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Flowering Shrubs

One of the joys of summer is the sight of flowering shrubs bursting into bloom.

Flowering shrubs have so much to offer – from colorful blooms that may attract butterflies or hummingbirds, berries for hungry birds, and vivid fall foliage - that they should be included in every landscape.

Let's take a look at just a few of the flowering shrubs for the high desert.



Apache Plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*) is a native shrub with fragrant, white flowers with yellow centers that appear throughout the summer. As the flowers fade, pink-plumed showy seed heads take their place. This is a very drought-tolerant shrub that requires minimal maintenance. Apache Plume grows from the high desert up to the ponderosa pine forest.

Butterfly Bush (*Buddleja* sp.) is notable for bloom color and fragrance and well-loved for its ability to draw butterflies to your garden. The colorful blooms appear in late summer. Most are fast growers that look best when pruned back hard in the spring. They require regular water and well-drained soil.



Caryopteris (*Caryopteris* sp.) is an Asian native that performs well in our climate. Caryopteris, often called Blue Mist, is valuable for its soft blue, butterfly-attracting late summer blooms, easy care and low water demands. Most varieties are compact growers so they make excellent foundation plantings.

Lilacs (*Syringa* sp.) are possibly the best known spring flowering shrub. Their fragrance is loved by gardeners everywhere. Tolerant of alkaline soils, heat and drought, lilacs are well adapted to the high desert. Color selections range from lilac to blue to white to reddish-purple.

Oregon Grape Holly and Creeping Oregon Grape (*Mahonia* sp.) are native shrubs worthwhile for their holly-like evergreen foliage, bright yellow flowers that bloom for several weeks in spring, burgundy-tinted new foliage and fall foliage ranging from red to purple. Edible blue berries appear in late summer but you'll have to fight back the birds if you want them for yourself! These shrubs do well in full to part shade.



Potentilla (*Potentilla* sp) are tough, low-care shrubs that perform well in poor soil and tolerate drought and heat. Potentilla varieties offer a range of bloom colors from golden-yellow to orange to red. Yellow varieties are best in full sun while orange and red blooms hold their color better in part shade. These shrubs bloom throughout the summer.

Rabbitbrush (*Ericameria nauseosus*) & Turpentine Bush (*Ericameria laricifolia*) are native shrubs that are appreciated in water-wise landscapes. They erupt in golden-yellow blooms in late summer that butterflies and other pollinators love. This is a very drought-tolerant shrub that typically grows on dry slopes, mesas and desert scrub.

Russian Sage (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*) is native to western and central Asia but is well adapted to our hot, dry climate. It is not a true shrub but rather a woody perennial. The gray-green foliage is complimented by sprays of lavender-blue flowers that appear in late summer when blooms of other plants are fading. Butterflies and other pollinators will welcome these late season flowers.

Spirea (*Spiraea* sp) is another group of tough, easy care shrubs that are undemanding about soil type. Spirea blooms are typically white, pink or rosy-red and appear in late spring or early summer. Some varieties, such as 'Anthony Waterer' offer burgundy-tinged new foliage.

Viburnum (*Viburnum* sp.) are a diverse group of shrubs. Some are valued just for their spring blooms of pink or white while others also offer late summer berries that the birds enjoy, and fall foliage color.

We hope that this glimpse at the variety of flowering shrubs available will entice you to add some to your landscape!

