

Plant Guidance by Ecoregions

Ecoregion 4 – The Blackland Prairies

The fertile dark clay soils of the Blackland Prairies are some of the richest soils in the world. They are found in gently rolling to nearly level regions just west of and, in some cases, surrounded by the Post Oak Savannah of ecoregion 3. Pecan, cedar elm, various oaks and hackberry dot the landscape with some mesquite invading the southern reaches. The dominant grass of this true tall grass prairie is little bluestem, but big blue stem, Indiangrass, eastern gammagrass, switchgrass and side oats grama can also be found. Annual rainfalls of 30 to 40 inches and temperatures of 66 to 70 degrees are average for this region.

Today, this region is almost entirely under the plow, with only 5000 of the original 12 million acres remaining in true prairie condition. This region truly represents some of the rarest landscapes in Texas!

Like many prairie communities comprising the Great Plains of North America, the Blackland Prairies harbor few rare plants or animals, though the prairie itself is significantly in decline. The special and unique feature of this ecosystem today are the grasslands communities themselves.

People are often surprised to learn that trees comprised a part of the prairie ecosystems, but several tree species, including some of significant sizes, will show in this list.

Plants for the Blackland Prairies

- **Trees**
 - Pecan
 - Black Walnut
 - Sycamore
 - Eastern Cottonwood
 - Burr Oak
 - Shumard Red Oak
 - American Elm
 - Cedar Elm
 - Common Persimmon
 - Deciduous Holly
 - Red Mulberry
 - Carolina Buckthorn
 - Huisache
 - Red Buckeye
 - Eastern Redbud
 - Mexican Plum

- American Elderberry
 - Eastern Red Cedar
- **Shrubs**
 - American Beauty-berry
 - Buttonbush
 - Fragrant Sumac
 - Autumn Sage
- **Succulents**
 - Pale-leaf Yucca
- **Vines**
 - Cross-vine
 - Trumpet Creeper
 - Coral Honeysuckle
 - Virginia Creeper
 - May Pop
 - Prairie Rose
- **Grasses**
 - Big Bluestem
 - Sideoats grama
 - Canada Wildrye
 - Big Muhly
 - Indiangrass
 - Little Bluestem
- **Wildflowers**
 - Columbine
 - Purple Coneflower
 - Coralbean
 - Cardinal Flower
 - Turk's Cap
 - Scarlet Sage
 - Indian Paintbrush
 - Texas Bluebonnet
 - Brown-eyed Susan