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G91-1015 Perennials

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Steinegger, Don and Streich, Anne, "G91-1015 Perennials" (1991). *Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension*. 990.

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Perennials

This NebGuide describes perennial flowers that will withstand Nebraska's winters outdoors and that will bloom within the growing season.

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Herbaceous perennials normally live for many years under local growing conditions, dying back to the ground each winter. They vary in height, leaf texture and flower color, and are the backbone of the flower garden for many home gardeners.

The following is a list of perennials best adapted to Nebraska's broad range of growing conditions. No single list of plant materials is suitable for every garden, however, and deciding which plants to use depends on personal taste.

COMMON NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	SITE	HEIGHT & FORM	FLOWER COLOR	COMMENTS
Anemone, Japanese	<i>Anemone vitifolia</i> 'Robustissima'	Sun, partial shade	30 in. high	Pink	Fall blooming.
Artemisia 	<i>Artemisia</i> spp.	Sun; tolerates dry conditions; low nitrogen soils	Rhizomatous; 6 to 12 in. high; spreads to 12 or more inches	Flowers are not ornamental	Silvery-gray, finely cut foliage. Foliage used in fresh flower arrangements. Several other native species. Many cultivars.
Aster, Fendler's	<i>Aster fendleri</i>	Sun	4 - 12 in.	Lavender	Native plant.
Astilbe	<i>Astilbe</i> spp.	Part shade; prefers cool, moist	6 in. - 3 ft.	White, pink, red	Many fine cultivars.

		conditions			
Baby's Breath	<i>Gypsophila paniculata</i>	Sun; moist soil	Fine textured; 1 1/2 - 3 ft. high, 4 ft. across; has stout rhizomes.	White, pink	Fresh and dried flower arrangements. Double flowering forms are usually grafted; place graft union 1 in. under soil. Takes two years to become established. Many useful cultivars.
Balloon Flower	<i>Platycodon grandiflorus</i> cv. 'Mariesii' cv. 'Shell pink'	Sun; partial shade; light; moist, well-drained soil with high organic matter	2 - 3 ft. high, 2 ft. wide	Blue, white, pink	Double flowering forms available. Late to emerge in spring; mark location to avoid injury from cultivation.
Basket-of-Gold	<i>Aurinia saxatilis</i>	Sun; partial shade; dry soil, best in low nitrogen soils	6 - 12 in., prostrate	Yellow	Silvery-gray foliage. Early spring flowering.
Bearded Iris	<i>Iris</i> spp.	Sun; average soil	2 - 3 ft. high	Broad color range	Many cultivars available.
Bee Balm 	<i>Monarda didyma</i>	Sun; partial shade; somewhat moist, well-drained, high organic soil	3 - 4 ft. high	Purple, red and pink combinations, salmon	Minty fragrance. Can become invasive in moist sites. Many cultivars; grow cultivars rather than species.

Bellflower

<p>--Peach-leaved</p> 	<p><i>Campanula persicifolia</i></p>	<p>Sun to semi-shade; fertile soil</p>	<p>Erect, leafy clump; 2 ft.</p>	<p>Deep blue to white</p>	<p>Many useful species and cultivars. Flowers for fresh arrangements. Many useful cultivars available.</p>
<p>--Clustered</p> 	<p><i>Campanula glomerata</i></p>	<p>Sun to semi-shade; moderate fertility</p>	<p>Spreads by rhizomes; 1 - 3 ft.; coarse erect growth</p>	<p>Deep blue to white</p>	
<p>Bergenia</p>	<p><i>Bergenia cordifolia</i></p>	<p>Sun to shade</p>	<p>12 in. high</p>	<p>Pink</p>	<p>Glossy green foliage; burgundy winter color. Best in winter shade.</p>
<p>Blackberry Lily</p>	<p><i>Belamcanda chinensis</i></p>	<p>Sun; fertile, sandy soil</p>	<p>Clump forming rhizomes; 2 - 3 ft. high; long narrow foliage-resembles German Iris.</p>	<p>Deep orange, red dotted</p>	<p>Fresh flower arrangements; seed clusters dried for flower arrangements.</p>
<p>Blanket Flower</p>	<p><i>Gaillardia x grandiflora</i></p>	<p>Sun; requires good air circulation; light soil; avoid high nitrogen soil</p>	<p>6 in. - 3 ft. high; high; erect or sprawling branches.</p>	<p>Yellow or red</p>	<p>Easy to grow. Generally short-lived.</p>
<p>Blazing Star</p>	<p><i>Liatris spicata</i></p>	<p>Sun to partial shade; sandy fertile soil</p>	<p>2 - 3 ft. high; stiff, erect growth form</p>	<p>Rosy purple</p>	<p>Fresh flower arrangements. Color accent in perennial borders.</p>

