

Some plants thrive when rainfall is abundant

Poorly-drained areas in the garden may be the curse of death for perennials that require well-drained soil for healthy growth, but some plants tolerate, or even thrive, in damp or soggy sites.

Marsh marigolds (*Caltha palustris*) are adaptable native wildflowers that grow in sun to part shade and prefer soil that never dries out. They even grow in standing water. In April and early May, marsh marigolds boast rich, bright yellow flowers that resemble buttercups. Shiny, dark green foliage grows between 8 and 18 inches tall.

Some types of iris are moisture lovers. Yellow flag iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) is adaptable. It grows happily in standing water and also tolerates drier soils. Plant it alongside a stream in full sun where it will form large clumps. Lovely yellow flowers with brown veining appear in May and June.

Japanese iris (*Iris ensata*) is an ideal choice for areas that are wet during spring rains and then dry out later in the season. The flowers, blooming in June and July, may be single or double in various shades of blue, pink, purple, yellow or white. It grows in sun to part shade and prefers rich, acidic soil. Add lots of organic matter and soil sulfur when planting.

Iris x robusta 'Gerald Darby' is a cross between *Iris versicolor* and *Iris virginica*. It features deep purple foliage in spring and tall, purplish-black stems that present violet-blue flowers in late spring or early summer.

Trollius europaeus, commonly called globeflower, prefers rich, moist soil and a location in sun to part shade. In spring to early summer, showy buttercup-like flowers appear in shades ranging from lemon yellow to golden orange over pretty, dark green foliage.

Consider Queen-of-the-Prairie (*Filipendula rubra*) for a bold accent in the landscape. It grows 4 to 6 feet tall and sports pink, fluffy flower plumes in July and August. A North American native, it favors moist to soggy organic soil in sun to part shade.

Obedient plant (*Physostegia virginiana*) is another North American native that grows best in moist to wet meadows or at the edge of woodlands. Obedient plants bloom from midsummer to early fall. Its snapdragon-like flowers can be lilac, white or rosy pink.

Bee balm (*Monarda*) is a vigorous grower in moist areas. They range in height from 2 to 4 feet and show off bright, shaggy heads of flowers in July and August in shades of red, purple and pink. You'll enjoy the butterflies, bees and hummingbirds that bee balm attracts to your perennial border or wildflower garden in sun to light shade.

Turtlehead (*Chelone lyonii* 'Hot Lips') is a native with a preference for moist to wet soils. From mid summer to fall, flower spikes resembling snapdragons are borne on stiff stems.

Depending on the variety, flowers may be purple, rose pink or white. Turtlehead prefers part shade and is a good choice for the border or waterside.

Gardeners need not give up on exercising their green thumbs in the moist areas of their landscapes. Water-loving plants can turn once drab landscapes to lush and beautiful!

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