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Remarkable Natives for Beautiful, Planet-Friendly Gardens

*Usually deer resistant

-What is the difference between a native and a nativar? A native plant (or straight species) occurs naturally in a given location or region. The U.S. National Arboretum's definition: "flora present at the time Europeans arrived in North America (1492) as species native to the eastern United States" Needless to say, you can find many different definitions of 'Native'. A native has no additional words in single quotes after the species name (italicized word) *Trillium cuneatum* Garden in the Woods, Framingham, MA

-A different looking plant from the parent plant that **naturally occurs in nature** is called a variety, var. for short. For example, a white flowering redbud was discovered in the wild. Named *Cercis canadensis* var. *alba*

-A nativar is *sometimes a natural variant that has been found in the wild* and brought into cultivation, **but often it has been developed by a plant breeder and would never be found in nature.** (National Wildlife Federation). A plant bred by humans is called a cultivated plant, also known as a cultivar or nativar (cultivated variety). Cultivated plants are designated but the letters cv. or by single quotes around the new plant's name. *Cercis canadensis* cv. Forest Pansy *Cercis canadensis* 'Forest Pansy'

-Doug Tallamy's comments in an interview with *Fine Gardening* magazine: "You can have a landscape comprised of 100% native plants and still support little because you've chosen natives that don't make a lot of food. Natives good, nonnatives bad? It's not nearly that simple....a lot of our natives contribute very little. **I think the biggest contribution our lab has made is the discovery of the keystone species concept."**

-"Keystone plants are natives that are essential to our ecosystems because they support 90% of the caterpillar species that enable our terrestrial birds to reproduce, as well as all of our specialist native bee species". *Keystone plants are vital to the Food Web and our ecosystem. -The Food Web: "Caterpillars transfer more energy from plants to animals than any other plant eater. 14% of native plants support 90% of the caterpillars... caterpillars (are) enormously important in terrestrial food webs...Plants that support caterpillars (are) the two-by-fours in the ecological house we're building..."

-Pollinator Plants. Per Doug; "Pollinators are really not about supporting the Food Web, They're about getting plants to reproduce, moving pollen from one plant to another. **We need both.**"

*Checkout the link in your handout for this interview.

*Another great info-piece is Doug's interview with Pacific Horticulture. See link in handout.

- Doug Tallamy's Top Keystone plants that support wildlife:

Top Herbaceous Plants (species) Goldenrod (*Solidago*, Z 3-9), Aster (Z4-9), Sunflower (*Helianthus*, Z3-9)

Top Woody Plants (species) Oak (*Quercus* Z2-9) Cherry (*Prunus* Z3-8) Willow (*Salix* Z4-9) Birch (*Betula* Z3-9) American Elm (*Ulmus americana* Z4-8) Cottonwood (*Populus* Z2-9)

-Excerpt from some of Doug's research on herbaceous plants that **support Butterfly/moth species** (caterpillars)

Common name	Genus	# butterfly/moth species supported
Goldenrod	Solidago	115
Asters	Aster	112
Sunflower	Helianthus	72
Joe Pye/Boneset	Eupatorium	42
Geraniums	Geranium	23
Butterfly Weed	Asclepias	12
Bee Balm	Monarda	7

Visit the National Wildlife Federation's new website [Keystone Plants for Wildlife](https://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/About/Resources/native-keystone-plants) to see BOTH groups of plants. <https://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/About/Resources/native-keystone-plants>

-Phlox *divaricata* 'Blue Moon' Woodland Phlox Sun – Part Shade 12" Spring – early Summer Z3-8 Fragrant TOP performer out of 43 shade phlox (*divaricata* and *stolonifera*) trialed at Mt Cuba Center.

**Antennaria plantaginifolia* Pussytoes Sun-Part Sun 12" in bloom (usually grown for velvety silver, ground-hugging leaves) Spring Z3-8

**Gaultheria procumbens* (left) and *Gaultheria p.* 'Winter Splash' Wintergreen Part Shade-Shade 10" Spring (white flowers) Red berries late summer Z3-7 Evergreen groundcover.

-*Zizia aurea* Golden Alexander Sun – Part Shade 1.5'-3' Spring Z3-8 Primary larval host for the black swallowtail butterfly

**Actaea* 'Misty Blue' Part Shade – Shade Spring 4'-5' Z3-8 Berries poisonous Introduction from Mt Cuba Center

-*Chrysogonum virginianum* Green and Gold Part Sun – Shade 6"-12" Spring into early Summer Z5-9 Slow growing ground cover

**Thermopsis villosa* Carolina Lupine Sun 3'-5' Early Summer Z4-9 'Sophia' is a dwarf nativar 12"-18"

**Spigelia m.* 'Little Redhead' Sun – Part Shade 24"-28" Late Spring-Summer Z5-9

**Eryngium yuccifolium* Rattlesnake Master Sun 4'-5' late Spring-Summer Z3-8

**Astilbe biternata* False Goatsbeard Part Shade 3'-6' late Spring-Early Summer Z4-8

-*Gillenia trifoliatus* Bowman's Root Part Sun – Shade 24"-30" Early Summer Z4-8 Great Fall foliage

**Callirhoe involucrata* (left, 6"-12", Z4-8) and *C. digitata* (2'-4', Z5-8) Purple Poppy Mallow Sun Summer

**Penstemon d.* 'Blackbeard' Beardtongue Sun Summer 28"-24" Z3-8 other great choices 'Pocahontas', 'Dark Towers' and 'Midnight Masquerade'

