

Cold Hardy Landscape Cacti & Succulents for Central Texas

Jeff Pavlat 3/11

The following is a list of recommended landscape plants for Central Texas. Keep in mind that there is a great deal of temperature variation across the region. Temperatures in outlying areas are in some cases 10 to 15 degrees colder than those in town. The cold tolerances listed are approximate.

It is important to recognize that there are a number of factors which determine hardiness. Plants placed on south facing slopes receive more solar heat and tend to have a better chance of being undamaged. Plants also fair better with some overhead protection from a tree or shrub. It also helps for them to be placed where they will not receive direct north wind. Generally, low-growing plants receive more ground heat than taller plants and are less likely to freeze. The state of the plant as it enters freezing temperatures is an important factor as well. For instance, many cacti and succulents will endure considerably colder temperatures when dry rather than wet (In fact, cold and wet is often a lethal combination for many cacti). Plants of the same species originating from different parts of the plant's native range can also result in higher or lower tolerances. It is possible to have two plants of the same species placed side by side and have one freeze, while the other survives. Often some experimentation is necessary to determine what plants will work best for your garden.

Cold Hardy Cacti

Species (*Texas Native)	Common Name	Min. Temp.	Notes
<i>Ariocarpus fissuratus</i> *	living rock	15°F	Provide excellent drainage
<i>Astrophytum asterias</i> *	star cactus, sand dollar cactus	20°F	
<i>Astrophytum capricorne</i>	goat's horn cactus	20°F	
<i>Astrophytum myriostigma</i>		20°F	
<i>Astrophytum ornatum</i>	monk's hood cactus	18°F	
<i>Coryphantha sulcata</i> *		10°F	
<i>Cylindropuntia imbricata</i> *	tree cholla	10°F	
<i>Cylindropuntia leptocaulis</i> *	Christmas cholla	10°F	
<i>Cylindropuntia spinosior</i>	cane cholla	10°F	
<i>Denmoza rhodantha</i>		20°F	
<i>Echinocactus grusonii</i>	golden barrel	15°F	
<i>Echinocactus horizontalonius</i> *	eagle claw	10°F	
<i>Echinocactus texensis</i> *	horse-crippler	0°F	
<i>Echinocereus coccineus</i> * (<i>E. triglochidiatus</i>)	claret cup	0°F	Provide excellent drainage
<i>Echinocereus dasyacanthus</i> *	Texas rainbow hedgehog, yellow pitaya	0°F	Provide excellent drainage
<i>Echinocereus enneacanthus</i> *	strawberry cactus	15°F	
<i>Echinocereus pentalophus</i> *	alicoche, lady-finger cactus	18°F	
<i>Echinocereus reichenbachii</i> *	lace cactus	0°F	Provide excellent drainage
<i>Echinocereus rigidissimus</i> ssp. <i>rubispinus</i>		15°F	Provide excellent drainage
<i>Echinocereus stramineus</i> *		10°F	Provide excellent drainage
<i>Echinopsis (Trichocereus) pasacana</i>		18°F	
<i>Echinopsis (Trichocereus) terscheckii</i>	Argentine saguaro	18°F	
<i>Echinopsis hybrids</i>		18°F	
<i>Escobaria (Coryphantha) missouriensis</i> *		0°F	
<i>Espostoa (Vatricania) guentheri</i>		20°F	Provide excellent drainage
<i>Ferocactus emoryi</i> v. <i>covillei</i>		18°F	
<i>Ferocactus glaucescens</i>		20°F	
<i>Ferocactus gracilis</i>		20°F	
<i>Ferocactus hamatacanthus</i> *	fishhook barrel	0°F	
<i>Ferocactus pilosus</i> (<i>F. stainesii</i>)		20°F	
<i>Ferocactus pottsii</i>		20°F	
<i>Ferocactus robustus</i>		20°F	
<i>Ferocactus wislizeni</i> *	Arizona barrel	5°F	
<i>Gymnocalycium marsoneri</i>		20°F	
<i>Mammillaria heyderi</i> *	pincushion cactus	15°F	
<i>Mammillaria prolifera</i> ssp. <i>texana</i> *			
(<i>M. multiceps</i>)		20°F	
<i>Mammillaria sphaerica</i> *		18°F	
<i>Neobuxbaumia polylopha</i>	Aztec column	20°F	
<i>Opuntia cacanapa</i> cv. " <i>Ellisiana</i> "	spineless prickly pear	10°F	
<i>Opuntia engelmannii</i> v. <i>linguiformis</i> *	cow's tongue prickly pear	10°F	
<i>Opuntia engelmannii</i> v. <i>lindheimeri</i> *	Texas prickly pear	10°F	
<i>Opuntia macrocentra</i> *	long-spine purple prickly pear	10°F	
<i>Opuntia microdasys</i>	yellow bunny ears prickly pear	18°F	Beware of the glochids on this plant
<i>Opuntia microdasys</i> v. <i>rufida</i> *	red bunny ears prickly pear	15°F	Beware of the glochids on this plant

Cold Hardy Cacti (Continued)

Species (*Texas Native)	Common Name	Min. Temp.	Notes
<i>Opuntia macrorhiza</i> *	plains prickly pear	0°F	
<i>Opuntia santa rita</i> *		0°F	
<i>Opuntia strigil</i> *	marble-fruit prickly pear	10°F	
<i>Oreocereus trollii</i>	old man of the mountain	18°F	
<i>Thelocactus bicolor</i> *	glory of Texas	18°F	
<i>Thelocactus (Feroactus) setispinus</i> (<i>Hamatocactus bicolor</i>)	twisted-rib cactus	15°F	

