

Texas Native Plants & Deer Resistance (Rev. 5-03-18)

Native Plant Society of Texas, Williamson County Chapter <https://npsot.org/wp/wilco>



Unfortunately, there are no “deer proof” plants. Deer will taste anything newly planted and will eat any plant when food supplies are low. Influences on deer browsing include deer density, food availability in nature areas, their trail through your yard and the palatability and age of the plant. In addition, young trees are vulnerable to bucks rubbing the velvet off their antlers in the early fall.

The most effective way to deter deer is to fence an area or cage individual trees, shrubs and new plantings. Alternatively, place netting directly over plants or over supports, but do not use lightweight bird netting as small creatures get entangled in it and suffer and die. You can use deer repellants you spray on or spread on the ground around the plant. (*Do not use INHUMANE repellants that have predator urine in them.*) Also, there are water emitters with a motion sensor that shoot water up to 25 feet. Sometimes, moving the plant to a different location in your yard is effective. In the end, you will need to experiment and accept that you will share with nature.

Listed below are native Texas plants that typically are available in area nurseries and their deer resistance. To learn more about the plant, click on the ‘Common Name’ and it will take you to the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center’s Plant Database. Understand that YOUR deer may eat a plant listed as ‘High’ and conversely may not eat something listed as ‘Low.’ Please ask for native Texas plants and avoid the invasive non-native plants. Go to <https://texasinvasives.org> for more information.

SHADE TREES		
Common Name	Botanical Name	Deer Resistance
Ash, Texas	<i>Fraxinus albicans (F. texensis)</i>	Low
Elm, Cedar	<i>Ulmus crassifolia</i>	Low
Cedar, Eastern Red	<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	HIGH
Cypress, Montezuma Bald	<i>Taxodium mucronatum</i>	Medium
Oak, Burr	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i> (oak wilt resistant white oak)	Eat Acorns
Oak, Chinquapin	<i>Quercus muehlenbergii</i> (oak wilt resistant white oak)	Eat Acorns
Oak, Escarpment Live	<i>Quercus fusiformis</i>	Eat Acorns
Oak, Lacey	<i>Quercus laceyi</i> (oak wilt resistant white oak)	Eat Acorns
Oak, Live	<i>Quercus virginiana</i>	Eat Acorns
Oak, Mexican White (Oak, Monterrey)	<i>Quercus polymorpha</i> (oak wilt resistant white oak)	Eat Acorns
Oak, Red (Oak, Spanish)	<i>Quercus buckleyi</i>	Eat Acorns
Pecan (Native)	<i>Carya illinoensis</i>	Medium

ORNAMENTAL/SMALL TREES		
Common Name	Botanical Name	Deer Resistance
American Smoke Tree	<i>Cotinus obovatus</i>	Medium
Anacacho Orchid Tree	<i>Bauhinia lunarioides</i>	HIGH
Desert Willow	<i>Chilopsis linearis</i>	Medium
Eve's Necklace	<i>Styphnolobium affine (Sophora affinis)</i>	Medium
Goldenball Lead Tree	<i>Leucaena retusa</i>	Medium
Huisache	<i>Vachellia farnesiana</i>	Low
Mesquite (Thornless 'Maverick' also)	<i>Prosopis glandulosa</i>	Medium
Mexican Buckeye	<i>Ungnadia speciosa</i>	HIGH
Holly, Possumhaw	<i>Ilex decidua</i>	Medium
Holly, Yaupon	<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>	Medium
Redbud, Mexican	<i>Cercis canadensis</i> var. <i>Mexiana</i>	Medium
Redbud, Texas	<i>Cercis canadensis</i> var. <i>texensis</i>	Medium
Retama	<i>Parkinsonia aculeata</i>	Medium
Roughleaf Dogwood	<i>Cornus drummondii</i>	Low
Soapberry, Western	<i>Sapindus saponaria</i> var. <i>drummondii</i>	HIGH
Southern Wax Myrtle (Dwarf varieties also)	<i>Myrica cerifera</i>	Medium
Sumac, Prairie Flame Leaf	<i>Rhus lanceolata</i>	Low
Texas Mountain Laurel	<i>Sophora secundiflora</i>	HIGH
Texas Persimmon	<i>Diospyros texana</i>	Medium

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SHRUBS		
Common Name	Botanical Name	Deer Resistance
Agarita	<i>Mahonia trifoliolata</i> (<i>Berberis trifoliolata</i>)	HIGH
American Beautyberry	<i>Callicarpa americana</i>	Low
Carolina Buckthorn	<i>Frangula caroliniana</i> (<i>Rhamnus caroliniana</i>)	Low
Coralberry (<i>tall Groundcover</i>)	<i>Symphoricarpos orbiculatus</i>	Medium
Dwarf Barbados Cherry (<i>Tall & dwarf varieties</i>)	<i>Malpighia glabra</i> (<i>M. puniceifolia</i>)	Medium
Dwarf Palmetto	<i>Sabal minor</i>	Medium
Elbow Bush	<i>Foresteria pubescens</i>	Medium
Fragrant Mimosa	<i>Mimosa borealis</i>	HIGH
Red Buckeye	<i>Aesculus pavia</i>	Medium
Sage, Texas (<i>Many compact varieties also</i>)	<i>Leucophyllum frutescens</i>	HIGH
Sumac, Aromatic	<i>Rhus aromatica</i>	HIGH
Sumac, Evergreen	<i>Rhus virens</i>	Medium
Texas Kidneywood	<i>Eysenhardtia texana</i>	Low
Yaupon Holly, --- Dwarf variety	<i>Ilex vomitoria</i> 'Nana', other	HIGH
Yellow Bells/Esperanza	<i>Tecoma stans</i>	HIGH
Yellow Bells, Native West TX	<i>Tecoma stans</i> var. <i>angustata</i>	HIGH
Yellow Bells, 'Sangria'	<i>Tecoma stans</i> var. <i>angustata</i> 'Sangria'	HIGH

PERENNIALS		
Common Name	Botanical Name	Deer Resistance
Black-eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Medium
Black-foot Daisy	<i>Melampodium leucanthum</i>	HIGH
Blue Flax	<i>Linum lewisii</i>	Low
Calylophus, Compact	<i>Calylophus berlandieri</i> (<i>C. drummondianus</i>)	Medium
Chile Petin	<i>Capsicum annuum</i> var. <i>aviculare</i>	HIGH
Chocolate Daisy	<i>Berlandiera lyrata</i>	HIGH
Columbine, Texas Gold	<i>Aquilegia chrysantha</i> var. <i>hinckleyana</i>	Medium
Coreopsis, Lance-leaf	<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	Medium
Cutleaf Daisy, Engelman's	<i>Engelmannia peristenia</i>	Medium
Dalea, Black	<i>Dalea frutescens</i>	Medium
Dalea, Gregg's	<i>Dalea greggii</i>	Medium
Damianita	<i>Crysactinia mexicana</i>	HIGH
Datura, Angel Trumpets	<i>Datura wrightii</i>	HIGH
Fall Aster	<i>Aster oblongifolius</i>	Low
Fall Obedient Plant	<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>	Low
Fern, River (Fern, Southern Wood)	<i>Dryopteris normalis</i>	HIGH
Fern, Wavy Scaly Cloak	<i>Astrolepis sinuata</i>	HIGH
Flame Acanthus	<i>Anisacanthus quadrifidus</i> var. <i>wrightii</i>	HIGH
Four Nerve Daisy	<i>Tetaneuris scaposa</i>	HIGH
Frog Fruit (<i>Groundcover</i>)	<i>Phyla nodiflora</i>	Medium
Giant Coneflower	<i>Rudbeckia maxima</i>	HIGH
Guara, Butterfly (White, Pink)	<i>Gaura lindheimeri</i> (<i>Oenothera lindheimeri</i>)	Medium
Horseherb (<i>Groundcover</i>)	<i>Calyptocarpus vialis</i>	Medium
Lantana, Texas	<i>Lantana horrida</i> (<i>L. urticoides</i>)	HIGH
Missouri Evening Primrose	<i>Oenothera macrocarpa</i> (<i>O. m. missouriensis</i>)	Medium
Mist Flower, Fragrant (Shrubby Boneset)	<i>Ageratina havanensis</i> (<i>Eupatorium havanense</i>)	Low
Mist Flower, Gregg's	<i>Conoclinium greggii</i> (<i>Eupatorium greggii</i>)	Low
Penstemon, Brazos	<i>Penstemon tenuis</i>	Low
Penstemon, Hill Country	<i>Penstemon triflorus</i>	Low
Penstemon, Rock	<i>Penstemon baccharifolius</i>	Low
Pigeonberry	<i>Rivina humilis</i>	Medium
Ponyfoot, Silver (<i>Groundcover</i>)	<i>Dichondra aregentea</i>	Low
Purple Coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Medium
Rock Rose	<i>Pavonia lasiopetala</i>	Medium

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PERENNIALS – Continued		
Common Name	Botanical Name	Deer Resistance
Salvia, Cedar Sage	<i>Salvia roemeriana</i>	HIGH
Salvia greggii , Autumn Sage (Many colors avail.)	<i>Salvia greggii</i>	HIGH
Salvia, Lyre Leaf	<i>Salvia lyrata</i>	HIGH
Salvia, Mealy Blue 'Henry Duelberg'	<i>Salvia farinacea</i> 'Henry Duelberg'	HIGH
Salvia, Tropical (several colors available)	<i>Salvia coccinea</i>	HIGH
Skeleton-leaf Goldeneye	<i>Viguiera stenoloba</i>	HIGH
Skullcap, Heartleaf	<i>Scutellaria ovata</i>	Medium
Skullcap, Wright's (Bushy/Purple/Shrubby)	<i>Scutellaria wrightii</i>	Low
Snake Herb (Tall Groundcover)	<i>Dyschoriste linearis</i>	Low
Texas Betony	<i>Stachys coccinea</i>	HIGH
Turks Cap	<i>Malvaviscus arboreus</i> var. <i>drummondii</i>	HIGH
Verbena, Prairie	<i>Glandularia bipinnatifida</i> (<i>Verbena bipinnatifida</i>)	HIGH
Winecup	<i>Callirhoe involucrata</i>	Medium
Woolly Stemodia	<i>Stemodia lanata</i> (<i>S. tomentosa</i>)	HIGH
Zexmenia, Orange	<i>Wedelia acapulcensis</i> var. <i>hispida</i> (<i>W. texana</i>)	HIGH

VINES		
Common Name	Botanical Name	Deer Resistance
Alamo Vine	<i>Merremia dissecta</i> (<i>Ipomoea sinuate</i>)	Medium
Crossvine	<i>Bignonia capreolata</i>	Medium
Honeysuckle, Coral	<i>Lonicera sempervirens</i>	Medium
Honeysuckle, Yellow	<i>Lonicera sempervirens</i> 'Sulphurea'	Medium
Texas Wisteria	<i>Wisteria frutescens</i>	HIGH
Virginia Creeper	<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>	Medium

GRASSES & SEDGES		
Common Name	Botanical Name	Deer Resistance
Big Muhly	<i>Muhlenbergia lindheimeri</i>	HIGH
Gulf Coast Muhly	<i>Muhlenbergia capillaris</i>	HIGH
Inland Seaots	<i>Chasmanthium latifolium</i>	HIGH
Little Bluestem	<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	HIGH
Mexican Feathergrass	<i>Nassella tenuissima</i> (<i>Stipa tenuissima</i>)	HIGH
Sedge, Webberville	<i>Carex perdentata</i>	HIGH
Sedge, Woodland	<i>Carex blanda</i>	HIGH
Sideoats Grama	<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	HIGH
Switchgrass	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	HIGH

SUCCULENTS		
Common Name	Botanical Name	Deer Resistance
Agave, Blue (Century Plant)	<i>Agave americana</i>	HIGH
Hesperaloe, Red Yucca	<i>Hesperaloe parviflora</i>	HIGH, Eat blooms
Hesperaloe, Giant	<i>Hesperaloe funifera</i>	HIGH, Eat blooms
Nolina, Lindheimer's	<i>Nolina lindheimeriana</i>	HIGH
Prickly Pear, Spineless	<i>Opuntia ellisiana</i>	Medium
Sotol, Texas (Green)	<i>Dasyllirion texanum</i>	HIGH
Sotol, Wheeler (Blue)	<i>Dasyllirion wheeleri</i>	HIGH
Yucca, Big Bend	<i>Yucca thompsoniana</i> (<i>Y. rostrate</i>)	HIGH, Eat blooms
Yucca, Buckley's	<i>Yucca constricta</i>	HIGH, Eat blooms
Yucca, Faxon	<i>Yucca faxoniana</i>	HIGH, Eat blooms
Yucca, Spanish Dagger	<i>Yucca treculeana</i>	HIGH, Eat blooms
Yucca, Twist Leaf (Green)	<i>Yucca rupicola</i>	HIGH, Eat blooms
Yucca, Blue Twist Leaf (Pale-leaf x Twist Leaf)	<i>Yucca rupicola</i> x <i>Y. pallida</i>	HIGH, Eat blooms