9.3 West-Central Semi-Arid Prairies

**Common Sunflower**  
*(Helianthus annuus)*

- **LIGHT:** Full sun
- **WATER:** Low to average
- **SEASON OF INTEREST:** Mid through late summer
- **HEIGHT:** 3-10 ft (dwarf varieties available)
- **DURATION:** Annual

These tall and showy flowers are easy and fun to grow, and the seeds are great for birds. Put only one plant in each pot and provide support as the plant grows.

**Nuttall’s Sunflower**  
*(Helianthus nuttallii)*

- **LIGHT:** Full sun
- **WATER:** Average to high
- **SEASON OF INTEREST:** Fall
- **HEIGHT:** 3-8 ft
- **DURATION:** Perennial

This late season flowering plant is an important source of nectar for migrating monarch butterflies in the fall and other pollinators. The seeds attract many birds, and are favored by goldfinches.

**Silvery Lupine**  
*(Lupinus argenteus)*

- **LIGHT:** Full sun
- **WATER:** Low
- **SEASON OF INTEREST:** Summer
- **HEIGHT:** 1-3 ft
- **DURATION:** Perennial

This species has stunning silvery-green leaves with spikes of blue to violet flowers. They are particularly attractive to hummingbirds and butterflies. Plant in a deep pot due to long roots.

*Not native to eastern half of ecoregion*

**Mexican Hat Plant**  
*(Ratibida columnifera)*

- **LIGHT:** Full sun
- **WATER:** Low
- **SEASON OF INTEREST:** Late spring through fall
- **HEIGHT:** 1-3 ft
- **DURATION:** Perennial

This long-blooming plant offers consistent pollen, as well as seeds for birds well into the fall. It is relatively disease and pest free.

**Stiff Goldenrod**  
*(Solidago rigida)*

- **LIGHT:** Full sun
- **WATER:** Low to average
- **SEASON OF INTEREST:** Late summer through fall
- **HEIGHT:** 3-5 ft
- **DURATION:** Perennial

A beautiful late season bloom that produces thick clusters of yellow flowers. It is attractive to pollinators and seed birds. It is deer resistant and thrives in poor, dry soil.

**White Heath Aster**  
*(Symphyotrichum ericoides)*

- **LIGHT:** Full sun
- **WATER:** Low to average
- **SEASON OF INTEREST:** Late summer through fall
- **HEIGHT:** 1-3 ft
- **DURATION:** Perennial

This densely blooming and compact plant resembles a spreading Juniper shrub when not in bloom. This low maintenance species does not have any serious pests or diseases.
9.3 West-Central Semi-Arid Prairies

Smooth Aster
(Symphyotrichum laeve)
LIGHT: Full sun
WATER: Low to average
SEASON OF INTEREST: Late summer through fall
HEIGHT: 2-4 ft
DURATION: Perennial
These small and densely blooming flowers are a striking blue to purple color with a golden-yellow center. This species has no serious pests or diseases.

Aromatic Aster
(Symphyotrichum oblongifolium)
LIGHT: Full sun
WATER: Low to average
SEASON OF INTEREST: Late summer through fall
HEIGHT: 1-2 ft
DURATION: Perennial
Colorful and aromatic, this plant produces many blue-purple flowers and the foliage emits a pleasant scent when crushed. Attracts birds and butterflies while being unattractive to deer and rabbits.
*Not native to western parts of ecoregion

Prairie Ironweed
(Vernonia fasciculata)
LIGHT: Full sun
WATER: Average to high
SEASON OF INTEREST: Mid summer through fall
HEIGHT: 2-6 ft
DURATION: Perennial
This flower provides a pop of purple color that will bloom again when deadheaded. This species may need support, is deer resistant, and has no serious diseases or pests.
*Not native to western parts of ecoregion