Looking for plants that tolerate dry spells? Here are some native plant ideas.

**Trees**
Hackberry, *Celtis occidentalis* (40-80', rapid growing, plentiful berries)
Chokecherry, *Prunus virginiana* (8-15' up to 30', plentiful fruits good for juice, jelly & syrup, good wildlife tree)

**Shrubs**
Grey dogwood, *Cornus racemosa* (6-15', slow growing, shade tolerant, white flowers/fruit)
Black Chokeberry, *Aronia melanocarpa* (3-6', fast growing, abundant white flowers, dark purple fruits)

**Evergreens**
Red pine, *Pinus resinosa* (120', state tree of MN, long brittle needles, self-pruning)
White pine, *Pinus strobes* (210', flexible blue-green needles, long-lived, good wildlife tree)

**Perennials**
Low Bush Honeysuckle, *Diervila ponicera* (12-18', fast growing, transplants well)
Red Osier Dogwood, *Cornus sericea* (6'-12', fast growing, red twigs in winter and white flowers in early spring)

The “Do One Thing” Issue

Sometimes, when we are faced with threatened or degraded natural resources, the problem(s) can seem overwhelming. We think, “How can one person, one family, or one community possibly make a difference?” Even if we are ready and willing to make some changes for the better, we may not know where to start. The articles in this issue of our newsletter offer some simple tips for making small changes to our daily lives. These small changes can add up to big results if we all just “do one thing.”

“Do one thing” literature is made available through a partnership of the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, University of Minnesota Extension, and the University of Minnesota.

Do One Thing: tune up your flow

Using less water can save time and work, and still give you a beautiful yard. Here’s how to get started.

1. **Check out Life Beyond Bluegrass.** How much lawn do you really want? The range of other native and non-native choices is amazing. Shrubs, groundcovers, herbs, perennials or low-input turfgrasses may all need less water.

2. **Spread that mulch.** It’s the gardener’s favorite. Mulch saves water, cools soil and adds organics (not to mention keeping out weeds).

3. **Drip, drip, drip.** Try drip or trickle irrigation if your plantings need more than natural rainfall. All the water goes to the roots.

4. **Automatic systems need brainpower.** Does your irrigation system have a rain sensor? SMART controllers monitor weather and give plants what they need.

Do One Thing: grow plants that need less water

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plants</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harebell, <em>Campanula rotundifolia</em> (1-2', sun, lavender/blue flowers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black-eyed Susan, <em>Rudbeckia hirta</em> (1-3', sun, orange-yellow flowers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wild columbine, <em>Aquilegia Canadensis</em> (1-3', pink/red/yellow flowers, nectar provides food for bumblebees and ruby-throated hummingbirds)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blue Heaven™ little bluestem, <em>Schizachyrium scoparium</em> ‘MinnblueA’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Butterfly weed, <em>Asclepias tuberosa</em> (full sun, orange or yellow flowers, favorite food of Queen and Monarch butterfly caterpillars)</td>
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</tbody>
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Do One Thing: harvest some rain

Why? Less stormwater down the drain will give us cleaner lakes and streams. Here’s how to get started.

1. **Save some rain in a barrel.** Use it to water thirsty pots and gardens during the next dry spell.

2. **Plant a rain garden.** Moving stormwater to a rain garden gives it a place and enough time to seep down and recharge the groundwater.

3. **Soak up rain with a green roof.** A spongy layer of soil and plants on top also keeps the inside of a building cooler.

4. **Make a driveway “flow through.”** Instead of a hard impenetrable surface on walks and driveways, use new porous paving that lets rain pass through it into the earth beneath.

Do One Thing: have a less thirsty lawn

Water use in our region doubles in summer months. Why? You guessed it, our lawns. Try these tips.

1. **Mow high, with sharp blades.** Clean cut leaf edges lose less water. Mow at 2 1/2 - 3 inches so roots grow deeper and absorb more water from the soil.

2. **Try low-input grasses.** Reseed or overseed with fine fescues or other mixes that stay green with less water than Kentucky bluegrass.

3. **Let it dry slightly before you water.** Mild water stress actually stimulates new grass roots and builds drought tolerance.

4. **Find peace with dormancy.** It’s true, a summer drought can turn bluegrass crisp and brown. But if it’s not too severe, grass will recover quickly when cooler fall weather comes.

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**Upcoming Events**

- **AgroEcology Summit, 7am - 5pm, Aug. 21st, at Willow Lake Farm, Windom.** This year’s topics range from geology to sediment to drainage to shrimping. Refreshments at 7am, registration at 8am. Lunch provided on site. Afternoon activities will include walking and bus tour. Contact Tony Thompson at [salix@mconn.com](mailto:salix@mconn.com) for more information.

- **2nd Annual Photo and Art Contest Entry Deadline, Aug. 21st, 4pm at Lake Crystal City Hall.** All submissions must have valid entry form attached. All submissions must also be matted. Limit of 5 entries per person. Artwork will be on display at LARC Aug. 26th– Sept. 9th for voting. Awards ceremony & reception will be held at 7pm on Sept. 11th. Visit the CWP website for entry forms or email Sarah at [sarah.duda@mnsu.edu](mailto:sarah.duda@mnsu.edu).