dry sites. |
| <i>Euphorbia marginata</i> 'Kilimanjaro' | snow in summer, variegated annual spurge | 2-4' | Green leaves, edged with cream; native to poor soil, do not fertilize, needs good drainage, self-seeds. |
| <i>Felicia amelloides</i> 'Variegata' | variegated or blue Marguerite | 12-18" | Small blue daisy-like flowers, variegated foliage, bushy shape. |
| <i>Lantana camara</i> 'Samantha' | variegated lantana 'Samantha' | 12-18" | Clusters of golden yellow flowers, chartreuse and yellow foliage; extremely drought tolerant. |
| <i>Pelargonium</i> 'Crystal Palace Gem' 'Blazonry' 'Golden Ears' | fancy-leaved geraniums | 12-18" | Showy, colored leaves; prefer lean, dry soils, and can tolerate part shade; grow from cuttings. |
| <i>Pennisetum setaceum</i> 'Rubrum' | purple fountaingrass | 2-4' | Excellent in containers; purple foliage and seed heads; good for xeriscaping; sets no seed; dies with frost. |
| <i>Senecio</i> 'Silver Dust' | dusty miller | 8-10" | Lacy silver colored mounding cultivar with a spread of 12" or more; prefers full sun. |
| <i>Setcreasea purpurea</i> or <i>Tradescantia pallida</i> | purple heart | 8-12" | A rugged plant that has no serious pest or disease issues; full sun. |
| <i>Tropaeolum majus variegata</i> 'Alaska' 'Jewel of Africa' | variegated nasturtium | 12" | Grown cascading in containers, up a trellis, or as a groundcover; prefers dry, less fertile sites. |

Foliage plants are invaluable for obtaining an attractive colorful look for plantings whether in containers or in ground. In a container, foliage can reinforce a color theme or blend the disparate elements of various bloomers. In the ground, annual foliage can carry a summer display through the quiet times between perennial flowering periods. These recommendations can be used in the tough situations that would be a challenge for the more typical plant list. Plants listed may be perennial in other zones, but are used as annuals in our northern gardens.

A word about establishment: Initial care must be taken to establish the plantings for the first two weeks, whether from seed or bedding plants. They require only light watering however; DO NOT overwater or plants will be floppy and disease-prone. Unless indicated these prefer full sun and average soil conditions of fertility, drainage, and pH.

Compiled by Terry Engels and Mary Zeug, Stearns County Master Gardeners, who have answered hundreds of public questions on foliage plants, and have years of experience seeing plants in their own gardens and at Munsinger Clemens Gardens in St. Cloud, MN.



Purple fountaingrass loves heat and full sun. It has no cold tolerance and dies with the first frost.



Lantana tolerates hot dry sites such as this container planting at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum.