



Amsonia

A tough, but sadly underused perennial, amsonia produces clusters of sky-blue flowers in late spring. It's not just a one-season wonder, though. In autumn, its foliage turns brilliant shades of gold -- enough to rival many of the trees when they put on their fall finery.

Name: *Amsonia tabernaemontana*

Conditions: Full sun and well-drained soil

Size: To 2 feet tall

Zones: 3-9



Sedum

Hundreds of sedum varieties are available and almost every one is tough and drought resistant. While most are grown for their flowers, 'Frosty Morn' has wonderfully variegated leaves that look great from spring to fall. That said, its autumn clusters of pure-pink flowers are great, too.

Name: *Sedum* 'Frosty Morn'

Conditions: Full sun and well-drained soil

Size: To 18 inches tall

Zones: 3-9



Meadow Sage

Meadow sage produces wonderful clusters of violet-blue flowers from midsummer to early fall. These flowers are loved by butterflies and hummingbirds and are great cut flowers.

Name: *Salvia* 'May Night'

Conditions: Full sun and well-drained soil

Size: To 28 inches tall

Zones: 5-9



Poppy Mallow

This ground cover loves hot, dry sites. It blooms like crazy from spring to midsummer, producing cup-shape flowers in one of the brightest shades of pink you can imagine.

Name: *Callirhoe involucrata*

Conditions: Full sun and well-drained soil

Size: To 1 foot tall

Zones: 4-7



Lavender

This plant has it all: It looks great, it smells wonderful, and it's as tough as nails (as long as it's not too wet). Enjoy the blue, lavender, purple, or white flowers in summer. They're great for drying and using in crafts -- and even cooking with.

Name: *Lavandula angustifolia*

Conditions: Full sun and well-drained soil

Size: 3 feet tall

Zones: 5-8



Lamb's Ears

An easy-to-grow ground cover, lamb's ears has soft, fuzzy leaves. Their silvery tone makes them a great foil for just about any plant in the garden. Note, though: Lamb's ear can spread aggressively in rich soil.

Name: *Stachys byzantina*

Conditions: Full sun and well-drained soil

Size: To 18 inches tall

Zones: 4-8



Purple Coneflower

It's hard not to love purple coneflower. This resilient perennial blooms much of the summer producing tons of mauve-purple blooms that hold up really well when cut. Or, if you leave them in the garden, they'll attract scores of butterflies.

Name: *Echinacea purpurea*

Conditions: Full sun and well-drained soil

Size: To 5 feet tall

Zones: 3-9



Blanket Flower

A tough prairie plant, gaillardia blooms all summer and into fall. Its flamboyant flowers are usually marked with bright shades of red and yellow.

Name: *Gaillardia* 'Kobold'

Conditions: Full sun and well-drained soil

Size: To 3 feet tall

Zones: 3-8



Yarrow

Not only does yarrow tolerate heat and drought like a champion, but this easy-growing perennial is also a great cut flower -- and deer, rabbits, and most other pests won't touch it. It comes in a number of varieties with blooms in shades of yellow, orange, red, pink, and white.

Name: *Achillea* varieties

Conditions: Full sun and well-drained soil

Size: To 4 feet tall

Zones: 3-9
