

HOME & GARDEN

XERISCAPING:

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Extension Service, different plants should also be grouped into watering zones with other plants that have similar needs. The publication lists a variety of trees, shrubs, vines, fruits, grasses, groundcovers and perennials suitable for planting in central and eastern Oregon, and Redberg said plants with minimal water requirements can also be selected from the Natural Resources Conservation Service's "Plant Species for Pollinator Habitat in the Inland Pacific Northwest."

Redberg said native plant species are amazingly resilient and suited for the local climate and that it is also important to try to find plants from seeds produced locally.

"The genetics of the plant are what's going to help it survive in extreme temperatures or drought or whatever else we throw at it," she said. "If they are surviving in that type of situation now, and they're producing seed, that means that they have the genetic capability to do that so their offspring will as well."

OSU Hermiston Agricultural Research & Extension Center Director Phil Hamm said it is important to select plants that are "cold hardy for our zone" to survive the winter.

He said succulent plants, such as cacti, that are suited to the local zone can provide color to a landscape while requiring little water.

"Be sure to pick the right plants for our zone, and if you do, be sure to follow the directions that come with it to establish it," he

said. "Be sure to water it enough to get it started."

Hamm said people may choose to use xeriscaping at their homes or businesses to save time and money, while still creating an attractive environment.

"It really comes down to how much time you want to spend in your yard and how you want your yard to look," he said. "When you do xeriscaping, it can look very good as well."

For more information about xeriscaping, visit http://extension.oregon-state.edu/yamhill/sites/default/files/an_introduction_to_xeriscaping.pdf.

For a list of plant species for pollinator habitat in the inland Northwest, visit http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_PLANTMATERIALS/publications/wapmc-po9185.pdf.

Xeriscaping 101

According to "An Introduction to Xeriscaping in the High Desert," by the Oregon State University Extension Service, people should follow seven steps to successfully design a landscape with minimal water requirements:

STEP 1: Planning

Carefully design the area to meet your needs and desires.

STEP 2: Zoning

Plants should be placed in zones with other plants with similar water requirements.

STEP 3: Soil

Know your soil and how it affects water absorption and add organic matter, such as compost, before planting.

STEP 4: Irrigation

Whether automatic or manual, plan to irrigate efficiently.

STEP 5: Turf

Determine where to place turf, if desired, and consider low-water use varieties, such as tall fescues or a combination blend of fine fescue, peren-

nial ryegrass and Kentucky bluegrass.

STEP 6: Mulching

Bark chips, post peelings, compost or rock mulch should be used to reduce weeds, minimize evaporation, cool the soil and prevent erosion.

STEP 7: Maintenance

Although xeriscaping requires less maintenance, it is still important to prune, mow, water, weed, fertilize and manage pests as necessary.



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