

City of Oakwood Native Plant Information Sheet

WHAT are native plants?

- Native plants are those that evolved naturally over thousands of years in a region alongside the local fungi, birds, insects, and mammals that depend on these plants for food and shelter.

WHY plant with native plants?

- Native plants provide a superior source of food for wildlife; they bring a diversity of birds, bees, butterflies, and other insects to your garden. Many local insects and their larvae can only utilize native plants.
- They require less maintenance, less water once established, and no fertilizer.
- Many native plants have deep roots that provide erosion control and filter out chemicals, improving the quality of our water. They improve air quality by trapping more carbon dioxide in the soil.
- Non-native plants may outcompete native species and can become invasive.

HOW to begin planting with native plants

- Review the city's Landscape Management regulations in Chapter 551 of the Codified Ordinances at <https://oakwoodohio.gov/documents/city-ordinance-chapter-5-general-offenses-code/>.
- Choose plants native to our area. For a detailed list by area code, visit <https://www.nwf.org/NativePlantFinder/Plants>. Additional information is available at the EPA's "What to Plant" website at <https://www.epa.gov/watersense/what-plant>.
- Purchase plants from local native plant nurseries when possible. Some commercial nurseries may use systemic pesticides. Talk to your nursery about their stock.
- If planting cultivars or nativars, choose those that have the same color and structure of leaves and flowers as the original native species.
- Choose the right plant for the right place. Consider the soil, light and water needs of the plants, as well as the expected height and form, keeping in mind the city's height and encroachment restrictions.
- Plant in groups for larger drifts of color and choose plants that bloom at different seasonal times. Add pollinator friendly annuals to assure continuous blooms.
- Plant native trees and shrubs too – many provide early season pollen and nectar and are hosts for many butterfly larvae.
- Frame your garden areas with defined borders, paths, or fences. Be mindful that paved paths and certain fences require a zoning permit prior to installation.

PROTECT your ecosystem!

- Let some leaves remain as mulch in your garden beds and defined areas at the base of trees. As the leaves compost, they will provide important nutrients for the soil as well as protection for overwintering butterflies and bees. City codes require that leaves be raked and removed from turf-grass areas.
- Allow native grasses and flower stalks to stand until spring; they provide food and habitat for over-wintering insects and birds as well as some winter interest.
- Find alternatives to using pesticides as they can kill all insects, including beneficial ones. For more information, visit <https://www.usda.gov/peoples-garden/gardening-advice/ipm>.
- Remove invasive plant species (e.g., Amur honeysuckle, Callery pear, Japanese barberry) and replace with non-invasive, preferably native plants.
(https://www.oipc.info/uploads/5/8/6/5/58652481/alternatives_to_ohio_invasive_plant_species.pdf)