



MAKE YOUR GARDEN "GREEN" WITH NATIVE PLANTS

Native plant gardens should feature a variety of species and plant types, including wildflowers, ferns, shrubs and grasses. Design considerations can also include texture, long-term growth, and stunning natural beauty throughout the year.

Why use native plants in your landscape?

- *Wildlife Habitat:* Native birds, butterflies, and other animals depend on native plants for food, cover, and habitat.
- *Low Maintenance:* Native plants are well-suited to local soils and climate, and require relatively little upkeep once established.
- *Conserve Nature:* Preserve the diversity and health of our local natural heritage by using regional flora in your garden.
- *Local Character:* NYC has its own regional flavor and distinct assemblage of native plants. Using local flora allows gardens to provide a powerful sense of place.

All plants listed are native to New York and hardy to zone 5.

Sunny window boxes (and other dry sites)

These plants naturally thrive in low nutrient soils (like sandy sites). The container should comfortably hold at least 5" of soil, filled with a growing medium that will drain well, and placed in site with lots of sun.

Suggested Species

- Wild columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*) Grows to 18 in. Unique red and yellow flowers attract hummingbirds in spring.
- Butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) Grows to 2 ft. Bright orange flowers in summer. Attracts butterflies. Foliage is a favorite food of Monarch caterpillars.

- Smooth blue aster (*Symphotrichum laeve*) Grows to 3 ft. Blue-violet aster flowers in late summer/fall.. Attracts butterflies. Smooth blue-green foliage and stems.
- Spotted bee-balm (*Monarda punctata*) Grows to 3 ft. Creamy yellow blossoms with purple spots in summer. Attracts butterflies & hummingbirds.
- Prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia humifusa*) Grows to 1ft., prickly evergreen stems "paddles". Large yellow flowers in summer, red fleshy edible fruits in fall.
- Birdfoot violet (*Viola pedata*) Grows to 6 in. Lilac-violet flowers with conspicuous orange centers in spring above dissected foliage. Attracts butterflies.
- Purple lovegrass (*Eragrostis spectabilis*) Grows to 2 ft. Airy purple flowers in late summer.

Where to purchase native plants

- *NYC retail:* Gowanus Nursery, Brooklyn gowanusnursery.com
- *NYC wholesale:* Greenbelt Native Plant Center nycgovparks.org/sub_about/parks_divisions/gnpc/index.html
- *Mail order:* Prairie Nursery www.prairienursery.com
- Also try native plant society seasonal plant sales (usually spring and fall)