		is best, although it's tolerant of other soils			Several other native species.
Bleeding Heart	<i>Dicentra eximia</i>	Partial shade to shade; fertile, moist soil	12 - 15 in. high clump former; short rhizomes	Pink, purple or white; gray-blue foliage	Several cultivars available. Cultivars are not superior to the species.
Blue False Indigo	<i>Baptisia australis</i>	Sun; partial shade; dry site; low nitrogen soil.	Erect, forms large clumps; 3 - 4 ft. high, 2 - 3 ft. wide	Indigo blue, blue-green foliage	Excellent summertime hedge. Stabilizes soil on bank. Foliage used in fresh flower arrangements. Pods used in dried flower arrangements. Plant may require staking.
Boltonia	<i>Boltonia asteroides</i>	Sun, partial shade	Up to 4 ft. high	White, pink	Large background plant; fall blooming.
Butterfly Milkweed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	Sun; sandy loam; dry location	Broadly domed bushy clump; 1 1/2 - 3 ft. high	Bright orange	Tuber forming plant. Does not transplant successfully when large. Seed pods used for dried arrangements. Flowers attract butterflies.
					
Columbine	<i>Aquilegia</i> spp.	Sun or light shade; cool, moist soil	1 1/2 - 3 ft.; large clumps; delicate lacy foliage	Broad color range	Leaf miner is a problem. Flowers May through June. Many useful

					species and cultivars of varying heights and flower forms.
Coneflower, Grayhead Prairie	<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	Sun	4 - 5 ft., 2 ft. wide	Yellow	Drooping petals; native plant.
Coneflower, Purple 	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Sun	2 - 3 ft. high	Purple	Coarse texture; native plant.
Coral Bells 	<i>Heuchera sanguinea</i>	Full sun to filtered shade; fertile soil high in organic matter	8 - 10 in.; flower scapes to 24 in.	White, red and shades of red	Fillers in bouquets. Susceptible to crown rot. Remove dried flowers to reduce infection.
Coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	Sun	2 - 3 ft.	Yellow	Cultivars: 'Early Sunrise', 'Sunray'.
Crane's Bill	<i>Geranium</i> spp.	Sun to partial shade; tolerates dry, less fertile soil	12 - 18 in. high; thick ascending stems	Lilac, blue, magenta, white, purple	Nearly indestructible; spreads excessively on high nitrogen soils. Several ornamental species and cultivars.
Daylily	<i>Hemerocallis</i> spp.	Sun to partial shade in afternoon; medium heavy loam	Forms large clumps; clumps; 18 in. to 5 ft. high	Broad color range	Tolerates neglect. Several species; hundreds of useful cultivars.



					
Dianthus	<i>Dianthus</i> spp.	Sun; rich, slightly alkaline soil requires good air circulation	Densely tufted; 6 - 15 in. high; trailing growth habit; creeping rhizomes	Deep pink, rarely white or red	Fragrant flowers; many cultivars.
False Sun Flower	<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>	Sun or partial shade; high organic matter	3 - 5 ft. high; erect stems; clump former	Yellow-orange	Many available cultivars that are useful in dry sites. Easy to grow.
Gaura	<i>Gaura lindheimeri</i>	Sun	3 ft., 2 ft. wide	White, pink, rose	Flowers open white, deepen to rose; native plant; may need stakes; Cultivars: 'Siskiyou Pink', 'Corrie's Gold'.
Goatsbeard	<i>Aruncus dioicus</i>	Shade	2 - 4 ft. high	White	Showy white panicles.
	<i>Chrysanthemum morifolium</i>	Sun	9 in. to 3 ft. or more in height	Broad color range	Highly variable in height, plant and flower form. Can readily transplant in full flower.

					Winter protection recommended. Hundreds of cultivars.
Hardy Ice Plant	<i>Delosperma congestum</i>	Sun, afternoon shade	2 in., spreads 30 in.	Yellow	Succulent leaves turn bright red in winter; Cultivar: 'Gold Nugget'.
Hosta 	<i>Hosta</i>	Partial shade to shade	6 in. to 3 ft. high	White, lavender	Many cultivars.
Lady's Mantle 	<i>Alchemilla mollis</i>	Part shade; tolerates sun with moist conditions	12 in. high; rounded form	Yellow	Beautiful foliage.
Lead Plant	<i>Amorpha canescens</i>	Sun	3 ft., dense	Lavender-blue	Dense, white hairy leaflets.
Missouri Primrose	<i>Oenothera missouriensis</i>	Sun; tolerates dry conditions	12 in. high	Yellow	Large flowers, native plant, sprawling growth habit.
New York Aster	<i>Aster novi-belgii</i>	Sun; moist, fertile soil	Rhizomatous; varies from small and slender to large and stout 1 1/2 - 3 ft. 1 1/2 - 3 ft.	Broad color range	Requires division each year; subject to rust, Aster yellows and mildew. Hundreds of cultivars and several other useful species and hybrids

