



Notes from the Homeowner

My journey into the world of native plants began when I trained as an Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist (OCVN) in 2014. Before then, I had a conventional yard with turf grass and non-native ornamentals. I remember buying "insect resistant" plants to keep my yard looking its best. After learning the importance of biodiversity and how native plants are vital to the local ecosystem (i.e., birds and insects, including pollinators), I realized that my yard was relatively sterile and non-living, like I'd been planting plastic.

I didn't tear up my yard, and I didn't spend a lot of money. Instead, in 2015, I started gradually adding native plants, shrubs and trees to my backyard. Fortunately, there are now more places available to purchase them. I became increasingly aware of more environmental-friendly practices that let my ecosystem flourish. Instead of blindly weeding, I watch new sprouts to see if they are native. Instead of buying/applying so much mulch, I keep fall leaf litter in the garden, which supports over-wintering insects as well as providing insulation and nutrients back to the soil. I leave tall plants and grasses to host native bees.

I no longer treat the lawn and leave it largely alone: the clover provides nitrogen to soil, dandelions and violets provide sustenance to pollinators, especially in early spring. I'm not a purist; I continue to work with what's here and love watching the seasonal changes and wildlife.

For further information read:

(Direct links to articles at wrightlibrary.org/yardtour1)

*Bring Back the Pollinators (Xerces.org)

*Leave the Leaves (Xerces.org)

*Moving Beyond Flowers: Natural Nesting Habitat for Bees and other Insects (Xerces.org)

*The Benefits of Clover, Dandelions and Lawn Weeds (TheSpruce.com)

*We're Thinking Over Why We Kill Clover (lawnstarter.com)

A few phone apps I use for plant ID:

*iNaturalist

*Seek by iNaturalist

*PictureThis

Native Plantings

SPRING EPHEMERALS

Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*)
Virginia Bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*)
Sharp-lobed Hepatica (*Hepatica nobilis acuta*)
Trout Lily (*Erythronium americanum*)
Dutchman's Britches (*Dicentra cucullaria*)

PERENNIAL WILDFLOWERS

Golden Alexander (*Zizia aurea*)
Meadow Anemone (*Anemone canadensis*)
Heart-Leafed Aster (*Symphyotrichum cordifolium*)
Wild Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*)
Great Blue Lobelia (*Lobelia siphilitica*)
Butterfly Milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)
Zigzag Goldenrod (*Solidago flexicaulis*)
Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*)
Black-Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*)
Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
Canada Goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*)
Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)
Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*)
Blue False Indigo (*Baptisia australis*)
Spotted Joe-Pye (*Eupatoriadelphus maculatus*)
Prairie Ironweed (*Vernonia fasciculata*)
Hairy Beard-Tongue (*Penstemon hirsutus*)
Rattlesnake-Master (*Eryngium yuccafolium*)
New England Aster (*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*)
Stiff Goldenrod (*Oligoneuron rigidum*)
Oxeye Sunflower (*Heliopsis helianthoides*)
Wild Bergamot/Bee Balm (*Monarda fistulosa*)
Downy Skullcap (*Scutellaria incana*)
Celandine (wood) Poppy (*Stylophorum diphyllum*)
Wild Ginger (*Asarum canadense*)
Black Cohosh (*Actaea racemosa*)
Jack-in-the-Pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*)
Virginia Waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum virginianum*)
Anise Hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*)

SEDGES

Plantain-Leaf (Seersucker) Sedge (*Carex plantaginea*)
James' Sedge (*Carex jamesii*)

GRASSES

Indian Grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*)
Wild Rye (*Elymus* sp)

FERNS

Ostrich Fern (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*)
Christmas Fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*)

SHRUBS

Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*)
Shrubby Cinquefoil (*Dasiphora fruticosa*)
Sweetspire-Little Henry cultivar (*Itea virginica*)
American Strawberry Bush (*Euonymus americanus*)
American Bladdernut (*Staphylea trifolia*)

TREES

Pagoda Dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*)
Serviceberry (*Amelanchier* sp)
Shingle Oak (*Quercus imbricaria*)
Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*)