

WISE

Why Ground Covers & Vines?

Wildfires are a part of life in southern Idaho. Firewise landscaping can help reduce the risk of wildfire burning your home. All plants are flammable, but some plants are more fire resistant than others.

It is best to avoid plants such as sage, pine and juniper which contain volatile oils or resins and are extremely flammable.

Many fire resistant vines like the *Akebia* (shown below) can be trained on arbors or fences or as a ground cover; flowers are reddish to purple-brown, about 1 inch across with a sweet fragrance; plants prefer full-part sun and moderate water use; 15' tall x



For more information:

Firewise Techniques For Homeowners and Communities
<http://www.firewise.org>

National Interagency Fire Center
<http://www.nifc.gov>

Firewise Plant Sources

Farwest Landscape & Garden Center
Boise, Idaho
(208) 853-4000
<http://www.farwestlandscape.net>

High Country Gardens
Santa Fe, New Mexico
(800) 925-9387
<http://www.highcountrygardens.com>

Mountain States Wholesale Nursery
Glendale, Arizona
(800) 840-8509
<http://www.mswvn.com>

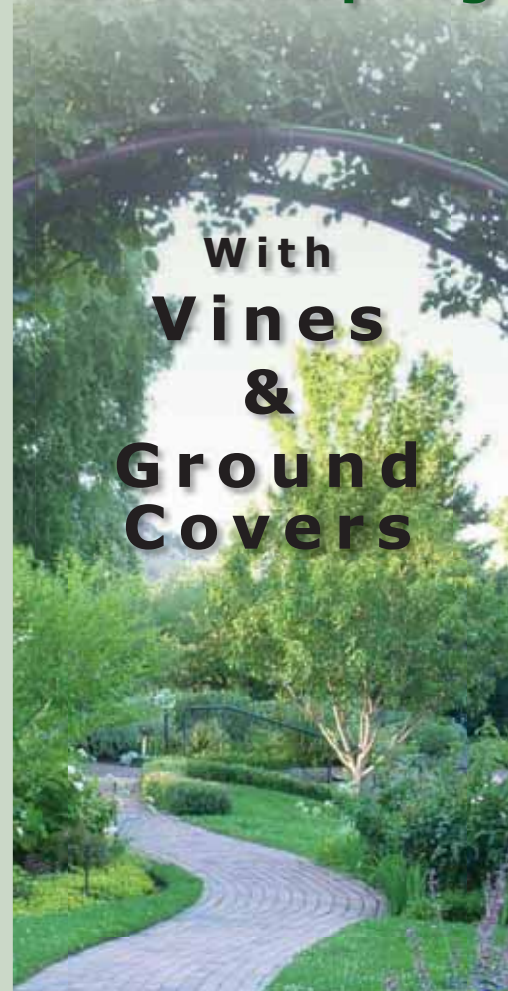
University of Idaho Nursery
Moscow, Idaho
(208) 885-3888
<http://www.seedlings.uidaho.com>

The Firewise demonstration garden is a cooperative project between the College of Western Idaho Horticulture program and the Bureau of Land Management. The garden can be viewed at the Idaho Botanical Garden.

Brochure developed by Brett Van Paeppegem, Roger Rosentreter, and Ann DeBolt. 2010
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FIREWISE Landscaping



With Vines & Ground Covers

FIRE

Attributes that decrease flammability:

- Low oil or resin content
- High moisture content
- Low growth form
- Compact growth form
- High soap or salt content
- Large leaves
- Green stems

Ground covers are an excellent choice for the first 4-5 feet around a home. They produce little or no flame length to ignite a house and do not require much water.

The chart below illustrates different types of plants and their relative fire resistance. Vines and ground covers are generally more fire resistant than other plant types, are inexpensive, and require little maintenance.

Conifers	Less Fire Resistant
Grasses	
Shrubs	
Deciduous trees	
Perennials	
Annuals	
Vines	
Ground covers	
Succulents	More Fire Resistant

Fire Resistant Ground Covers

Common Name	Botanical Name
Ajuga *	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>
Basket-of-gold	<i>Aurinia saxatilis</i>
Caucasica sage	<i>Artemisia caucasica</i>
Creeping phlox	<i>Phlox subulata</i>
Creeping thyme	<i>Thymus praecox</i>
Giant flowered soapwort	<i>Saponaria x lempergii</i>
Green mat penstemon	<i>Penstemon davidsonii</i>
Ground cover rose	<i>Rosa hybrid</i>
Hardy plumbago *	<i>Ceratostigma plumbaginoides</i>
Hens & chicks	<i>Echeveria</i> spp.
Hummelo lamb's ear	<i>Stachys monieri</i> 'Hummelo'
Japanese pachysandra *	<i>Pachysandra terminalis</i>
Lamb's ear	<i>Stachys byzantina</i>
Lily-of-the-valley *	<i>Convallaria majalis</i>
Mat penstemon	<i>Penstemon caespitosus</i>
Mother of thyme	<i>Thymus serpyllum</i>
Pink iceplant	<i>Delosperma cooperi</i>
Poppy mallow	<i>Callirhoe involucrata</i>
Pussytoes	<i>Antennaria</i> spp.
Rock soapwort	<i>Saponaria ocymoides</i>
Rockcross	<i>Arabis</i> spp.
Silver edged horehound	<i>Marrubium rotundifolium</i>
Snow-in-summer	<i>Cerastium tomentosum</i>
Turkish speedwell *	<i>Veronica liwanensis</i>

Need some shade *

Ground covers have a low growth form and are generally more compact, which facilitates higher fire resistance than many other plant types.



