



Water-Wise & Drought Tolerant Herbs for Central Texas

Global warming is no longer a debatable topic. It is happening. We all need to be conscious of this and do everything we can to help heal this very serious situation. Those of us who are gardeners can focus more on planting drought-tolerant, xeriscape herbs and plants. Many of us already do this by using Natives in our gardens, but there are also many herbs that are water-wise as well.

Many herbs already listed on **Ellen's Top Ten Herbs** are considered drought-tolerant or better yet, water-wise. These include; **Purple coneflower, *Echinacea purpurea*; Chaste tree, *Vitex agnus-castus*; Passionflower, *Passiflora incarnate*; Garden Sage, *Salvia officinalis*; Horehound, *Marrubium vulgare*; Mullein, *Verbascum thapsus* and Rosemary, *Rosmarinus officinalis*.**

Other herbs that I have found to be quite drought-tolerant and lovely in the garden include:

Yarrow, *Achillea millifolium*. The plant of a thousand leaves is a perennial herb that is used as a styptic in stopping bleeding, both internally and externally. I like to use the white Yarrow, but the plant comes in various colors of reds, pinks and yellow.

Lavender, *Lavendula spp.* If you're clever enough to grow Lavender you know that it doesn't require much water. Lavender is an exceptionally useful medicinal herb. It is used to reduce stress, calm the mind and body to promote a good night's sleep and to help heal burns and other skin problems. There are numerous varieties of Lavender that will grow in our Central Texas environment including English, French and Spanish.

Goldenrod, *Solidago altissima*. A frequently overlooked herb, this beauty doesn't need any extra water at all. Its flowing yellow blossoms arrive in the fall creating fields of serene, swaying blooms. Goldenrod is used as a gentle diuretic and also to aid in respiratory problems.

Borage, *Borago officinales*, this beautiful herb is also water-wise and will reappear in the garden every year. Its large leaves can be used for respiratory issues (although there are better choices, such as Mullein and Horehound), and its lovely small blue flowers are high in GLA and useful in treating arthritis and joint pain. The flowers are also edible and can act as an anti-depressant.

Other Water-wise herbs for our local gardens include **Thyme, Milk Thistle, Yellow Dock** and many of the **Salvias**. **PLEASE BE WATER CONSCIOUS** and plant these herbs in your gardens to conserve our precious resource, our life giving, water.