

RABBIT “RESISTANT” PLANTS

This list suggests some desert adapted landscape plants that seem to be less palatable to rabbits. Be aware that rabbits may eat anything during times of drought. Most plants are also more desirable when they are young, or perhaps over-watered or over-fertilized. New plants fresh from the nursery are very tender and tasty, so they may need some temporary protection for four to six months until they toughen a bit.

Plants can be protected by encircling them with chicken wire (or any type of wire that holds its shape). Make the enclosure large enough to protect the plant when it attains a mature size if you don't intend for the fencing to be temporary. Alternatively, start with chicken wire sized for the plant at the time of installation then replace it with a larger barrier as the plant grows. For best security, burry the wire four to eight inches below ground to deter burrowing bunnies.

An invisible shield might be preferable to the look of chicken wire. Various rabbit repellants in both spray and powder form are available at nursery centers.

Shrubs:

- Aloysia wrightii* – Wright's Bee Brush, Oreganillo
- Ambrosia ambrosioides* – Giant Bur-sage
- Ambrosia deltoidea* – Triangleleaf Bur-sage
- Ambrosia dumosa* – White Bur-sage
- Artemisia ludoviciana* – Western Mugwort, 'Silver King,' 'Silver Queen'
'Valerie Finnis'
- Artemisia* 'Powis Castle' – 'Powis Castle'
- Asclepias linaria* – Pineleaf Milkweed
- Asclepias subulata* – Desert Milkweed
- Baccharis sarothroides* – Desert Broom
- Berberis* spp. – Barberries
- Buddleja marrubiifolia* – Woolly Butterfly Bush
- Caesalpinia gilliesii* – Yellow-bird of paradise
- Caesalpinia mexicana* – Mexican-bird of paradise
- Caesalpinia pulcherrima* – Red-bird of paradise
- Calliandra eriophylla* – Pink Fairy Duster (protect while young)
- Caryopteris x clandonensis* – Blue Mist
- Celtis* spp. – Hackberry
- Cercis* spp. – Redbud
- Chrysactinia mexicana* – Damianita
- Cordia parvifolia* – Little Leaf Cordia
- Dodonaea viscosa* – Hopbush

Encelia farinosa – Brittlebush
Ericameria laricifolia – Turpentine Bush
Ericameria nauseosa (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*) – Chamisa, Rabbit Brush
Eriogonum fasciculatum – Flattop Buckwheat
Eriogonum wrightii – Wright's Buckwheat
Fallugia paradoxa – Apache Plume
Forestiera pubescens (*F. neomexicana*) – Desert-olive, New Mexico-privet
Gossypium harknesii – San Marcos-hibiscus
Guaiacum angustifolium – Guayacan
Guaiacum coulteri – Guayacan
Justicia californica – Chuparosa (protect while young)
Justicia spicigera – Firecracker Bush
Lantana spp. – Bush Lantanas
Larrea tridentata – Creosote Bush
Leucophyllum spp. – Texas Rangers, Texas-sages
Peroovskia atriplicifolia – Russian-sage
Rhus aromatica (*R. trilobata*) – Skunk Bush
Rhus microphylla – Desert Sumac
Rhus ovata – Sugar Sumac
Rosmarinus officinalis – Rosemary
Ruellia peninsularis – Desert Ruellia
Salvia apiana – White Sage
Salvia clevelandii – Chaparral Sage
Salvia greggii – Autumn Sage
Salvia leucantha – Mexican Bush Sage
Salvia x *Trident*[™] – Trident[™] Sage
Santolina spp. – Santolinas
Senna artemisioides (*Cassia artemisioides*) – Feathery Senna
Senna lindheimeriana – Lindheimer Senna
Simmondsia chinensis – Jojoba
Sophora secundiflora – Texas Mountain-laurel
Tagetes lemmonii – Mt. Lemmon Marigold
Tecoma stans – Yellow Bells
Trixis californica – Trixis
Zizyphus obtusifolia – Gray Thorn

Perennials:

Achillea millefolium – Yarrow
Aquilegia chrysantha – Golden Columbine
Baileya multiradiata – Desert-marigold
Berlandiera lyrata – Chocolate Flower
Calylophus hartwegii – Sundrops
Conoclinium greggii (*Eupatorium greggii*) – Mist Flower
Coreopsis lanceolata – Lance-leaf Coreopsis
Datura wrightii (*D. meteloides*) – Sacred Datura, Jimsonweed

Dicliptera resupinata – Dicliptera
Epilobium canum (*Zauschneria californica*) – Hummingbird Bush
Erigeron spp. – Fleabane
Euphorbia rigida (*E. biglandulosa*) – Gopher Plant
Gaillardia spp. – Blanket Flower
Gazania spp. – Gazanias
Gutierrezia sarothrae – Broom Snakeweed
Lavandula spp. – Lavenders
Melampodium leucanthum – Blackfoot-daisy
Menodora longiflora – Long-flowered Menodora
Menodora scabra – Rough Menodora
Mirabilis multiflora – Desert Four O'clock
Penstemon spp. – Penstemons (may try flowers, but won't eat plant)
Phlomis spp. – Jerusalem-sages
Plumbago scandens – White Plumbago
Porophyllum gracile – Odorata
Ratibida columnaris – Coneflower, Mexican Hat
Salazaria mexicana – Paperbag Bush
Salvia chamaedryoides – Blue Sage
Salvia coccinea – Red-sage
Salvia farinacea – Mealycup Sage
Senna covesii (*Cassia covesii*) – Desert Senna
Tagetes lucida – Mexican-mint Marigold, Yerba Anis
Thymophylla acerosa (*Dyssodia acerosa*) – Shrubby Dogweed
Thymophylla pentachaeta (*Dyssodia pentachaeta*) – Goleen Fleece
Verbena spp. – Verbenas (protect young plants)
Zinnia acerosa – Desert Zinnia
Zinnia grandiflora – Prairie Zinnia

Groundcovers:

Anemopsis californica – Yerba Mansa, Yerba del Manso
Aristolochia watsoni – Indian Root, Pipevine
Dalea capitata –
Dalea greggii – Trailing Smoke Bush, Trailing-indigo Bush
Lantana spp. – Trailing Lantanas

Vines:

Antigonon leptopus – Queen's Wreath
Cissus trifoliata – Arizona Grape-ivy
Clematis drummondii – Virgin's Bower, Old Man's Beard
Passiflora spp. – Passion Flowers

Accents:

- Agave* spp. – Agaves (protect softer-leaved species, such as *A. desmettiana*)
- Aloe* spp. – Aloes (most are ok)
- Bursera microphylla* – Elephant Trunk Tree
- Dasyliirion acrotriche* – Green Desert Spoon
- Dasyliirion wheeleri* – Desert Spoon
- Euphorbia* spp. – Euphorbias
- Hesperaloe* spp. – Hesperaloes
- Nolina* spp. – Beargrasses
- Opuntia* spp. – Prickly-pears (except *O. ficus-indica* when young)
- Pedilanthus macrocarpus* – Slipper Plant
- Yucca* spp. – Yuccas

Annuals:

- Coreopsis tinctoria* – Tickseed
- Gaillardia pulchella* – Blanket Flower
- Helianthus annuus* – Sunflower

Need Help?

For more information about particular desert plants or problems, call the Desert Botanical Garden's Plant Hotline, 480-481-8120, Monday through Friday, from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. or email your questions to planthotline@dbg.org

The Desert Botanical Garden provides a range of services to homeowners including a desert Plant Hotline, a variety of classes about landscaping and gardening in the desert, an onsite library, and an extensive selection of resources in the Garden Shop.



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