

TOP 10

BULBS FOR A SUSTAINABLE GARDEN 2022 SELECTED BY PHIPPS CONSERVATORY AND BOTANICAL GARDENS

These plants are excellent choices for your home garden landscape. They are non-invasive, are resistant to disease and insects which eliminates the need to use pesticides, and require little or no watering or fertilization once established.



Photo © Rasbak

Balkan Anemone (*Anemone blanda*)

Tiny daisy like blooms decorate this April blooming bulb. The blooms range from blue or white to pink and purplish red. Growing only to 6 – 9 inches tall, these bulbs are deer resistant, tolerate soil where black walnuts grow, and grow in full to part sun. Balkan anemone are sensitive to winter winds and should be protected; they prefer rich soils with medium moisture. Plants can spread to create a carpet of flowers.



Photo © FritzJohreynolds

Ornamental Onion (*Allium* spp. and cvs.)

Ornamental onions are plants in the onion or allium family which have been selected for their unique firework-like flowers. Bursts of purples, pinks and white emerge in early spring and summer (depending on the variety) to bring interest and excitement to the garden bed. Two varieties we recommend are nodding onion (*Allium Cernuum*) and Allium 'Millenium'.



Camas Lily (*Camassia*)

This North American summer blooming bulb has a stalk that grows up to 2 – 3 feet tall with spikes of star shaped blossoms of white, lavender or blue. Camas lily prefers moist, well drained to wet soils and tolerates clay. They do well in wet meadows and are deer resistant. The bulbs are known to be edible and an important food source for indigenous peoples of western United States; the Salish people of Montana still harvest these bulbs today.



Photo © Dominicus Johannes

Snow Drop (*Galanthus nivalis*)

One of the earliest spring bulbs to bloom, snow drops earn their name as they will often peek out of the ground while snow remains. They prefer full to part sun and grow in deciduous forests, capturing sunlight while the trees are without leaves. The delicate flowers are made up of 6 drooping tepals (sepals and petals). The outer three are white and longer than the inner three which are also white but with notched tips of green. Snow drops are perfect for woodland gardens, borders and interplanted with ground covers such as candy tuft and deadnettle's.



Photo © Dominicus Johannes

Crocus (*Crocus* spp. and cvs.)

Crocus bulbs bloom in early spring in full sun to part shade and moist, well-drained soil. Fragrant blooms open during the day and close up at night. Flowers of purple, white and orange are a welcome signs of warmer weather. They tolerate both clay soils and drought conditions. Crocus flowers will spread non-aggressively to form large clumps and work well as ground cover and in rock gardens, woodland gardens and even growing throughout the lawn (wait to mow until after they bloom!).



Swamp Lily (*Lilium superbum*)

Native to eastern and central United States, swamp lily has drooping orange and purple speckled blooms with backward curving petals and petal-like sepals, simple leaves that whorl around the stem and multiple flowers per plant. This native summer blooming bulb prefers moist, well drained soils and grows in full sun to shady conditions. The flowers shoot up to heights of 4 – 7 feet, making it tallest of the bulbs. They do well in rain gardens and attract hummingbirds.



Photo © Missouri Botanical Garden

Daffodil (*Narcissus* spp. and cvs.)

Daffodil are deer resistant bulbs with cheerful yellow trumpet-shaped spring blooms. Two varieties we suggest are 'Tete-a-Tete' and 'Marieke'. 'Tete-a-Tete' is a diminutive variety at 6 – 9 inches tall with a long narrow trumpet flower. 'Marieke' grow to 18 inches to 2 feet tall with upright facing, bright yellow blooms. Daffodil do well in full to part sun with average, well-drained soil. Grow these in masses or intimate groupings with other spring bulbs such as purple blooming crocus and hyacinth for a beautiful contrast.



Photo © Nicholas A. Tonelli

Virginia Bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*)

A spring ephemeral, this early-blooming perennial has clusters of pink buds opening to light blue, trumpet-shaped flowers on upright plants in March or April. This Southwestern PA native, deer-resistant plant is spectacular in mass plantings, but the foliage dies back by mid-summer. It grows best in light shade and moist soil.



Photo © Retro Lenses

Iris (*Iris* spp. and cvs.)

Iris plants of all types are a delight in the garden with their delicate blooms of three distinct petals standing upright in the center and three colorful sepals falling downward around the outside. Named after Iris, the Greek goddess of the rainbow, some say that the plant got its name from the many colorful varieties found among the species. Best known are the purple varieties with yellow centers. We suggest the native dwarf crested iris (*Iris cristata*) and Siberian iris (*Iris sibirica* 'Caesar's Brother').



Photo © Kara27

Winter Aconite (*Eranthis hyemalis*)

Winter aconite are early blooming bulbs, emerging in March and April. The bright yellow flowers are a welcome sight, usually spotted growing underneath deciduous trees. They prefer full sun to part shade and tolerate deer and soil where black walnut grows. After the flowers fade, the lobed, basal leaves of winter aconite will emerge.

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