Native Plant Event: Plant Selection Guide

NATIVE PLANTS

Oakland County is home to beautiful and diverse natural spaces, including wide-open prairies, park-like savannas and diverse wetlands.

Over time and through development, many habitats have been degraded and separated into smaller spaces, resulting in "habitat fragmentation." Habitat fragmentation and impervious surfaces, such as concrete, increase runoff, flooding potential and establishment of non-native species, and reduces both the access to and the benefits of these natural areas for us and the wildlife we value.

By planting native species, we collectively increase the many benefits these native plants provide to us and our adjacent natural communities. In fact, many of the plants that make these natural communities special are still abundant across Oakland County and now they can be planted in your backyard!

BENEFITS OF NATIVE PLANTS

Native plants are well adapted to local climatic conditions and are an important part of our local ecosystems.

Some of benefits of native plants include:

- Established native plants require less water and fertilizer than non-native species
- Native plants help filter stormwater, reducing run-off and erosion, which contribute to flooding
- Native plants are more carbon friendly than traditional landscaping - less greenhouse gases are expended by sourcing local, they require less frequent replacement,and they are better at storing carbon
- Native plants provide food and shelter for local wildlife and pollinators
- Native plants foster biodiversity and benefit more wildlife species per plant than non-native plants

PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS

Before Pickup

If the area where you are planting has existing grass or weeds, remove these by hand before planting. If planting in a large area, you can use herbicide sparingly (wait two weeks after spraying to plant) or install weed barrier fabric.

After Pickup

After picking up your plants, unload from your car immediately and plant as soon as possible. While preparing to plant, keep plants out of direct sunlight and watered enough to keep soil slightly damp.

Planting

When you're ready to plant, arrange the plants on top of the soil in your intended design, see layout tips below:

- Plant the same species in a group to create an attractive focal point
- Plant taller species in the back and keep bloom season in mind
- Add a border or mulch as needed to maintain an intentional aesthetic garden or set-and-forget for a more wild, natural look.
- Space plants approximately 18 inches apart in holes that are slightly wider than the root ball of the plant, and bury the root ball about the same depth as it was in the pot – don't plant too deep.
- Water immediately and frequently during the first two weeks and during dry conditions throughout the first season.

NATIVE PLANT RESOURCES

Learn more about the native plants - including planting information, pollinator and other wildlife benefits, by following the QR code or the link to Oakland County Parks' page on native plants.

bit.ly/4vHPQHt

Do you have lawn and garden questions?
MSU Extension staff and volunteers are available to assist! You can upload your question and up to three photos anytime at https://www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/askan-expert or call our lawn and garden hotline Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 a.m. to noon at 888-678-3464.

Presented in partnership with **John Ball Zoo HabitatHero**.
Register your garden and see your impact!
Scan the QR code or visit https://bit.ly/4vYpjFS
Learn more: https://jbzoo.org/habitat-hero/

