

Native Plants Guide

Our own backyards can help restore biodiversity of our native bees, butterflies and birds by simply adding some plants, reducing your lawn size and doing some fun projects!

Native Plants

American Plum



Small tree with white flowers blooming in April-May, then red fruit in Aug & Sept. 18+ birds

Pokeweed or Milkweed



Lover of birds & monarch butterflies, this commonly misunderstood “weed” is critical to Monarch Butterflies

Anise-Scented Goldenrod



Perennial herb has large heads of golden flowers. Grows in full sun to light shade, and in dry soils. Supports bees, 121 butterfly & 18+ bird species

Black-Eyed-Susan

(*Rudbeckia hirta*)



Annual grows 1-2 ft tall in full sun. Resistant to deer, attracts birds & pollinating insects

Tips to make your yard a Biodiversity HotSpot!

1. Plant Native Plants

Native Plants support our local birds, bugs and ecosystems. Giving them the food they have adapted to over the milenia helps support their success.

- a. Find native plants that support our local birds.
<https://www.audubon.org/native-plants>
- b. Find native plants that support our local butterflies and insects
<https://www.nwf.org/NativePlantFinder/>
- c. Find Jersey Friendly Plants:
<https://www.jerseyyards.org/plant>
- d. Native plants can be hard to find at big box plant stores so check:
 - i. April 22-28: Native Plant Sale with Pine Pinelands Direct will donate portion of the proceeds to Pinelands Preservation Alliance. Online can be shipped to your home.<https://www.pinelandsdirect.com/>
 - ii. Native Plant nurseries
<http://www.plantnative.org/ndetook.htm>
 - iii. <https://www.jerseyyards.org/jersey-friendly-plants/where-to-buy-native-plants/>
 - iv. Local Audubon foundation
 - v. Milkweed seeds for the Monarch Butterfly:
<https://monarchwatch.org/ways/>

2. Remove Invasive Plants

Although these plants are in your lawn “naturally” or sold at your plant store, they can spread without providing food to native species while eliminating native plants.

- a. NJ invasive list:
<https://www.nj.gov/dep/njisc/FactSheets/>
- b. Commonly sold plants that are invasive:
<https://www.epicgardening.com/invasive-species-sold-at-garden-center/>

Invasive Plants

English Ivy



Disrupts both ground plants as well as can engulf and kill trees.

Instead Try: Red Bearberry

(*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)



Mat-forming shrubs produce flowers that later turn into red berries. Grows in full sun to shade, and dry to moist sandy, acid soils.

Japanese Honeysuckle



It spreads and out-competes native plants while vines strangle stems and trunks.

Instead Try: Trumpet Honeysuckle vine



This vine needs a trellis to grow. Blooms best in full sun to partial shade, and prefers moist, rich soils. Attracts bees & butterflies

Instead Try: Highbush Blueberry

(*Vaccinium corymbosum*)



There are a variety of native berry bushes that are a great replacement!

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Arrowwood

(*Viburnum dentatum*)



Deciduous shrub with white flowers, then black berries and finally red foliage.
Attracts birds, native bees, butterflies and is deer resistant

Blue Wild Indigo

(*Baptisia australis*)



Tall, bushy perennial with lupine-like, purple flowers, which bloom May-June. It tolerates drought, poor soils and is deer resistant. Attracts pollinators

American Holly (*Ilex opaca*)



Grow your own mistletoe!

Moss Phlox



Spreading, mat-forming evergreen perennial. Can be a variety of colors which bloom March-May enjoying full sun. Use for edging, cascading walls, and as a groundcover

Little Bluestem



Beautiful Blue/green ornamental grass

Tips Continued:

3. Lawn Tips

- Reduce lawn size
- Set your lawn mower to above 3 inches to avoid killing insects
- Mow from the middle out, or from one side to the other to help give a chance for bugs to leave the lawn before getting killed.
- Reduce fertilizers & pesticides, use organic alternative and spray when insects are not as active

4. Plant ground cover beds under Trees

Caterpillars and butterflies use trees as part of their life cycle. If you mow lawns under trees they will die or get eaten. By planting small root groundcovers under trees can help save these species.

5. Crafts

a. Bee Hotel

Native bees mostly live in hives in the soil or in burrows in plant matter. By mimicking this environment in bee hotels will help protect these important pollinators as well as help your garden!

b. Motion activated security lights

Nocturnal insects can be killed by being attracted to bright outdoor lights. So change your outdoor lights to only turn on when motion is detected.

c. Water feature

Birds and bees need access to a source of water during hot days and during dry spells. When getting a bird bath consider adding pebbles so it also can be accessible to bees!

d. Collect rainwater from your roof to water your plants

Rain water contains more oxygen, carbon dioxide and nitrogen than tap water that is great for plants. It also allows for you to use less water saving you money and benefiting your plants!

<https://www.theconservationfoundation.org/images/Rain%20Barrel%20Installation1.pdf>

Invasive Plants

Tree of Heaven



Host of the spotted lantern fly, fast growing and smothering other plants.

Instead Try: Pagoda Dogwood



Small, perennial, deciduous tree or typically grows 15 to 25 feet. This plant grows in partial shade, and in cool, moist, acidic, well-drained soils, though it can tolerate poor soils and clay.

Garlic Mustard



This plant not only shade out native understory flora but also produce compounds that inhibit seed germination of other species