

Plants for the Forgetful Gardener

By Sarah Gorton, SAWS Intern



Blackfoot Daisy



Damianita



Red Yucca



Horseherb



Texas Sedge



Milkweed

I was once a helicopter plant mom, but with time I've regressed to a negligent, forgetful gardener.

I can pass my plants every day and know they need watering. But until they are flopped over sideways, begging for water, I actually forget to water them. And while I've killed many a plant, there are a handful that scoffed at my forgetfulness and beat the odds.

This is a list of true survivors.

Blackfoot daisy and **damianita** are cute groundcover wildflowers that absolutely despise supplemental water. Some parts of downtown and south San Antonio can't even support either flower because the soil is too heavy. You can find these tiny flowers sprouting up all over the sides of the highway traveling on U.S. Highway 281 north of Loop 1604.

One much more traditional plant for the xeric "I'm-sick-of-mowing-the-lawn" person are yuccas, especially **red yuccas**. Red yucca in particular is a hummingbird magnet, but any agaves are perfect for the anti-waterer. They come in all shapes and sizes so don't let your disdain for the stereotypical Arizona yard keep you from browsing them at a local nursery.

Straggler daisy or **horseherb** is my personal favorite native because it grows so easily in San Antonio, people have it in their yards without even trying. Many think it's a weed, but it's actually a nice turf supplement that thrives in shade and can handle some foot traffic.

Texas sedge makes for a neat turf alternative. It's a bit unusual because it grows in clumps that fill in until you can't see individual plants, and the grass grows long and eventually flops over. It's a great option if you want to have that 'keeping up with the Joneses' green lawn look, but without the heavy duty watering requirement.

Of the plants listed above, all but the straggler daisy and Texas sedge are WaterSaver Landscape Coupon-eligible plants. If you haven't applied for the WaterSaver Landscape Coupon because you're worried you don't have a green thumb, consider giving these low maintenance plants a shot. They'll need some water to get established, but beyond that they'll thrive despite your negligence!

Milkweed, especially antelope horn milkweed, grows best when left alone. Milkweed isn't as noticeable as wildflowers, but they're pretty well-distributed across San Antonio. In addition to being easy to grow, they're essential for monarch butterflies to complete their life cycle. Add some of this to your yard and you're bound to be a good home for some monarch larvae.

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