Revised 04/26

✓	Common Name	Scientific Name	Bloom Color	Bloom Period (April / May / June / July / Aug. / Sept. / Oct.)	Height (ft.)	Climate	Benefits
	Alum Root	Heuchera Americana	White/ Green		1’-2’	Shade	
	Beardtongue	Penstemon Digitalis	White		3’-4’	Moist/Sunny	
	Bee Balm	Monarda Fistulosa	Purple		2’-4’	Sunny/Sandy	
	Big Leaf Aster	Eurybia Macrophylla	Violet		1’-3’	Shade	
	Black Eyed Susan	Rudbeckia Fulgida	Yellow		2’-3’	Average	
	Black-eyed Susan	Rudbeckia Hirta	Yellow		1’-3’	Sunny/Sandy	
	Blue Lobelia	Lobelia Siphilitica	Blue		1’-3’	Moist/Sunny	
	Bluestem Goldenrod	Solidago Caesia	Yellow		2’-3’	Average	
	Butterfly Weed	Asclepias Tuberosa	Orange		1’-3’	Sunny/Sandy	
	Cardinal Flower	Lobelia Cardinalis	Red		3’-4’	Average	
	Columbine	Aquilegia canadensis	Red		1’-3’	Shade	
	Culver’s Root	Veronicastrum Virginicum	White		3’-5’	Average	
	Early Meadow Rue	Thalictrum Dioicum	Green		1’-2’	Shade	
	Fox Sedge	Carex Vulpinoidea	Green/ Yellow		20”-40”	Moist/Sunny	
	Giant St. John’s Wort	Hypericum Ascyron	Yellow		2’-5’	Moist/Sunny	
	Golden Alexanders	Zizia Aurea	Yellow		1’-3’	Moist/Sunny	
	Harebell	Campanula Rotundifolia	Blue		6”-20”	Sunny/Sandy	
	Heart-Leaved Aster	Symphyotrichum Cordifolium	Blue		2’-5’	Shade	
	Horsemint	Monarda Fistulosa	Purple		2’-4’	Sunny/Sandy	
	Ironweed	Vernonia Missurica	Purple		4’-6’	Average	
	Joe-Pye Weed	Eutorochium Maculatum	Pink		2’-10’	Moist/Sunny	
	Little Bluestem	Schizachyrium Scoparium	Green/ Purple		1’-3’	Average	
	Marsh Blazing Star	Liatris Spicata	Purple		1’-2’	Moist/Sunny	
	Muskingum Sedge	Carex Muskingumensis	Purple		1’-3’	Moist/Sunny	
	Nodding Wild Onion	Allium Cernuum	Pink		1’-2’	Moist/Sunny	
	Penstemon	Penstemon Hirsutus	Blue		1’-2’	Sunny/Sandy	
	Prairie Dock	Silphium Terebinthinaceum	Yellow		6’-8’	Sunny/Sandy	
	Prairie Drop-Seed	Sporobolus Heterolepus	Green		2’-3’	Moist/Sunny	
	Prairie Hearted -Leaved Aster	Symphyotrichum Oolentangiense	Blue		2’-3’	Sunny/Sandy	

✓	Common Name	Scientific Name	Bloom Color	Bloom Period	Height (ft.)	Climate	Benefits
				April May June July Aug. Sept. Oct.			
	Purple Love Grass	Eragrostis Spectabilis	Purple		12”-30”	Sunny/Sandy	
	Richweed	Collinsonia Canadensis	Yellow		2’-4’	Shade	
	Riddell’s Goldenrod	Solidago Riddellii	Yellow		24”-40”	Average	
	Showy Goldenrod	Solidago Speciosa	Yellow		2’-5’	Sunny/Sandy	
	Smooth Aster	Symphyotrichum Laeve	Blue		1’-3’	Sunny/Sandy	
	Southern Blue Flag	Iris Virginica	Blue		2’-3’	Moist/Sunny	
	Spiderwort	Tradescantia Ohiensis	Purple		18”-40”	Moist/Sunny	
	Stiff Goldenrod	Solidago Rigida	Yellow		3’-5’	Average	
	Swamp Milkweed	Asclepias Incarnata	Pink		3’-4’	Moist/Sunny	
	White Snakeroot	Ageratina Altissima	White		3’-5’	Shade	
	White Wild Indigo	Baptisia lactea	White		2’-4’	Average	
	Wild Strawberry	Fragaria Virginiana	White		4”-8”	Sunny/Sandy	
	Yellow Coneflower	Ratibida Pinnata	Yellow		3’-7’	Sunny/Sandy	
	Yellow Giant Hyssop	Agastache Nepetoides	Yellow/ White		4’-6’	Shade	
	Zig Zag Goldenrod	Solidago Flexicaulis	Yellow		1’-2’	Shade	

*Denotes a biennial species, all other species are perennial

These plants have documented benefits for butterflies, native bees and other pollinators as reservoirs of nectar, as host plants for caterpillars and because they attract other beneficial insects.

These plants have documented benefits for birds, as sources of nutrition from the seed they produce, insects found on these species, and for nest-building.

These plants are considered deer resistant and may be less favorable than other species for deer to browse.

MAINTENANCE

- In the fall, allow seeds to develop and spread before trimming back. Plants can be cut within a few inches of the ground in either fall or spring, and plant material can be left over winter for bird and other wildlife habitat.
- If plants start to exhibit signs of disease, trim back or thin to promote air flow during the growing season
- Remove weeds as they sprout for the first few years after planting or use mulch to reduce weeds. Less weeding will be required over time.
- No fertilization of plants is necessary and fertilizer will likely make weed growth more vigorous.
- Mulch can be used in the first few years for additional weed suppression and for aesthetics as your plants grow.
- Plants will naturally spread via seed.
- Plants will reach full maturity (size) within 2-3 years.