

Native Plants in NC Landscapes: Tips for Success and Top Picks for Coastal Landscapes

Review the presentation and learn more:
<http://go.ncsu.edu/natives>

What is a native plant?

“A plant that has evolved in a **given place** over a **period of time** sufficient to develop **complex and essential relationships** with the **physical environment** and **other organisms** in a given ecological community.”

- D. Tallamy, *The Living Landscape*

Ecoregions of North America provides a meaningful framework for selecting native plants. Level III is the best reference for plant selection.

Why plant natives?

To enhance the local environment and sustain biodiversity. Native plants are better than non-natives for this purpose because they are the foundation of food webs that support native animals.

Ecosystem services include all of the essential services nature provides, such as pollination, air and water purification, climate modification, and much more, that support human life and well being. Ecosystem services rely on biodiversity.

Large areas of natural habitat are being replaced by managed landscapes composed of non-native turf and plants that are not able to support local biodiversity at the same level as native plants.

You can make a difference! Help restore and preserve biodiversity by planting trees, shrubs, flowers and grasses native to the coastal plain in your landscape.

Not every plant in your yard needs to be native. By combining natives with non invasive species that are adapted to the local climate and growing condi-

tions, you can have an attractive landscape that enhances the biodiversity and ecosystem health of your community.

Getting the most benefit

Select the right plant for the site! Not all natives will grow in every site—select plants adapted to the conditions in your landscape (sun/shade, drainage, etc.)

Choose natives suited for landscaping—Not all natives are good candidates for landscaping. Some are too vigorous while others require specialized conditions not found in landscapes.

Prepare the soil and helps plant establish—Just because plants are native doesn't mean they don't need care. Add organic matter to soils to support healthy growth. Plant should be watered during establishment (the first season).

Maximize Ecological Value—Get the most benefit by incorporating a diversity of native species into your landscape. Think layers when choosing plants—including trees, shrubs and perennials to provide a variety of habitats.

Native Plants for Coastal Landscapes

The following coastal plain native plants are: available from garden centers and nurseries, adaptable to a range of landscape conditions, and attractive in the landscape. These are only a few of the 100's of wonderful native plants that make excellent landscape additions!

Canopy Trees—“Foraging hubs”. Oaks support hundreds of species and are among the best, most long-lived shade trees. Over 30 species are native to NC. Most common in coastal landscapes:

- Willow Oak, *Quercus phellos*

- Live Oak, *Quercus virginiana*

Other great native trees available from nurseries include:

- River Birch, *Betula nigra*
- Red Maple, *Acer rubrum*
- Southern Magnolia, *Magnolia grandiflora*

Other great native trees include persimmon, hickory and American beech. These may be harder to find at nurseries. Try the NC Forest Service Tree Seedling Store, <http://nc-forestry.stores.yahoo.net>

Understory Trees and Shrubs

These make up the middle layer in landscapes and provide the best nesting habitat for birds. Many have showy flowers and fruits/berries.

Popular native understory trees for coastal plain landscapes include:

- Redbud, *Cercis canadensis*
- Dogwood, *Cornus florida*
- Red Buckeye, *Aesculus pavia*
- Sweet Bay Magnolia, *Magnolia virginiana*
- Yaupon, *Ilex vomitoria*
- Cabbage Palm, *Sabal palmetto*

Great native shrubs include:

- Fothergilla, cultivar 'Mt. Airy'
- Sweet Pepperbush, *Clethra alnifolia*
- Beautyberry, *Callicarpa americana*
- Coral Honeysuckle, *Lonicera sempervirens*
- Dwarf Yaupon, *Ilex vomitoria* 'Bourdeaux'
- Dwarf Palmetto, *Sabal minor*

Perennials

Flowers are critical nectar sources for pollinators. Get the most benefit:

- Plant in groups of 3 to 5+ of each species
- Plan for blooms spring-fall, at least 3 species in bloom at any give time
- Select single instead of double flower varieties

Great native perennials, in order of bloom:

- Wild Columbine, *Aquilegia canadensis*
- Bluestar, *Amsonia tabernaemontana*
- False Indigo, *Baptisia* species
- Coreopsis species
- Butterflyweed, *Asclepias tuberosa*
- Swamp Milkweed, *Asclepias incarnata*
- Adam's Needle, *Yucca filamentosa*
- Black-eye Susan, *Rudbeckia fulgida*
- Seashore mallow, *Kosteletzkya virginica*
- Joe Pye Weed, *Eutrochium dubium*
- 'Fireworks' Goldenrod, *Solidago rugosa*
- Panic Grass, *Panicum virgatum*
- Muhly Grass, *Muhlenbergia capillaris*

Learn More!

Visit:

<http://go.ncsu.edu/natives>

To review the slides and find links to these great resources and more:

NCSU Going Native Website

<http://www.ncsu.edu/goingnative>

NCCE Plants Database:

<http://plants.ces.ncsu.edu>

Extension Gardener Handbook

<http://content.ces.ncsu.edu/extension-gardener-handbook>

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