



A light drinker

ALTMAN PLANTS

A sedum sampler

Many sedums look so different you'd never know they were so closely related. Here's a sampler of low-growing selections:

Sedum reflexum. A quick spreader with short gray-green leaves and stalks of yellow flowers in summer.

Sedum spurium. "Tricolor." So named because green leaves are mottled with cream and edged in pink. Pink flowers in late summer.

Sedum brevifolia. Strands of tiny leaves form a carpet of medium green.

Sedum rupestre. "Angelina." With a little stress — lots of sun and no water — tips turn orange or red. Yellow flowers in summer.

Sedum hispanicum. Almost flat species grows as a carpet of mint green tinged with red.

Sedum makinoi. Light-green leaves stand out against reddish stems. Tiny, star-shaped flowers.

Sedum spurium. "Dragon's Blood." Dark red flowers. Green foliage will turn orange-red when stressed.

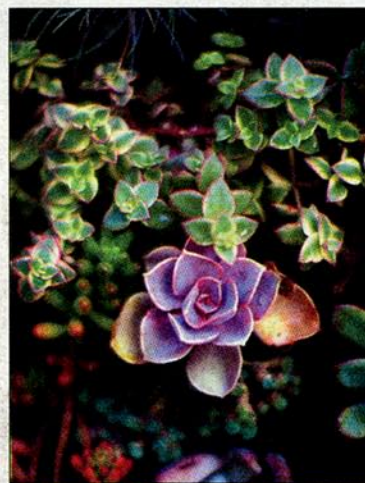
— CRAIG NAKANO

BY DEBORAH NETBURN AND CRAIG NAKANO

This sedum mat is an awesome sod alternative. Instead of blanketing space with thirsty grass, this mat is made of small succulents that use less water and are more interesting. Unfortunately, you can't walk on it, but who wants to step on something so attractive? These mats, not yet on the market, are being developed by Altman Plants, the largest succulent and cactus growers in the U.S.

Sedum (pronounced SEE-dum) is an evergreen ground cover that's frequently employed on green rooftops. It's a versatile, low-maintenance species that works well on slopes, in rock gardens, around pavers and as filler plants in containers.

Possible uses include throwing them up on bare roadside hills where they will require no more than biweekly watering, developers using them for green rooftops without the wait and big-box stores selling them rolled up and ready for plopping in the frontyard.



JAY L. CLENDENIN >>> LOS ANGELES TIMES

Succulents: Mats made of low-maintenance sedum, top, are being developed by Altman Plants as an alternative to water-intensive grass lawns. Above, a plant in bloom.