

### Select and Group Plants Appropriately:

There is a misconception among some people that the only plants allowed in a Xeriscape are cactus and other desert perennials. Nothing could be farther from the truth! There are a large number of plants that do well in our semi-arid climate with little or no supplemental irrigation. The trick to waterwise gardening is to put the right plants in the right place.

Different plants have different requirements when it comes to light, soil and water. And every yard contains several different microclimates. You want to put plants in the microclimate that most closely matches their needs. For instance, plants that like sun and dry conditions, such as Ice Plant, Snow-In-Summer and Yarrow, would do best in a southern or western exposure, in areas that get watered infrequently. Plants that prefer cooler sites, such as Sweet Woodruff, Kinnikinnick and Coral Bells, would be happier with an eastern or northern exposure, or in areas that are shaded by other plants. Higher water-using plants would do best in low-lying drainage sites or areas next to downspouts.

To make it easier to irrigate efficiently, plants should also be grouped by sprinkler zone according to their watering needs. Don't put low-water shrubs like Rabbitbrush or New Mexico Locust in the midst of a zone where the majority of plants need regular irrigation. And for the sake of your house foundation, try to limit the plants nearest the house to those that need little irrigation.

Because there is such a large palette of plants that do well in our climate, you can also select plants based on color, texture or fragrance. For instance, you might want to turn one bed into a butterfly garden, and select plants whose blossoms attract butterflies. There are books available to help you with your plant selection.