

Plant Native Plants

Native plants—those that occur in a specific geographic region over hundreds or thousands of years—have immeasurable environmental and aesthetic benefits.

When it comes to their ecological and environmental importance, native plants are the best of the best.

Native plants:

- Grow extensive root systems that hold soil in place (reducing soil erosion and pollution) and aid in managing and filtering stormwater runoff
- Often require less water and no fertilizers or pesticides
- Provide natural habitat for wildlife, including many bird, insect and mammal species
- Preserve the natural history of a geographic area
- Require little maintenance once established while providing a palette of colorful flowers, fruits/berries and leaves.

Incorporating native plants into your backyard, community or farm has measurable benefits to both terrestrial and aquatic habitats. Storm runoff increases greatly in urban areas because of roads, roofs and parking lots. In rural areas, runoff can become a problem if it's causing erosion. Native plants have deeper and more extensive root systems that prevent erosion and provide extra filtration. Research suggests that native landscaping in the form of rain gardens, bioswales, prairies, green roofs, and urban tree canopies, may provide a low-cost alternative to large-scale infrastructure solutions to reduce runoff. Native plants and trees intercept rainfall while their roots aid infiltration and prevent runoff by acting as pathways for water flow. Because of this native plants can enhance the value of grassed waterways on farms and in drainage ditches. Many native species can also be planted in wet areas in your yard where turfgrass may struggle to grow.

Learn more about Ohio's native plants, and make a plan to plant your own! Find an Ohio native plant nursery near you on this map provided by The Lake Erie Allegheny Partnership for Biodiversity:

<http://leapbio.github.io/nurseries/>