

Best Annuals for Parker County

The following list is the result of a survey of Parker County Master Gardeners. They were asked to rate the trees they had experienced growing or observing. Number after name of the tree shows first place votes it received from Parker County Master Gardeners.

Larkspur		Have never grown this. I plant the seeds every fall for beautiful blooms in the spring.
Plumbago		Either the tropical or the native is dependable and blooms are blue which are hard to find in the selection of annuals in nursery. Comes back, beautifully.
Cockscomb		This reseeds but stays in area where it is planted-blooms all summer till frost and is drought tolerant plus looks good in pots. I love the red plumes. Love the ones with the deep, deep color.
Dianthus (Pinks) (1)		These annuals come in so many wonderful exciting colors and have no insect problems. Comes in great colors.
Zinnia (1)		For dependable hot summer color all zinnia cultivars are great. The profusion variety is my favorite and gives my summer landscape vibrant color. Will get some powdery mildew if planted in too much shade. Remove existing plants in late July and replant for fall.
Portulaca (Moss rose)		This reseeds too easily. I plant in pots on deck. Comes back every year. Dependable in heat.
Cosmos		Planted this by seeds and comes back every year. Drought tolerant and blooms from June to November. Is tall but does not need staking.
Dusty miller (1)		I like the silver color and the dependability of no disease and no insects are attracted to dusty miller. It is a perennial for about three years then needs to be replaced due to woodiness. Dusty Miller planted behind Purple Heart Jew makes a great combination. Grows anywhere all year, very little water. I have some of these I have had for years in the same place, cut them down in late winter and they come back. Should these be moved to perennials? Maybe short lived perennials, but I have some that have been in the same place for many years.
Coleus		Coleus is the dependable leaf color plant for shade or for bed that has morning sun and afternoon shade. Use these every year for their beautiful colored leaves.
Scarlet sage		This plant gives all summer color. I love the red.

Gomphrena (Globe amaranth) (1)		I am tired of this annual but it is dependable and comes in white, pink, and magenta. Great for lots of flowers, reminds me of old gardens. Very easy and dependable reseeding annual. Blooms all summer until frost.
Esperanza 'Gold Star' (1)		This is a perennial in all my gardens-dies to ground but comes back each spring. The yellow is mostly planted but there is a new orange blooming esperanza. Gets quite large.
Geranium		This looks so good in a pot as primary plant or grouped in flowerbed. The color really makes a statement in garden and I use it in pots that have morning sun, afternoon shade. Although annuals, I often protect them from year to year.
Scaevola 'New Wonder'		This is a perennial in my landscape. It blooms early in spring till the hot summer arrives. Rests for July and August and perks back up from September till frost.
Begonia		I like the angel wing cultivar but am bored with the begonia that everyone plants, especially the bronze one. I do like the green leafed variety in shade that blooms pink. Although annuals, I protect them and have used the same ones for years.
Snapdragon		I like the short variety of snapdragons and plant them in early winter then deadhead them so that they will bloom in spring. Look wonderful in pots of color for spring. In fact, do better in pot than in the flowerbed for me. Mine are perennial and reseeding themselves.
Pansy		This is a staple for the winter garden for color. I prefer the little violas (Johnny Jump-ups)
Petunia		This annual is my in-between planting for color. In-between winter and spring. I plant in late winter as soon as they are available in nursery. The heat of summer will make them leggy and will replant with an annual that likes the heat.
Alyssum		I love the smell of this annual and its short mounding stature. Love the fragrance of this plant, especially the white alyssum. Not impressed with the blooms, have used but will not again.
Blue daze		Like it because it has blue bloom and is good spiller for pots in grouping of plants. Love the blue color, use also in containers
Caladium		Wish we could plant this earlier. Likes warm soil but makes a splash of color in shade flowerbed when planted in large groupings. Gives a shade garden color. Great interest for shade
Impatiens		Nothing is as dependable to bloom in shade. Good for shade
Hollyhock		The French hollyhock is my favorite since it reseeds in my landscape. It gets rust, spider mites and all insects love the large leaves but I still love the blooms and shape of leaves.
Ornamental kale		Bolts too quickly for me. Great for cool season and for floral arrangements

Gaillardia (Indian blanket)		The brown, red, orange colors of this annual never blends in my landscape although I do like the fact that it is easy to grow.
Mari-mum		This is sold in either orange or yellow and is good filler with plants that are purple or white. Sometimes it gets spider mites. Powdery mildew can be problem if planted in too much shade.
Large flowered purslane		This reseeds and reverts back to pig weed. Dependable in heat.
Copper plant		Just do not like the color of leaf. Love the beautiful color buy these late in the season for fall color
Ornamental pepper		This annual is drought tolerant but I never get around to planting since the blooms are not as pronounced as most annuals. Love the leaf color as well as the pepper color.
Ageratum		This plant does not have large blooms but I love the shape of the leaf.
Cleome		I reseed this annual each year. I like it because it blooms, is tall and does not need staking.
Four o'clock		This reseeds too much and I do not like to thin the plants. Plus it gets too large. Once you plant it, you will have it forever.
Periwinkle		Gets fungus so I will not plant is annual anymore. Do not like to spray fungicide.
California poppy		I love these at Clark gardens.
Firebush		This is good drought tolerant plant and gets large so will fill in blank spots in flowerbed. Looks good in pot also. I plant this plant in mid summer when spring annuals need to be removed. Wish the blooms were larger.
Nasturtium		Somewhat difficult to find perfect spot in flowerbed. Either too much sun and water requirements are difficult.
Ornamental cabbage		No flowers so I do not plant in winter flowerbed or pots. Great for cool season.
Bat face		This will get lost in landscape unless planted in groups of at least three plants.
Daisy 'Marguerite'		Is drought tolerant but takes up too much room.
Amaranthus		Does not bloom so I do not plant. I will always plant a blooming annual instead of an annual that just has interesting leaves.
Heliotrope		This does not do well for me. Cannot find place in flower bed that it is happy with.
Stock		Does not bloom long enough for me.
Sweet William		Have never grown this.
Calendula		Have never grown successfully.

		Tried to plant seed and did not come up.
Shrimp plant		This is sold so late in nursery; my landscape is already full so never have a place for it. Love the yellow color.

For more information on these annuals, refer to [the real dirt A Gardening Handbook for Parker County](#)