

Department of Plant Sciences

PLANTS FOR TENNESSEE LANDSCAPES: SEED GROWN FLOWERS FOR THE HOME GARDEN

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Introduction

Growing ornamental plants by seed is a tradition cherished by many Tennessee gardeners. These plants passed along by friends and family hold a special place in the home garden and in our memories. This list strives to include as many of these treasured heirloom pass-a-long plants as possible along with garden standards. As improved varieties and cultivars come along, this list will evolve and grow over time.



Centaurea cyanus, a cool season annual commonly called Bachelor Button or Cornflower, is easily grown by direct seeding in TN home gardens. The seed can be broadcast in fall through winter and will produce blooms the following spring.

Seed vs. Transplant

Some of the plants in this list are not commonly found as transplants in the trade warranting them separation from the plant list in publication **W874-A Plants for TN Landscapes- Annuals**. That publication focuses on annual garden plants that perform well in TN and are easily sourced at garden centers. Many of them are difficult to germinate without controlled environment conditions, and some are even reproduced strictly through vegetative propagation. In this publication, we share plants that are easily propagated from seed in the TN home garden.

Many of these plants are not generally found in garden centers. They are relatively common, but are not



Nigella damascene, Love in a Mist, is the perfect addition to the edging of a cottage style garden.

particularly appealing as young plants in cell packs or do not transplant well. Understandably, garden centers invest in the more marketable and faster moving plants. The easily seed grown plants in this list are exquisite performers certainly worthy of attention as colorful and inexpensive additions to the landscape.



Plume and Wheat type *Celosia*, warm season annuals, provide bright color all summer long.

Seeds can be sourced from seed catalogues, garden centers, or friends and family who are eager to share. Some of the harder to find cultivars might require a search for companies or social media groups that specialize in heirlooms, new market arrivals, and specialty niches.

Finally, do not underestimate fellow gardeners' willingness to share!



Cosmos sulphureus, Sulfur cosmos add height and movement to the landscape.

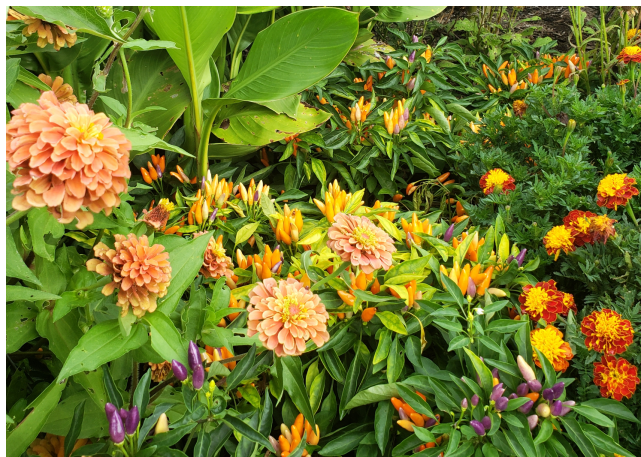
About the list

The list is predominately composed of annuals easily grown from seed, but some biennials and perennials are also included and are noted in the comments column. Growing requirements, plant attributes, and common uses are also referenced in the comments.

Plants are organized in alphabetical order by scientific name, and common names are also listed.

Many of these plants are easily grown by direct sowing in a prepared garden site, or naturally re-seed themselves from year to year. Those plants are identified with an X in the Direct Sow column. Those plants whose seed are naturally reseed will lay in wait throughout the winter until growing conditions are suitable for their germination. Others including select cool season plants, biennials, and some perennials actually require a cold and moist period, called stratification, to initiate germination. Specific notes on some of these requirements are in the comments.

Other plants may germinate best by starting indoors and then transplanting into the garden. Every plant has its own requirements for success including soil temperature, lighting, scarification, and stratification, but the list focuses on easy plants to grow from seed in the TN home garden.



