

Each month, a Broomfield Master Gardener profiles one of the xeric plants in the demonstration garden located just east of the City and County Building. It's a beautiful, relaxing spot to take a break, eat lunch, or get some water-wise ideas for your own yard. Special thanks to the Master Gardener volunteers, CSU Extension, and Parks employees for their hard work in maintaining this hidden gem!

October 2020 Xeric Plant: Tickseed (*Coreopsis* spp.)

By Linda Brotman-Evans, Broomfield Master Gardener Apprentice



One perennial stalwart for a garden is Tickseed (*Coreopsis* spp.) in the Asteraceae family. They form 1-2 foot mounds that are easy to grow as a plant or seed in fall or spring. An added bonus is that most are deer resistant, cold and heat tolerant, and xeric once established. There are many species to choose from since they are adaptable to most Colorado soils and several are native plants in the West. They bloom from June to September, with some blooming into October.

One favorite is *Coreopsis grandiflora*, a reliable perennial with an abundance of bright yellow blooms. It self-seeds, but not to the point of crowding out other plants. One variety has single flowers, another has double flowers. 'Heliot' is more compact and smaller. Yet the 2-inch flowers have a burgundy ring around the petals for a brilliant contrast. Like 'Heliot,' some varieties bloom in their first year of planting; others bloom after the first year.

The most drought-tolerant is the thread leaf variety, *Coreopsis verticillata*, which holds its upright shape regardless of the weather. 'Route 66' is a popular one due to red bleeding around the center. 'Golden Showers' is one among many favorites if you like a bright yellow.

The lance leaf cultivar, *Coreopsis lanceolata*, is virtually foolproof. 'Crème Brulee' is an improved version of 'Moonbeam.' The latter has pale yellow flowers, while 'Crème Brulee' has deeper buttery ones. Two other coreopsis worth mentioning are the 'Rising Sun' and 'Sienna Sunset,' both with large abundant flowers. Tickseeds do not need fertilizer, but adding compost at planting will help drainage. After first flowers bloom, cut plants back by two-thirds if they droop. New buds will set and stems will grow upright again.

AT A GLANCE	
Common Name	Tickseed
Scientific Name	<i>Coreopsis</i>
Height	12" - 2.5'
Width	12" - 2.5'
Hardiness	USDA zones 4 - 9
Sun	Full
Water Needs	Low
How to Use	Borders, containers, cut flowers

Photo Credit: High Country Gardens, <https://www.highcountrygardens.com/perennial-plants/coreopsis/coreopsis-creme-brulee>, 2020.