					available to gardeners.
Oriental Poppy	<i>Papaver orientale</i>	Sun; fertile, well-drained soil	3 - 4 ft. high	Orange, pink, salmon, white	Foliage dies back during summer. Numerous cultivars.
Painted Daisy	<i>Chrysanthemum coccineum</i>	Sun; soil with organic matter; fertile soil	2 - 3 ft.; upright, long stems	Pink, red or white; single or double	Aphids may be a problem. Excellent cut flowers. Many useful cultivars.
Penstemon	<i>Penstemon</i> spp.	Sun; prefers well drained conditions	1 1/2 - 3 ft.	Broad color range	Neat foliage, often glossy, somewhat evergreen. Cultivars: 'Husker Red', 'Prairie Splendor'.
Peony	<i>Paeonia lactiflora</i>	Sun to partial shade; deep, rich, drained soil; high organic matter; protect from wind	2 - 3 ft. high; rhizomatous	Broad color range	Hundreds of cultivars; many flower forms from singles to doubles. Very popular perennial.
Perennial Flax	<i>Linum perenne</i>	Sun; light, well-drained, moist and fertile soil	1 - 2 1/2 ft. high; gracefully arching stems	Blue	Not suitable for cut flowers. Other species of <i>Linum</i> make valuable garden plants.
Pitcher's Sage	<i>Salvia azurea</i>	Sun	3 - 4 ft., 2 ft. wide	Blue-violet	Native plant; Cultivar: 'Nekan', 'Grandiflora'.
Prairie Ragwort	<i>Senecio plattenensis</i>	Sun	16 - 18 in.	Yellow, orange center	Basal leaves have maroon undersides.
Purple Poppy-mallow	<i>Callirhoe involucrata</i>	Sun	18 in.	Purple	Native groundcover.

Rudbeckia, Goldstrum	<i>Rudbeckia fulgida</i> 'Goldsturm'	Sun	24 in. high	Yellow	Compact, long-blooming form.
Russian Sage	<i>Perovskia atriplicifolia</i>	Sun; tolerates dry conditions	3 - 5 ft. high	Lavender	Sub-shrub form with silver gray foliage; no pests.
Sedum	<i>Sedum</i> spp.	Sun to light shade; drought tolerant	4 - 24 in. high	Pink, white, red, yellow	Good cut flower. Cultivars bearing different flower colors available.
Shasta Daisy	<i>Chrysanthemum maximum</i>	Sun to partial shade for double flowering forms	2 - 4 ft. high from a rosette	White	Good cut flower; many cultivars.
Snakeroot, Black	<i>Cimicifuga racemosa</i>	Partial shade to shade	2 - 3 ft. high	White	Handsome, broad leaves.
Sneezeweed	<i>Helenium autumnale</i>	Sun; moist soil; moderate fertility; high organic matter	2 - 4 ft. high; rank growth	Yellow, reddish-brown, crimson	Late summer bloom.
Spiderwort 	<i>Tradescantia</i> spp.	Shade or sun	1 1/2 - 2 ft. high	White, blue or rose	Easy to grow.
Statice, German	<i>Goniolimon tatarica</i>	Sun	18 in. high	White	For dried arrangements.
Statice, Sea Lavendar	<i>Limonium latifolium</i>	Sun	18 - 30 in. high; rounded form	Lavender	Open, light texture.
Threadleaf Coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis</i>	Sun; moist,	Clump	Yellow	Popular

	<i>verticillata</i>	fertile soil	forming; 18 - 24 in. in height		cultivars are "Moonbeam," a pale yellow, and "Zagreb," a dark yellow.
Veronica, Speedwell 	<i>Veronica</i> spp.	Sun to partial shade	2 - 4 ft. high	Blue, white, red	Many hybrids and cultivars available. Good garden plant.
Yarrow 	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Sun; dry soil; best in low nitrogen soils	18 - 30 in. high; stiff erect stems	Red, cream, yellow	Gray-green foliage. Excellent for cutting or drying. Flowers from June to September.

File G1015 under: HORTICULTURE

A-36, Ornamentals

Revised April 1999, 2,000

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Elbert C. Dickey, Interim Dean and Director of Cooperative Extension, University of Nebraska, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

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