Mixed annual border at the West TN Research & Education Center

Seed Grown Flower for the Home Garden

<i>Scientific Name</i> Common Name	Height (feet)	Light Needs			Bloom	Direct Sow	Cultivars/ Series	Comments
		Sun	Part Sun	Shade				
<i>Abelmoschus esculentos</i> Okra	4-6'	X			July- September	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candle Fire • Red Burgundy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unusual tall foliage plant • Fruit is edible & ornamental • Heat tolerant • Cut flower- fruit
<i>Abelmoschus manihot</i> Ornamental Okra	4-6'	X			July- September	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unusual tall foliage plant • Large yellow flower • Heat tolerant • Cut flower- pods
<i>Ageratum houstonianum</i> Floss Flower	1-2'	X	X		June- Frost		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Horizon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracts pollinators • Cut flowers- tall varieties
<i>Alcea rugose</i> Hollyhock	3-6'		X		May-June	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracts pollinators • Cut flower • Biennial
<i>Amaranthus caudatus</i> Love-lies-bleeding	2-3'	X	X		July- Frost	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large droopy red, yellow, or green flower clusters • Tolerates drought • Dry & cut flower • Reseeds
<i>Amaranthus cruentus</i>	3-8'	X	X		July- Frost	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hot Biscuits • Autumn Torch • Hopi Red Dye 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large upright plume type flower clusters • Tolerates drought • Dry & cut flower • Reseeds
<i>Ammi majus</i> False Queen Anne's Lace False Bishops Weed	1.5-2'	X	X		May-July	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracts pollinators • Best when direct sown • Reseeds • Cut flower
<i>Asclepias curassavica</i> Annual Milkweed	2-4'	X	X		June- October	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracts pollinators • Host plant for monarch caterpillar • Reseeds
<i>Asclepias physocarpa</i> <i>aka</i>	4-6'	X	X		July- August	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracts pollinators • Host plant for monarch caterpillar • Reseeds

Seed Grown Flowers for the Home Garden

<i>Scientific Name</i> Common Name	Height (feet)	Light Needs			Bloom	Direct Sow	Cultivars/ Series	Comments
		Sun	Part Sun	Shade				
<i>Gomphocarpus physocarpa</i> Swan Butterflyweed Hairy Balls								<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry & cut flower- seed pods
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i> Butterfly Weed	1.5-2'	X	X		May-July	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native perennial • Attracts pollinators • Host plant for monarch caterpillar • Reseeds • Can be sown in the fall
<i>Beta vulgaris</i> Garden Beets	1-2'	X	X		Foliage	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulls Blood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cool season edible root crop with ornamental foliage • Direct seed in early spring or late summer • Spring/Fall/Winter foliage
<i>Beta vulgaris subsp. vulgaris</i> Swiss Chard	1-2'	X	X		Foliage	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bright Lights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cool season edible leafy green • Direct seed in early spring or late summer • Fall/Winter- Colorful spines and broad foliage
<i>Capsicum annuum</i> Ornamental Pepper	.5-1'	X	X		June-Frost		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medusa • Purple Flash • Prairie Fire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ornamental varieties hold their fruit in an upright, showy position • Reseeds • Cut flower- fruit & foliage
<i>Celosia argentea</i> Wheat	2-3'	X	X		June-Frost	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celway • Asian Garden • Flamingo Feather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tall plant with wheat head type bloom • Attracts pollinators • Reseeds • Dry & cut flower
<i>Celosia cristata</i> Cockscomb	1-2'	X	X		June-Frost	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bombay • Neo • Supercrest • Chief • Prestige Scarlet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bright bloom colors • Attracts pollinators • Reseeds • Dry & cut flower
<i>Celosia plumosa</i> Plumed	1-2'	X	X		June-Frost	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh Look • New Look • First Flame 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bright bloom colors • Attracts pollinators, Reseeds • Dry & cut flower

