

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Growing water-wise

... continued from Page D1

Drought-tolerant perennial contenders include:

Statice
Everlasting sweet pea



Everlasting sweet pea is a welcome perennial.

Echinacea
Sage
Sea holly
Rose
Feverfew

Shrubs with minimal water needs are:

Ceanothus,
Bottlebrush
Pride of Madeira
Heavenly bamboo
Pittosporum
Smoke tree
Cotoneaster
Butterfly bush

Hydrangeas that are three to four years old will do fine. Younger specimens will require more water.

Vines that I recommend are:

Bougainvillea
Honeysuckle
Jasmine
Climbing and rambling roses.

Annuals don't have roots that go as deep as perennials. They focus energy on flowering which requires increased moisture.

These annuals usually require only weekly watering to one inch as opposed to daily drinks:

Zinnia
Marigold
Cleome
Portulaca
California poppy
Globe amaranth
Vinca
Chamomile



Chamomile reseeds itself without any irrigation.

Photos Cynthia Brian

Cosmos
Sunflower
Wax begonia

To minimize water waste, prioritize planting drought-tolerant perennials, shrubs and trees, and augment with color spots of annuals. Established plants do better in a drought than in a newly planted landscape. A plant is considered established when its roots have taken hold and spread in the soil. Perennials take a year to be established plants. A shrub could take two to three years, and most trees need three or more years. For this reason, it is always recommended to plant a garden in spring and fall when the weather is milder.

In a drought, paying attention to our trees is critical. Give established trees a deep soak every three to four weeks to keep roots from rising to the surface. Trees will experience leaf drop in the heat, but the tree will survive. If your trees are two years old or younger, an easy way to give them a good drink is to drill holes in a five-gallon bucket to allow water to slowly trickle to the roots. When you use a soaker wand, make sure to position it six feet or more from the trunk of the tree or at the end of the canopy as that is where the roots are. Roots are not at the base.

A sampling of California native trees that will be beautiful and survive in a drought include:

Olive
Pomegranate
Fig
Marina strawberry
Desert willow
Pistache
Mimosa
Manzanita
Crape myrtle
Redbud

... continued on Page D14