

12 Months of Xeriscape Color

January	Paperwhites	<i>(Narcissus tazetta)</i>
	These bulbs love cold weather, and provide fragrant white and yellow flowers. Plant bulbs in sun or under deciduous trees. Paperwhites will naturalize to bloom every year.	
February	Primrose Jasmine	<i>(Jasminum mesnyi)</i>
	This tough evergreen is a mounding shrub that reaches 8 feet in height and width and prospers without irrigation. The yellow blooms herald spring. A bonus: Deer won't eat this plant.	
	Cemetery Iris	<i>(Iris alba)</i>
	White, orchid-like blooms emerge from the green, sword-like foliage in February and March. Plant so the top of the rhizome is level with the soil surface. Iris are not fussy about soil, and deer don't eat them.	
March	"Texas Gold" Columbine	<i>(Aquilegia chrysantha hinckleyana 'Texas Gold')</i>
	Yellow blooms resemble shooting stars, creating a bright show under deciduous trees. The perennial reseeds new plants each year.	
April	Crossvine	<i>(Bignonia capreolata)</i>
	The evergreen vine can cover a fence or trellis and will grow in sun or light shade. Its red-apricot tubular flowers are show-stoppers, and draw the first hummingbirds of spring.	
May	Coreopsis	<i>(Coreopsis spp.)</i>
	This wildflower starts its show in spring and blooms into autumn. Seed must reach bare soil and receive full sun.	
June	Esperanza	<i>(Tecoma stans)</i>
	The hotter, the better for yellow bells. Remove spent blooms for continuous color through fall. The plants will freeze back, but roots are hardy so they should come back in spring. In sheltered locations, esperanza will grow into a small tree. It is also deer-resistant.	

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July	Firebush	<i>(Hamelia patens)</i>
	Hummingbirds love the tubular red-orange flowers on this small shrub. Use it in a container to draw hummers to the patio. The plant loves the heat and full sun. Deer don't have a taste for firebush.	
August	Poinciana	<i>(Caesalpinia pulcherrima, C. gilliesii)</i>
	When other plants are withering under the sun, the Mexican bird of paradise shines its brightest. With electric-orange flowers, <i>C.pulcherrima</i> will grow into a small tree in milder climates, reaching about 5 feet in South Texas. Flowers on <i>C. gilliesii</i> are less showy.	
September	Chaste Tree	<i>(Vitex agnus-castus)</i>
	Also called Mexican lilac, this busy plant produces lavender blooms that resemble lilacs. It thrives in the heat and provides nectar for hummingbirds and butterflies.	
October	Lantana	<i>(Lantana spp.)</i>
	The large family of lantanas has earned a prominent spot in xeriscapes. Hummingbirds and butterflies love the nectar, and the blooms span several months.	
November	Fall Aster	<i>(Aster oblongifolius)</i>
	The bloom season is short but spectacular. The root-hardy perennial is suitable for hot, dry locations near streets and sidewalks.	
December	Butterfly Rose	<i>(Rosa chinensis 'Mutabilis')</i>
	These plants have survived for generations with minimal care. It also will bloom all summer without supplemental watering. The mutabilis offers simple flowers that begin as yellow, turning apricot, then pink.	

Other excellent xeriscape plants for color include **purslane**, an annual that will reseed and thrives in heat and provides a punch of color in the summer landscape. **Mealy blue sage** (*Salvia farinacea*) blooms spring through fall. **'Texas Gold' columbine** bursts with yellow flowers in early spring. **Dwarf Mexican petunias** (*Ruella brittoniana 'Katie'*) will bloom all summer. The bright purple **'Laura Bush' petunia** flowers spring through fall and does well during the summer heat.

The source for this **GVST Gardening Guide** is Dr. Calvin Finch, horticulturist and Conservation Division Manager for San Antonio Water System. You can see color photographs of all of these xeriscape plants at www.PlantAnswers.com. For information about how to qualify for a xeriscape landscaping rebate, visit www.saws.org.

All of the GVST Gardening Guides are available on the GVST website: www.gardeningvolunteers.org.