Seed Grown Flowers for the Home Garden

<i>Scientific Name</i> Common Name	Height (feet)	Light Needs			Bloom	Direct Sow	Cultivars/ Series	Comments
		Sun	Part Sun	Shade				
<i>Centaurea cyanus</i> Cornflower Bachelor Button	2-3'	X	X		Fall Sown April/Ma y Winter Sown June/July	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cool season biennial • Drought and poor soil tolerant • Can be sown in the fall or late winter • Blooms in true blue, purple, pink, and white • Reseeds • Dry & cut flower
<i>Cleome hassleriana</i> Cleome Spider Flower	3-4'	X	X		June - Frost	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sparkler • Queen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tall with unique palmately compound leaves • Sometimes has spines along the stem • Attracts hummingbirds & pollinators • Reseeds • Cut flower
<i>Consolida ajacis</i> Larkspur	2-4'	X	X		May-June	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cool season annual • Blooms in blue, purple, pink and white • Direct seed in fall or winter for spring display • Best when direct seeded, Reseeds • Dry & cut flower
<i>Cosmos bipinnatus</i> Cosmos	2-4'	X	X		May- Frost	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensation • Seashell • Sonata 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drought tolerant • Attracts pollinators • Blooms in white, pink, yellow and magenta • Best when direct seeded • Cut flower
<i>Cosmos sulphureus</i> Sulfur Cosmos	2-3'	X	X		May- Frost	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmic • Sunny 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drought tolerant • Attracts pollinators • Blooms in hues of yellow/orange • Cut flower
<i>Daucus carota</i> Queen Anne's Lace	2-4'	X	X		May- Frost	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biennial that should be seeded in fall • White to cream colored lacey blooms • Attracts pollinators • Reseeds- can become weedy • Cut flower
<i>Echinacea purpurea</i> Purple Coneflower	1.5-3'	X	X		June- August	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pow Wow • White Swan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perennial • Attracts pollinators & birds in winter • Reseeds & can be propagated by division

Seed Grown Flowers for the Home Garden

Scientific Name Common Name	Height (feet)	Light Needs			Bloom	Direct Sow	Cultivars/ Series	Comments
		Sun	Part Sun	Shade				
							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheyenne Spirit • Magnus • Magnus Supreme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hybrids offer a range of colors • Does not require stratification but can be seeded in fall • Cut flower
<i>Echinacea tennesseensis</i> TN Coneflower	1.5-3'	X	X		June-July	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rocky Top 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perennial, requires excellent drainage • Attracts pollinators & birds in winter • Reseeds & can be propagated by division • Requires stratification, if direct seeded it must be sown in fall or winter • Cut flower
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> Fennel	4-5'	X	X		July-Frost	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bronze Fennel • Antares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tender biennial or annual • Ornamental & edible plant parts with licorice flavor, feathery foliage • Heat tolerance • Host plant for swallowtail caterpillars • Cut flower- bloom & foliage
<i>Gomphrena globosa</i> Globe Amaranth	.5-2'	X	X		May-Frost	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gnome • Fireworks • Strawberry Fields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does well in most soils and tolerates drought • Reseeds • Tall and compact cultivars available • Dry & cut flower
<i>Helianthus spp.</i> Sunflower	2-8'+	X			May - July	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many bloom colors & heights available • Attracts pollinators and birds • Cut flower- look for pollen-less varieties
<i>Ipomoea alba</i> Moonvine	Vine	X	X		July-Frost	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White bloom flowers at night • Attracts nighttime pollinators • Vine requires support • Seeds must be scarified for good germination
<i>Ipomoea imperialis</i> Morning Glory	Vine	X	X		July-Frost	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blooms in many colors • Vine requires support • Reseeds and is weedy
<i>Ipomoea quamoclit</i> Cypress Vine	Vine	X	X		June - Frost	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine foliaged vine with small trumpet shaped red blooms, requires support • Attracts hummingbirds and other pollinators

