

# NATIVE FLOWERS

## For Gardening and Landscaping



Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

### Smooth White Beardtongue (*Penstemon digitalis*)

Also known as foxglove beardtongue. Beautiful addition to pollinator garden or perennial border. Long blooming period in early summer. "Husker Red" is popular cultivar with dark red leaves.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Dry - moist, well drained	12 - 36"	3-9



### Canada Anemone (*Anemone canadensis*)

Dense clusters of bright green leaves topped by classic 1" white anemone flowers. Makes splendid tall groundcover for open damp areas. Long bloom period in late spring.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Dry - wet, flood tolerant	12 - 24"	2-9



### Northern Blueflag (*Iris versicolor*)

Narrow sword-shaped leaves stay attractive all season. Spring bloomer with several blue-violet flowers per stem.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Moist - wet, tolerant of standing water	24 - 36"	3-9



### Joe-Pye Weed (*Eutrochium* spp.)

Several similar species with tall leafy stems and flat to rounded heads of small pink flowers. Butterfly magnet in mid-late summer. Shorter cultivars now widely available. An essential plant for butterfly and pollinator gardens.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Moist, flood tolerant	36 - 72"	4-8



### Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*)

Essential food plant for eastern monarch caterpillars. Bold, handsome foliage and baseball-sized spheres of fragrant pink flowers. Spreading roots can be controlled with simple root barrier.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Full sun	Dry - moist, flood tolerant	36 - 60"	4-9



### Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)

Clumping milkweed, popular for rain and butterfly gardens. Easy to grow with adequate moisture. Smaller and less assertive than common milkweed. Valuable monarch resource.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Full sun - light shade	Moist - wet, flood tolerant	24 - 48"	3-9



## Great Blue Lobelia (*Lobelia siphilitica*)

Late summer beauty with sturdy spire of blue flowers on leafy stem. Easier to grow than related cardinal flower. May last for decades in garden as long as no competition. Will self-sow on bare disturbed soil. A bumblebee favorite.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Full sun - shade	Moist - wet, flood tolerant	24 - 36"	3-9



## Wild Bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*)

Grows in clumps, less spreading than many related bee-balms. Late summer lavender flowers draw bees and butterflies. Aromatic foliage. May get powdery mildew in damp weather.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Full sun	Dry - moist, flood and drought tolerant	36 - 48"	3-9



## Sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*)

This popular garden perennial with its many cultivars is actually a native wildflower often found on prairies and open fields. Valuable butterfly and pollinator plant. Long blooming period in late summer. Wild plants are tall with yellow flowers, but garden cultivars, available in many colors, are shorter and more compact. The common name comes from historic use of dried leaves as snuff.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Moist to wet, tolerant of standing water	36 - 60"	3-8



## Smooth Blue Aster (*Symphyotrichum laeve*)

Native asters are a valuable late summer resource for butterflies and pollinators. Smooth blue aster has numerous 3/4 inch blue flowers and is a mainstay for a native aster garden. Combine with purple New England aster and heath aster with its tiny white flowers.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Dry - moist	12 - 36"	3-9



## Bluets (*Houstonia caerulea*)

Tiny spring wildflower that can form delicate carpets of pale blue on dry sunny sites. A classic rock garden plant and groundcover.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Full sun - light shade	Moist to dry. Drought tolerant	2 - 6"	3-9



### CONTACT INFORMATION

#### Division of Lands and Forests

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233  
P: 1-866-640-0652 | F: 518-402-9028 | landsforests@dec.ny.gov  
www.dec.ny.gov

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K. Verschoor, NYS DEC; R. Routledge, Sault College, Bugwood.org; D. Cappaert, Michigan State University, Bugwood.org; W.M. Ciesla, Forest Health Management International, Bugwood.org; M. Harte, Bugwood.org

# NATIVE GRASSES, FERNS & GROWDCOVERS



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### Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*)

Famous prairie grass, grows in tall clumps with distinctive “turkey foot” seed heads. Turns shades of copper and gold in fall.

