

## For more information

### Places and organizations in Pennsylvania

Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania, 614 Dorseyville Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238-1618, Tel (412) 963-6100, Fax (412) 963-6761, [www.enviroweb.org/orgs/aswp](http://www.enviroweb.org/orgs/aswp)

Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve, Washington Crossing Historic Park, PO Box 685, New Hope, PA 18938-0685, Tel (215) 862-2924, Fax (215) 862-1846, Native plant preserve, plant sales, native seed, educational programs, [www.bhwp.org](http://www.bhwp.org)

Brandywine Conservancy, Brandywine River Museum, PO Box 141, Chadds Ford, PA 19317, Tel (610) 388-2700, Fax (610) 388-3814, Native seeds, plants, garden, and bookstore; Environmental Management Center offers planning and conservation services, [www.brandywinemuseum.org](http://www.brandywinemuseum.org)

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; Bureau of Forestry; PO Box 8552, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8552, Tel (717) 787-3444, Fax (717) 783-5109, Invasive plant brochure; list of native plant & seed suppliers in PA; list of rare, endangered, threatened species, [www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry)

Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania, 9414 Meadowbrook Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19118, Tel (215) 247-5777, [www.upenn.edu/morris](http://www.upenn.edu/morris), PA Flora Project Website; Arboretum and gardens (some natives), educational programs, PA Flora Project, [www.upenn.edu/paflora](http://www.upenn.edu/paflora)

"Native Plants in the Landscape" Conference (each June at Millersville, Lancaster County, PA); Millersville University Dept. of Continuing Education, Tel (717) 872-3030, Fax (717) 871-2022

Pennsylvania Landscape & Nursery Association, 1707 S. Cameron Street, Harrisburg, PA, 17104, Tel (717) 238-1673, Fax (717) 238-1675, [www.plna.com](http://www.plna.com)

Pennsylvania Native Plants Society, 1001 East College Avenue, State College, PA 16801

Penn State Cooperative Extension, Department of Horticulture, 102 Tyson Building, University Park, PA, 16802, Tel (814) 865-2571, Fax (814) 863-6139 For local information, contact the extension office in your county listed in the blue section of your phone book or by locating their office on the Web at [www.extension.psu.edu](http://www.extension.psu.edu)

Pittsburgh Garden Center Place; 1059 Shady Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15232, Tel (412) 441-4442, Fax (412) 665-2368, Green Line (412) 665-2364, Education programs, [trfn.cplgh.org/garden](http://trfn.cplgh.org/garden)

Rodale Institute, 611 Siegfriedale Road, Kutztown, PA 19530, Tel (610) 683-1400, Fax (610) 683-8548, Gardens, landscaping brochures, organic gardening and farming events and products, [www.rodaleinsitute.org](http://www.rodaleinsitute.org)

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, 209 Fourth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222, Tel (412) 288-2777, Fax (412) 281-1792, [www.pacconserve.org](http://www.pacconserve.org)

## Other Internet Sites

### Look for many other listings under "native plants" on the Internet.

Plant Conservation Alliance, [www.nps/plants/allen](http://www.nps/plants/allen)  
Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, [www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org)  
Center for Plant Conservation, Missouri Botanical Garden, [www.mobot.org/cpc](http://www.mobot.org/cpc)

The Nature Conservancy, [www.tnc.org](http://www.tnc.org)  
The New England Wildflower Society, [www.newfs.org/index.html](http://www.newfs.org/index.html)  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Green Landscaping with Native Plants, [www.epa.gov/greenacres/](http://www.epa.gov/greenacres/)

## Books

Bir, Richard. *Growing and Propagating Shrub, Native Woody Plants*. University of North Carolina Press. ISBN# 0-8078-4366-0

Dirr, M.A. 1990. *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants*, 4 ed. Stipes Publishing Co; 10-12 Chester St; Champaign, IL 61820. ISBN# 0-87563-347-1

Ferrenela, Viki. 1993. *Wildflowers in Your Garden*. New York: Regina Ryan, Random House. ISBN# 0-679-41453-3

Highshoe, G.L. 1988. *Native Trees, Shrubs, and Vines for Urban and Rural America*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold. ISBN# 0-442-23274-8

Mickel, John. 1994. *Ferres for American Gardens*. New York: Macmillan. ISBN# 0-02-584491-1

Newcomb, Lawrence. 1977. *Newcomb's Wildflower Guide*. Boston: Little, Brown, & Co. ISBN# 0-316-60441-0

Otlesen, Carole. 1995. *The Native Plant Primer*. New York: Harmony Books. ISBN# 0-517-59215-0

Petrides, G.A. 1972. *A Field Guide to Trees and Shrubs*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. Peterson Field Guide Series. ISBN# 0-395-17579-8

Phillips, H.R. 1985. *Growing and Propagating Wild Flowers*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. ISBN# 0-8078-4131-5

Rhoads, A.F. and Klein, W.M. 1993. *The Vascular Flora of Pennsylvania. Annotated Checklist and Atlas*. American Philosophical Soc.; 104 S. Fifth St.; Philadelphia, PA 19106. ISBN# 0-87169-207-4

Rhoads, A.F. and Block, T.A. 2000. *The Plants of Pennsylvania, An Illustrated Manual*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania. ISBN# 0-8122-3535-5

Roberts, E.A. and Rehmann, Elsa. 1996. *American Plants for American Gardens*. Athens: University of Georgia Press. ISBN# 0-8203-1851-5

Sein, Sara. 1993. *Noah's Garden, Restoring the Ecology of Our Own Back Yards*. Houghton Mifflin. ISBN# 0-395-6373-8