Seed Grown Flowers for the Home Garden

<i>Scientific Name</i> Common Name	Height (feet)	Light Needs			Bloom	Direct Sow	Cultivars/ Series	Comments
		Sun	Part Sun	Shade				
								<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reseeds, can become weedy
<i>Ipomoea x multifida</i>	Vine	X	X		June- Frost	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red blooms • Foliage is lacy but not as fine as Cypress Vine • Reseeds, not as weedy as Cypress Vine
<i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> Sweet Pea	Vine	X	X		April- June	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracts pollinators • Cool season annual • Can be sown in late winter to early spring • Prefers cooler less humid conditions • Cut flower
<i>Limonium sinuatum</i> Statice	1-1.5'	X	X		June-July			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires excellent drainage • Prefers cooler less humid conditions • Dry flower
<i>Lunaria annua</i> Dollar Plant Money Plant	2'		X	X	April- May	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biennial, best in shade to part shade • Blooms in white and pinkish/lavender • Grown for the display of showy seed pods • Reseeds • Dry & cut flower
<i>Lychnis coronaria</i> Rose Champion	2-2.5'H 1'W	X	X		May-July	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biennial • Blooms in magenta or white • Silver/gray foliage • Reseeds & can be propagated by division
<i>Malva sylvestris</i> Malva Tall Mallow	4-6'	X	X		July- Septembe r	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blooms in rose-purple with darker stripes • Cut flower
<i>Malvaviscus arboreus</i> <i>ar. drummondii</i> Turks Cap	10-15'	X	X		June- Frost	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bush-like native perennial • Blooms red • Attracts hummingbirds and pollinators
<i>Mirabilis jalapa</i> Four O'clock	2-3'	X	X		June- Frost	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brightly colored flowers open in the afternoon each day, fragrant • Reseeds

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		Sun	Part Sun	Shade				
<i>Nigella damascena</i> Love-in-a-mist	vine	X	X		May-July	X	• Miss Jekyll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cool season annual, best direct seeded • Airy ferny textured foliage • Blooms in blue, white, & purple • Reseeds and can be sown in fall through late winter • Dry flower- seed pods
<i>Ocimum basilicum</i> Basil	1-3'	X	X		Summer	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thai • Purple Ruffles • Spicy Globe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracts pollinators • Reseeds • Downey Mildew is an issue for Basil, look for resistant cultivars like those suggested. • Cut flower- foliage & bloom
<i>Oenothera speciose</i> Pink Evening Primrose	1'	X	X		May-June	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefers well in a wide range of soils and growing conditions • Drought tolerant • Native, reseeds • Bright pastel pink flowers
<i>Papaver rhoeas</i> Common Poppy	1-1.5'	X	X		May-June	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grown as a cool season annual in TN • Blooms in a wide range of colors, patterns, and forms • Can be sown in fall to winter • Best when direct seeded • Dry flower- seed pod
<i>Papaver somniferum</i> Opium Poppy	3-5'	X	X		May-June	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blooms in a wide range of colors, patterns, and forms • Best when direct seeded • Dry flower- seed pod
<i>Physalis alkekengi</i> Chinese Lantern Plant	1-2'	X	X		N/A	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bloom matures into a small fruit with a showy orange papery covering • Best when direct seeded • Reseeds