Light	Soil	Height (ft)	Zone
Full sun	Dry - moist	4 - 8'	3-9



### Broad-leaf Sedge (*Carex platyphylla*)

Clump-forming sedge with soft blue-green leaves which are up to an inch wide. Does well in dry shade, often stays green all winter.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Part shade – shade	Dry – moist	4 - 12"	4-9



### Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)

Short clumps of green to blue-green leaves, topped by flowering stems. Shades of red, gold, orange and copper in fall. Small, fluffy, white seed heads along stems. Often found on dry exposed sites, such as rocky ridges or dry sand plains. Many cultivars available. Drought tolerant.

Light	Soil	Height (ft)	Zone
Full sun	Dry - moist, well drained	1 - 3'	3-9



### Bottlebrush grass (*Elymus hystrix*)

Clump-forming cool season grass with airy three-dimensional seed heads. Decorative grass for light shade. Tolerates dry soil, clay soil, limestone soils. Grows on rock outcrops.

Light	Soil	Height (ft)	Zone
Partial shade – light shade	Dry - moist	1 - 4'	5-9



### Northern Prairie Dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*)

Dense clumps of long thin leaves resemble shaggy heads of hair. Easily grown decorative grass. Can be used as groundcover on dry sunny sites. Delicate-looking open seed heads. Gold fall color.

Light	Soil	Height (ft)	Zone
Full sun	Dry - moist, well drained	1 - 3'	3-8



## Pennsylvania Sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*)

Sometimes used for lawns, this low-growing sedge is often found growing under oak trees. Forms a delicate wispy groundcover layer in shade, becomes heavier and clump-forming in sun.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Full sun - shade	Dry - moist, well drained	4 - 8"	4-8



## Wild Ginger (*Asarum canadense*)

Heart-shaped leaves 3 inches across make this a beautiful groundcover for shade, especially under deciduous trees.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Partial shade - shade	Moist, well drained	4 - 8"	4-8



## Appalachian Barren Strawberry (*Waldsteinia fragarioides*)

A little-known native groundcover with glossy dark green leaves which even thrives in dry shade. Semi evergreen. Yellow flowers in spring.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Full sun - shade	Dry - moist	3 - 6"	3-8



## Bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)

Creeping evergreen groundcover with small shiny leaves and red berries. Forms dense mat on rock outcrops or acidic sandy soil.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Full sun - partial sun	Dry - moist, well drained	3 - 9"	2-6



## Christmas Fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*)

Wonderfully durable evergreen fern for shade.

Light	Soil	Height (in)	Zone
Partial shade - shade	Moist - dry	12 - 18"	3-8



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 www.dec.ny.gov

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T. Potterfield, All Things Plants; K. Verschoor, NYS DEC; C. Evans, Illinois Wildlife Action Plan, Bugwood.org; J. Sturner, Morton Arboretum; H.F. Schwartz, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org; K.A. Rawlins, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org; R. Routledge, Sault College, Bugwood.org; M. Harte, Bugwood.org; D. Stephens, Bugwood.org; J.H. Miller, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org; Prairie Nursery; B. Harvath, American Nurseryman

# NATIVE SHRUBS

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### Highbush Blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*)

Bell-like white flowers. Clusters of delicious blue berries. Fall color is a range of reds. Striking in winter with colorful young branches and peeling multicolored bark on older stems. Tolerates flooding, needs acidic soil.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun - light shade	Dry - wet	10'8'	3-7



### American Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra ssp. canadensis*)

Large compound leaves and plate-sized clusters of small white flowers. Small purple berries used in making preserves, pies, and elderberry wine.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun - light shade	Moist, well drained	8'8'	4-9



### Virginia Rose (*Rosa virginiana*)

Versatile with glossy leaves and large, pink flowers. Spectacular fall colors. Salt tolerant, somewhat drought tolerant. Does well in sandy soil.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun	Dry - moist	5'10'	4-8



### Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)

Fragrant spheres of white flowers attract butterflies, hummingbirds and native bees. Top wildlife species. Good for rain gardens.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun	Moist - wet	8'8'	5-11



### Maple-leaved Viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*)

Understory shrub with soft maple-shaped leaves. Clusters of small white flowers. Dark-blue berries. Unusual pale, bluish-pink fall colors.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Partial - full shade	Dry-moist, well drained	5'5'	4-8



