

## MASTER GARDENER DROUGHT GARDEN

This planting area was a problem for many years until Spokane County Master Gardeners “adopted it” for a drought tolerant demonstration garden. The site has poor soil (dry, devoid of organic matter) and is squeezed between hot pavement and a cement wall. It faces fully south. The site has all the characteristics of a gardener’s worst nightmare, yet Master Gardeners have transformed it using a serpentine rock wall design and drought tolerant perennials, groundcovers and small shrubs that bloom at different times during the year, have interesting foliage and tolerate (or even thrive in) adverse conditions. This site is watered once a week during the summer months only. A drip irrigation system would be ideal here and someday may be put in.

**Procedure:**

- First, weeds and remaining old plants were dug out and discarded.
- A 4-inch layer of organic matter, in the form of municipal compost and 3-way mix, was incorporated into the top several inches of ground. (Hard work, but worth it!)
- Rocks were hand placed in a serpentine pattern and soil from in front of the rocks was mounded up behind the rocks to create two levels (about a 6-inch difference)
- Plants adapted to a hot, dry site were selected, planted and watered heavily during establishment
- 2-inches of fine bark mulch were spread over the site to hold in soil moisture. Mulch should be re-applied yearly.

**Plants in this garden:**

For more information about each of these plants, please request the lists of drought tolerant plants in the WSU/Spokane County Master Gardener Resource Center.

Common Name	Plant Name	Common Name	Plant Name
Beardstongue	<i>Penstemon species</i>	Maltese Cross	<i>Lychnis chalconica</i>
Blanket flower	<i>Gaillardia aristata</i>	Purple Coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>
Blue Flax	<i>Linum perenne “Lewisii”</i>	Showy stonecrop	<i>Sedum spectabile</i>
Creeping Oregon Grape	<i>Mahonia repens</i>	Wooly Thyme	<i>Thymus lanuginosus</i>
Daylily	<i>Hemerocallis species</i>	Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
Hens and Chicks	<i>Sempervivum species</i>	Yucca	<i>Yucca species</i>

Compiled by Tonie Fitzgerald. For more information, contact Master Gardeners at (509) 477-2181.

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