Cold Hardy Succulents

Species (*Texas Native)	Common Name	Min. Temp.	Notes
<i>Agave americana</i>	century plant, maguey	15°F	
<i>Agave americana v. marginata</i>		20°F	Can burn some in low 20's
<i>Agave americana v. medio-picta alba</i>		15°F	Can burn some in low 20's
<i>Agave bracteosa</i>	squid agave	15°F	
<i>Agave colorata</i>		17°F	
<i>Agave havardiana</i> *		-10°F	Provide excellent drainage
<i>Agave lechuguilla</i> *	shin dagger	0°F	
<i>Agave lophantha</i> * "compact form"		10°F	Much nicer form than the species
<i>Agave lophantha</i> * cv. "Quadricolor"		18°F	
<i>Agave neomexicana</i> *		-20°F	Provide excellent drainage
<i>Agave ocahui</i>		15°F	
<i>Agave ovatifolia</i>	whale's tongue agave	5°F	
<i>Agave parrasana</i>		10°F	Some clones are less hardy
<i>Agave parryi v. parryi</i>		-20°F	
<i>Agave parryi v. parryi</i> "Estrella"		15°F	Leaves burn back when too dry
<i>Agave parryi v. truncata</i>		15°F	
<i>Agave salmiana</i>	maguey de pulque	5°F	
<i>Agave scabra</i>		10°F	
<i>Agave schidigera</i>		15°F	
<i>Agave striata</i>		15°F	
<i>Agave victoriae-reginae</i>	Queen Victoria agave	10°F	Provide excellent drainage
<i>Agave weberi</i>		12°F	
<i>Agave cv. "leopoldii"</i>		17°F	
<i>Agave cv. "sharkskin"</i>		10°F	
<i>Agave xylonacantha</i>		12°F	
<i>Aloe brevifolia</i>		20°F	
<i>Aloe ciliaris</i>		20°F	
<i>Aloe dewetii</i>		20°F	
<i>Aloe ferox</i>		20°F	
<i>Aloe marlothii</i>		20°F	
<i>Aloe nobilis</i>		low 20s	
<i>Aloe saponaria type</i>	spotted soap aloe	20°F	
<i>Aloe spinosissima</i> (<i>A. aborescens</i> x <i>A. humilis echinata</i>)		low 20s	
<i>Aloe striata</i>		20°F	
<i>Aloe striatula</i>		18°F	
<i>Aloe cv. "blue elf"</i>		low 20s	
<i>Calibanus hookeri</i>		17°F	
<i>Dasyliirion acrotriche</i>		15°F	
<i>Dasyliirion berlandieri</i>		10°F	
<i>Dasyliirion miquihuanensis</i>		15°F	
<i>Dasyliirion quadrangulatum</i>	Mexican grass tree	15°F	
<i>Dasyliirion texanum</i> *	Texas sotol	5°F	
<i>Dasyliirion wheeleri</i> *	blue sotol	0°F	
<i>Delosperma species/cultivars</i>	ice plant	-15°F	Provide excellent drainage
<i>Dyckia encholiriodes</i>		low 20s	
<i>Dyckia platyphylla</i>		low 20s	
<i>Dyckia cv. "Cherries Foster"</i>		low 20s	
<i>Euphorbia antisiphilitica</i> *	candelilla	at least 15°F	
<i>Euphorbia resinifera</i>		at least 18°F	

Aloes can handle freezing temperatures for brief periods. They require protection when freezing temperatures persist.

Cold Hardy Succulents (Continued)

Species (*Texas Native)	Common Name	Min. Temp.	Notes
<i>Fouquieria splendens</i> *	ocotillo	10°F	
<i>Graptopetalum paraguayense</i>	ghost plant	at least 18°F	
<i>Hechtia texensis</i> *		15°F	
<i>Hesperaloe funifera</i>	giant red yucca	10°F	
<i>Hesperaloe nocturna</i>	night blooming hesperaloe	10°F	
<i>Hesperaloe parviflora</i> *	red yucca	-20°F	
<i>Manfreda maculosa</i>	Texas tuberose	10°F	Root hardy if top freezes
<i>Manfreda virginica</i>		-20°F	
<i>Mangave (Manfreda) "Macho Mocha"</i>		9°F	
<i>Nolina lindheimeriana</i> *	Devil's shoe string	15°F	
<i>Nolina matapensis</i>	Sonoran tree bear grass	15°F	
<i>Nolina microcarpa</i> *	bear grass	-15°F	
<i>Nolina nelsoni</i>	blue nolina	10°F	
<i>Nolina texana</i> *	bear grass	-15°F	
<i>Sedum species/cultivars</i>	stonecrop	varies	Not all are cold hardy
<i>Yucca aloifolia</i>		0°F	
<i>Yucca baccata</i>		-20°F	
<i>Yucca elata</i>		-10°F	
<i>Yucca faxoniana</i> *	Spanish dagger	0°F	
<i>Yucca glauca</i> *	soapweed yucca	-35°F	
<i>Yucca gloriosa</i>	soft-tipped yucca	22°F	Deer sometimes eat
<i>Yucca pallida</i> *		0°F	
<i>Yucca recurvifolia</i>		0°F	
<i>Yucca rigida</i>		5°F	
<i>Yucca rostrata</i> *	beaked yucca	5°F	
<i>Yucca rupicola</i> *	twisted leaf yucca	0°F	
<i>Yucca thompsoniana</i> *	Thompson's yucca	5°F	
<i>Yucca treculeana</i> *	Spanish dagger	10°F	