Giant flowered soapwort contains soap, which facilitates higher fire resistance. It blooms throughout the summer, and grows 6" tall x 48" wide.



AJUGA
(*Ajuga reptans*)

- Foliage turns purplish
- Purple blooms in spring
- Prefers part shade-shade
- Moderate - high water use
- 4" tall x 24" wide



PINK ICEPLANT
(*Delosperma cooperi*)

- Succulent bright green foliage
- Bright pink blossoms
- Prefers full-part sun
- Moderate water use
- 2" tall x 18" wide



CLEMATIS
(*Clematis* spp.)

- Medium fire resistance rating
- Fine twiggy stems
- Prefers full sun but shady feet
- Moderate water use
- 15' tall x 5-10' wide



SILVER LACE VINE
(*Polygonum aubertii*)

- Profuse white blooms
- Invasive in some areas
- Prefers full sun
- Low water use
- 25" tall x 25" wide



CAUCASICA SAGE
(*Artemisia caucasica*)

- Velvety silver-green foliage
- Great rock garden plant
- Prefers full sun
- Low water use
- 5" tall x 24" wide



PUSSYTOES
(*Antennaria* spp.)

- Soft silvery gray foliage
- Unique blooms
- Prefers full sun
- Low water use
- 6" tall x 18" wide



GRAPE VINE
(*Vitis* spp.)

- Large deep green leaves
- Edible fruit
- Prefers full-part sun
- Moderate water use
- Train & prune to variable sizes



TRUMPET VINE
(*Campsis radicans*)

- Large blooms in various colors
- Attracts hummingbirds
- Prefers full sun
- Low water use
- 20-40" tall x 15" wide



GREEN MAT PENSTEMON
(*Penstemon davidsonii*)

- Evergreen
- Compact glossy green foliage
- Low water use
- 2" tall x 12" wide



ROCK SOAPWORT
(*Saponaria ocymoides*)

- Profuse pink blooms
- High soap content
- Prefers full-part sun
- Moderate water use
- 24" tall x 24" wide



HONEYSUCKLE
(*Lonicera* spp.)

- Fragrant blooms, color varies
- Contains fire resistant soap
- Prefers full-part sun
- Moderate water use
- 12' tall x 9' wide



VIRGINIA CREEPER
(*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)

- Vibrant red fall color
- Can be invasive
- Fast growing
- Moderate water use
- 30' tall x 30' wide



LAMB'S EAR
(*Stachys byzantina*)

- Soft textured silvery foliage
- Prefers full-part sun
- Moderate water use
- 10" tall x 24" wide



SILVER EDGED HOREHOUND
(*Marrubium rotundifolium*)

- Soft foliage with silvery edges
- Prefers full sun
- Low water use
- 10" tall x 18" wide



HOPS VINE
(*Humulus lupulus*)

- Extremely fast growing
- Cut back to the ground yearly
- Prefers full sun
- Moderate water use
- 15' tall x 15' wide



WISTERIA
(*Wisteria* spp.)

- Purple, violet, pink, or white blooms hang up to 30" long
- Prefers full-part sun
- Moderate - high water use
- 30' tall x 30' wide

Fire Resistant Vines

Common Name	Botanical Name
Chocolate vine	<i>Akebia quinata</i>
Clematis	<i>Clematis</i> spp.
Climbing hydrangea	<i>Hydrangea anomala petiolaris</i>
Dragon Lady crossvine	<i>Bignonia capreolata</i> 'Dragon Lady'
Grapes	<i>Vitis</i> spp.
Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera</i> spp. & hybrids
Hops vine	<i>Humulus lupulus</i>
Kiwi vine	<i>Actinidia kolomikta</i>
Matrimony vine *	<i>Lycium barbarum</i>
Purpleleaf grape	<i>Vitis vinifera</i>
Silver lace vine *	<i>Polygonum aubertii</i>
Sweet autumn clematis	<i>Clematis terniflora</i>
Sweet pea *	<i>Lathyrus latifolius</i>
Trumpet honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera sempervirens</i>
Trumpet vine	<i>Campsis radicans</i>
Virginia creeper *	<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>
Wisteria	<i>Wisteria</i> spp.

Can be invasive *

Firewise landscapes use metal fencing materials to reduce flammability. Growing vines on a metal fence creates a 'Green Fence', which could help stop a wildfire. Many vines, like honeysuckle, are more fire resistant because of their high moisture content. This attractive vine blooms throughout the summer and attracts hummingbirds.



Honeysuckle contains soap and a large amount of moisture, which facilitates fire resistance. Available in various colors, it grows 12' tall x 9' wide.