Seed Grown Flowers for the Home Garden

Scientific Name Common Name	Height (feet)	Light Needs			Bloom	Direct Sow	Cultivars/ Series	Comments
		Sun	Part Sun	Shade				
								• Dry flower- seed pod
<i>Plectranthus scutellarioides</i> <i>aka</i> <i>Solenostomon scutellarioides</i> Coleus	1-3'	X	X		Foliage		• Kong • Kong Jr. • Pineapple Surprise	• Grown for its many colors of foliage • Most seed grown cultivars are inferior to vegetatively grown cultivars • Color is more vivid when blooms are pinched- off regularly • Cut flower- foliage
<i>Ricinus communis</i> Castor Bean	6-12'	X	X		August- Frost	X	• Carmencita • Red Impala • Red Giant • Zanzibar	• Huge leaves on towering plant • Bold tropical effect • Beans are toxic so remove if in places of concern
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i> Gloriosa Daisy Blackeye Susan	1-2'	X	X		June- Frost	X	• Cherokee • Goldilocks • Indian Summer • Prairie Sun	• Drought tolerant • Fuzzy green foliage • Large daisy like blooms in mixed shades of yellow, gold, to burnt orange • Reseeds, Native • Cut flower
<i>Salvia coccinea</i> Texas Sage	1.5-3'	X	X		June- Frost		• Lady in Red • Summer Jewels • Nymph	• Attracts hummingbirds & pollinators
<i>Salvia farinacea</i> Mealycup Sage	1-2.5'	X	X		June- Frost		• Victoria Blue • Evolution Violet	• Attracts pollinators • Cut flower
<i>Salvia splendens</i> Scarlet Sage	1-2'	X	X		June- Frost		• Lighthouse • Early Bonfire • Rambo Red	• Attract pollinators • Cut flower
<i>Tagetes erecta</i>	1.5-2.5'	X	X		June- Frost	X	• Big Duck • Moon Song	• Blooms up to 3" in diameter • Cut flower- long stem cultivars

Seed Grown Flowers for the Home Garden

<i>Scientific Name</i> Common Name	Height (feet)	Light Needs			Bloom	Direct Sow	Cultivars/ Series	Comments
		Sun	Part Sun	Shade				
African Marigolds						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marvel • Taishan 		
<i>Tagetes patula</i> French Marigolds	.5-1'	X	X		June- Frost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jane • Super Hero • Bananza • Durango • Hero 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average 1" Bloom, very • Used as edging or front of borders 	
<i>Talinum paniculatum</i> Jewels of Opar	1-1.5'	X			June- Frost	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kingwood Gold 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tolerant of heat, drought, and poor soil • Attracts pollinators • Reseeds • Dry & cut flower- seed heads 'jewels'
<i>Thunbergia alata</i> Blackeyed Susan Vine	Vine	X	X		June- Frost	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Susie 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefers well-drained soil • Vine requires support • Bloom is small yellow/orange trumpet shape with an open bell and dark center • Attracts pollinators
<i>Tithonia rotundifolia</i> Mexican Sunflower	2-6'	X			June- Frost	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiesta Del Sol • Torch • Goldfinger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracts butterflies, birds and pollinators • Cut flower
<i>Torenia fournieri</i> Torenia	.5-1'		X	X	May- Frost		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clown • Kauai 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reseeds • Blooms in blue, yellow, pink, white
<i>Tropaeolum majus</i> Nasturtium	1'H x 3'W	X	X		April- May	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefers well-drained soil • Dislikes heat and humidity grows best in cooler regions of the state • Can be planted in late winter to very early spring • Edible, cut flower
<i>Verbena bonariensis</i> Stick Verbena Brazilian Verbena	3-5'	X	X		June- Frost	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airy vertical effect in gardens • Drought tolerant • Long bloom season • Attracts pollinators • Cut flower- used as filler
<i>Xerochrysum bracteatum</i>	1-2'	X			July-Frost	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer dry sunny conditions

Seed Grown Flowers for the Home Garden

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		Sun	Part Sun	Shade				
Strawflower Everlasting Flower							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry & cut flower 	
<i>Zinnia angustifolia</i> Zinnia	1'	X	X		May- Frost	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crystal • Star 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drought tolerant, disease resistant • Mounding habit • Useful in containers and landscape • Attracts pollinators
<i>Zinnia hybrid</i> Zinnia	1-3'	X	X		May- Frost	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profusion • Zahara • Magellan • Zowie! Yellow Flame • Queeny • Benary • Uproar Rose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracts pollinators • Long season of color • Use succession planting to extend bloom period • Powdery mildew and leaf spotting of foliage can be unsightly later in the season • Look for resistant cultivars- Profusion and Zahara Series have excellent mildew resistance • Cut flower



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