### American Hazelnut (*Corylus americana*)

Dense, vase-shaped clumps of supple stems with large rough leaves and edible nuts. Important grouse food. Shades of orange, gold and red in fall.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun - full shade	Dry - wet	10'10'	4-9



## Nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*)

Large multi-stemmed shrub. Can be trained into small single-stemmed tree. Glossy foliage, clusters of small white flowers. Resistant to viburnum leaf beetle. Dark-blue berries persist into winter. Good fall color.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun - light shade	Moist - wet	25'/15'	3-7



## Northern Bush-honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*)

Not a true honeysuckle. Slender stems with large finely toothed, glossy leaves, yellow flowers. New leaves typically reddish bronze. Orange, gold and red fall colors. Spreads easily, good ground cover. Drought-resistant.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Dry - moist	3'/3'	3-7



## Bayberry (*Morella caroliniensis* (formerly *Myrica pensylvanica*))

Coastal species well adapted to sandy soil and occasional flooding. Fine urban shrub because of high salt tolerance and resistance to insects and diseases. Glossy, aromatic foliage, semi-evergreen. Tolerates pruning.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Dry - wet	10'/10'	3-6



## Flowering Raspberry (*Rubus odoratus*)

Large fuzzy leaves with pointed lobes on thorn-less, arching canes. Single pink flowers are an inch across and resemble wild rose flowers. Small raspberry fruits. Wonderful shrub for edge areas. Shade tolerant.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun - full shade	Moist	5'/3'	4-6



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# NATIVE TREES

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### White Spruce (*Picea glauca*)

Classic conical Christmas tree shape. Short stiff needles are bluish green. Most adaptable native spruce for landscape planting. Many cultivars.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Moist, well drained	50'/20'	2-6



### Alternate-leaved Dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*)

Also known as "Pagoda Dogwood" because of unusual horizontal branch structure. Excellent small tree for partial shade. Clusters of small white flowers, good fall color. Shade tolerant.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun - full shade	Moist, well drained	20'/10'	3-7



### Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*)

Rangy oak with shaggy-capped acorns and big dark glossy leaves, often with distinctive deep lobe in middle. Very adaptable and tough, will grow on both acidic and alkaline soils. Flood tolerant and somewhat drought tolerant.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Dry - wet	80'/60'	3-8



### Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)

Red flowers followed by red seeds in spring. Red-stemmed leaves with whitish undersides in summer. Red and yellow leaves in fall. Well-known as a swamp tree, but also grows well on upland sites. Most versatile native maple for landscapes. Many cultivars. Flood tolerant.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun - light shade	Dry - wet	50'/30'	3-9



### Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)

Young trees narrow, columnar. Older trees more conical form. Small, blue, berry-like cones on female trees are eaten by many birds. Tough tree which thrives on dry, harsh, rocky sites. Grows well on limestone, and also on more acidic sites. Very drought tolerant. Must have full sun.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun	Dry - moist, well drained	40'/15'	3-9



## Serviceberry, Shadbush (*Amelanchier arborea*)

Graceful small tree. Has delicate white flowers in early spring. Flowers followed by oval leaves and edible berries in summer. Vivid fall colors.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Moist, well drained	20'/15'	4-9



## Black Gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*)

Great fall color. Fruit attracts many birds and mammals, good nectar source for honey bees. Salt and shade tolerant.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun - full shade	Dry - wet	50'/30'	4-9



## Swamp White Oak (*Quercus bicolor*)

Dark green leaves with white undersides. Tolerates compacted soils and drought. Also good for wet areas, flood tolerant.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun - full shade	Dry - wet	80'/50'	4-8



## Tamarack (*Larix laricina*)

Deciduous conifer with soft bluish-green needles, small round cones. A northern species which does well on cool, wet sites. Bright yellow fall color.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun	Moist - wet	50'/15'	2-4



## River Birch (*Betula nigra*)

Young trees have spectacular, multi-colored, peeling bark in warm shades of tan, brown, pink and cream. Popular birch for landscape use because of heat tolerance and disease resistance. Flood tolerant.