Strasbaugh, P.D. and Core, E.L. *Flora of West Virginia*. Grantsville, WV: Seneca Books, INC. ISBN# 0-89092-010-9

## Landscaping with Native Plants



## in Pennsylvania

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Edward G. Rendell, Governor  
Department of Conservation & Natural Resources  
Michael DiBerardinis, Secretary



## So what exactly is a "Native Plant"?



A native plant is one which occurred within the state before settlement by Europeans. Native plants include ferns and clubmosses; grasses, sedges, rushes, and their kin; flowering perennials; annuals which only live one year; biennials, which have a two year life cycle; and, of course, the woody trees, shrubs, and vines which covered "Penn's Woods" when the first settlers arrived. There are over 2,100 native plant species known in Pennsylvania. An introduced or non-native plant is one that has been brought into the state and become established. At the turn of the 21st century, about 1,300 species of non-native plants existed in Pennsylvania. That is 37 percent of Pennsylvania's total plant flora (which is about 3,400 species), and more introduced plants are identified every year.

An invasive plant is a species that has become a weed pest. One that grows aggressively, spreads, and displaces other plants. Although some native plants are introduced from other continents, leaving behind pests, diseases, predators, and other natural controls. While new plants are coming into Pennsylvania, invasive plants are being lost to habitat destruction, invasive plants, and introduced pests and diseases. By 2000, 5 percent of Pennsylvania native plant species had been eliminated and another 25 percent were in danger of becoming so. The good news is that action can be taken to protect and enhance the remaining diversity of beautiful and often useful plant species which grace our Commonwealth.

**Protect native plant communities and minimize habitat destruction**  
**Learn more about native plants**  
**Landscape with native plants**  
**Buy nursery-propagated native plants**  
**Do not remove native plants from the wild**  
**Practice responsible landscaping techniques**

**1. Go Native with these 6 basics:**  
**1. Protect native plant communities and minimize habitat destruction**

The most important guideline is to conserve already existing areas of native vegetation as a whole, functioning unit. The easiest, least expensive, and best way to conserve Pennsylvania's plant heritage is to protect existing native plant communities from further disturbance. If disturbance is necessary, strive for minimum

habitat destruction. In some cases ecological restoration may be necessary, which can include planting native species, removing invasive introduced species, controlling erosion, and loosening soil compaction.

## 2. Landscape with native plants

Native plant communities have been destroyed in many areas and therefore landscaping is required; parks, yards, streets, and campuses, for example. Well-chosen native plants perform well in these landscapes. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)-Bureau of Forestry (BOF) recommends avoiding rare, endangered, and threatened plants and instead choosing native plant species which grow commonly throughout the state. These hardy and adaptable plants do well in a wide variety of conditions and have a much better chance of success in gardens. For a list of recommended native plants easily purchased, see the inside of this brochure. If you do not want all natives, plant adapted introduced plants suited for the site, colonial annuals, or flowering plants that will not escape and become environmental weeds.

## 3. Learn more about native plants

Learn what plants are native in your area. This brochure lists just a few of the resources for this region, but there are many more. Many field guides can get you started.

## 4. Buy nursery-propagated native plants

Most retail nurseries and mail-order catalogs now offer native plants. The more consumers request native plants, the more this supply will grow. If you want guaranteed ornamental characteristics, cultivars (named varieties) are available in some cases; for instance, New England Aster has a cultivar named 'Purple Dome,' which was selected for shorter height and showier flowers. Cultivars should be predictable in attributes like height, color, blooming period, or absence of seed pods/thorns—qualities many gardeners want. If your goal is genetic diversity, however, ask for straight species, not cultivars, grown from local seed sources. Plants grown from seed have much more variety than cloned cultivars.

## 5. Do not remove native plants from the wild

Taking native plants from the wild depletes native populations. Also, many wild-collected plants do not survive transplanting. Prevent wild-collecting of plants by making sure that plants you buy are propagated at a nursery, or by starting plants yourself from a local seed supply (Collect seed only with the property owner's permission). Ask the DCNR-BOF for a list of native plant and seed sources in Pennsylvania.

## 6. Practice responsible landscaping techniques

The first rule of responsible landscaping is to plant the right plants in the right environment: never introduce invasive plants into your landscape that will aggressively spread off your property and invade native plant communities. They can drastically alter ecosystems and give you and your neighbors maintenance headaches for years to come. Ask the DCNR-BOF for the brochure "Invasive Plants in Pennsylvania."

When landscaping with native plants, it is important to choose plants that will grow well at the site: wet or dry, shade or sun, acid or neutral soil. A good trick is to notice which native plants are thriving nearby, and to use those clues to guide plant selection. This brochure lists some information, but more is available from plant nurseries, catalogs, books, or the Internet.

**For soil fertility, compost and mulch** of leaves or grass clippings provide slow release nutrients. Chemical fertilizers often provide too many nutrients too quickly for native plants, and this flush of nutrients gives weeds a competitive edge. Proper site preparation begins with a soil test before applying fertilizer. Keep the soil covered to prevent weeds. Remove invasive plants nearby. Take out severely diseased plants, or ones with insect infestations. Many native plants attract beneficial insects which help control pests, so try creating habitat for "good bugs."

## In Summary

Native plants help create beautiful landscapes that provide wildlife habitat and reduce maintenance costs. Their greatest benefit, though, may be the increased awareness about which plants are native and which are not, and the protection of remaining native plant communities. Children and adults can have a high-quality educational experience right in their own backyard, park, school, or workplace. Loss of native plant communities is not just in the tropical rainforest!

Revised from original text by:



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