Light	Soil	Height/Spread (ft)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Moist - wet	60'/30'	3-9



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K. Verschoor, NYS DEC; B. Cook, Michigan State University, Bugwood.org; P. Wray, Iowa State University, Bugwood.org; T.D. Sydnor, The Ohio State University, Bugwood.org; J. Sharman, Vitaltree, Bugwood.org; R. Webb, Self-employed horticulturist, Bugwood.org; J. Ruter, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org; Dow Gardens Archive, Dow Gardens, Bugwood.org; S. Katovich, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org; C. Evans, Illinois Wildlife Action Plan, Bugwood.org; K.A. Rawlins, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org; J.H. Miller, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org; F. Bonner, USFS (ret.), Bugwood.org

# NATIVE VINES

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### Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)

High-climbing vine with graceful five-leaflet leaves and glorious red fall color. Can cling to almost any surface with adhesive-tipped tendrils. Splendid vine for covering walls. Can also climb wire fences and trellises by coiling tendrils. Dark-blue berries valuable food for birds. Several cultivars available.

Light	Soil	Height (ft)	Zone
Full sun - shade	Dry - moist	Up to 70'	4-9



### Woodbine (*Parthenocissus inserta*)

A “non-stick” version of Virginia creeper, this species climbs with coiling tendrils like a grape. It does not form adhesive disks and cannot cling to walls. Same five-leaflet leaves and red fall color as Virginia creeper. Climbs trellises or fences, also excellent groundcover. Very tolerant of road salt.

Light	Soil	Height (ft)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Dry - moist	Up to 50'	4-8



### American Groundnut (*Apios americana*)

Slender twining vine with compound leaves and clusters of wisteria-like pink flowers in late summer. Non-woody perennial which dies back to ground each fall. Has small edible tubers spaced along thin roots like beads in a necklace. Excellent in containers.

Light	Soil	Height (ft)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Moist - wet, flood tolerant	10 – 15'	5-9



### Summer Grape (*Vitis aestivalis*)

Vigorous climber with small tangy fruit. Large leaves are dark green above and silvery white beneath. Young tendrils often bright red. Parent of several wine grape hybrids. Needs regular pruning.

Light	Soil	Height (ft)	Zone
Full sun	Moist -dry	50 – 75'	5-9



### Trumpet Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*)

Twining stems with opposite leaves topped by clusters of slender, 2 inch long, red trumpet-shaped flowers. Many cultivars and hybrids. Flowers attract hummingbirds.

Light	Soil	Height (ft)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Moist, well drained	Up to 25'	4-9



## Virginia Virgin's Bower (*Clematis virginiana*)

Vigorous clematis with small white flowers, blooming in late summer. Climbs with twining leaflet stems. Fall color often burgundy to purple. Clouds of fluffy, swirled seed heads make eye-catching display. Easy to grow and eager to climb.

Light	Soil	Height (ft)	Zone
Full sun - partial sun	Moist, well drained	Up to 25'	4-8



## Wild Yam (*Dioscorea villosa*)

Graceful twining vine with strongly veined, heart-shaped leaves. Does not have edible root. Non-woody, dies back to perennial rhizome in late fall. Interesting winged seedpods. Native substitute for invasive cinnamon vine.

Light	Soil	Height (ft)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Moist, well drained	10 - 15'	4-8



## Hops (*Humulus lupulus*)

Common hop vine grown for flowers used to flavor beer. Vigorous twining vine with handsome multi-lobed leaves. Dies back to perennial rhizome in fall. Fast-growing vine great for shade coverage.

Light	Soil	Height (ft)	Zone
Full sun	Moist, well drained	Up to 30'	4-8



## Limber Honeysuckle (*Lonicera dioica*)

Very hardy small vine with large oblong opposite leaves on twining stems. Early spring flowers yellow, red or purplish, held above "cup" of fused pair of leaves. Flowers valuable for bumblebees. Undersides of leaves are bright silvery white.

Light	Soil	Height (ft)	Zone
Full sun - partial shade	Dry - wet	Up to 15'	3-8



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