**Cimicifuga racemosa* (Actaea) Black Cohosh Part Shade – Shade 4'-6' early Summer-Summer Z3-8.

-*Echinacea paradoxa* (2'-3', Z3-8, only Echinacea species with yellow flowers) and *Echinacea pallida* 'Hula Dancer' (2'-3', Z3-8, more attractive to pollinators than the straight species)

**Agastache foeniculum* Hyssop (left) and 'Blue Boa' Sun 3' Summer-fall Z3-6

**Helianthus decapetalus* Ten Petaled Sunflower Sun – Part Shade 4'-5' Summer Z4-9 Spreads Tolerates fry or wet soil. Host for Checkerspot Butterfly 3rd most beneficial Keystone plant for caterpillars

-Phlox *paniculata* 'Jeana' Sun – Part Sun 4'-5' Summer Z4-9 #1 out of 94 trialed at Mt Cuba Center Long bloom period, fragrant, mildew resistant, & sterile Attracted 4 times more butterflies than other phlox in trial.

**Asclepias tuberosa* Sun 24" Summer Zones 3 – 9 **Asclepias speciosa* Showy Milkweed Sun 1' -3' Summer Z3-9 **Asclepias incarnata* 'Cinderella' Swamp Milkweed Sun 3' – 5' Summer Z3-8 There are over 100 species of Milkweed. *speciosa* and *incarnata* are among the top 5 most attractive to Monarch butterflies

-*Coreopsis verticillata* 'Zagreb' (left, 18", Z3-8) and L'il Bang 'Starlight' (6"-8", Z5-8, sterile BUT attractive to pollinators) Sun – Part Sun Summer Z5-8

- **Eupatorium coelestinum* Mist Flower Sun – Part Sun 18”-3’ midsummer-fall Z5-9 Spreads!
- **Silphium mohrii* Sun-Pt Sun 2’-5’ Summer-early fall Z4-8
- **Euphorbia corollata* Native Baby’s Breath Sun 3’ Summer Z3-9 reseeds
- Physostegia virginiana* ‘Variegata’ Variegated Obedient Plant Sun – Part Sun 32” mid-late Summer Z2-9
- **Liatris ligulistylis* Meadow Blazing Star Sun-Part Sun 3’-5’ August-September Z3-7 The ultimate Monarch magnet!
- **Veronicastrum virginicum* Culvers Root ‘Lavender Towers’ Sun 48” – 72” Summer Z3 – 9 NOTE: ‘Lavender Towers’ attracted more pollinators than straight species in Dr. Annie White’s research on natives and natives
- **Solidago* Goldenrod Sun late Summer-Fall Z3-9 100-120 species #1 Keystone plant in the East for food & pollinator web *Solidago odora* Sweet Goldenrod 2’-4’ Late summer Z4-9 Clump growing! Foliage smells like anise when crushed
- **Hibiscus moscheutos* Summerific ‘Berry Awesome’ Rose Mallow Sun-Part Sun 3.5’- 4’ Summer Z4-9 flowers 7”-8”
- **Vernonia* ‘Iron Butterfly’ Narrow Leaf Ironweed Sun 30”-36” Fall Zones 4 – 9 Avant Gardens
- Aster oblongifolius* Smooth Aster ‘October Skies’ (left, 15”) and ‘Raydon’s Favorite’ (3’) Sun – Part Sun Late summer-Fall Z5-8 Both top performers in Chicago Botanic Garden’s trials. 2nd Keystone plant for caterpillars
- **Aster ericoides* ‘Snow Flurry’ Heath Aster Sun 4”-6” Fall Z3-9
- **Sporobolus heterolepis* Prairie Dropseed 2’-3’ Sun-Part Sun Z3-9 Warm season grass
- **Deschampsia cespitosa* ‘Goldtau’ Tufted Hair Grass 12”-24” Sun-Part Shade Z4-9 More compact than the straight species Cool season grass
- **Muhlenbergia capillaris* Pink Muhly Grass Sun – Part Sun 3’-4’ Z6-10 Warm season grass. *Muhlenbergia reverchonii* ‘Undaunted’ Zone 5 NOT NATIVE
- **Bouteloua* ‘Blonde Ambition’ Eye-Lash Grass Sun 30”-36” mid-Summer Z4-9 Warm season grass
- **Schizachyrium scoparium* ‘Blue Paradise’ Little Blue Stem Sun 3.5’ Z3-9 Warm season grass
- **Carex appalachica* Appalachian Sedge Sun – Shade 8-12” Summer Z3-7 Cool Season
- **Carex pennsylvanica* Pennsylvania Sedge Part Sun – Shade 10”-12” Z3-8 Semi-evergreen Cool season Sedge great for erosion control on slopes

Flowering Native Shrubs

- Rhododendron* (Azalea) *viscosum* Swamp Azalea 3’-5’ white to pale pink flowers Foliage turns yellow-orange-purple in fall. Right: ‘Weston’s Lollipop’ interspecific cross 4’-6’ Foliage turns reddish-orange in fall. Sun – Part Shade late Spring-Early Summer Z4-8 Fragrant
- **Salix candida* ‘Iceberg Alley’ Sageleaf Willow Sun-Part Sun 3’-6’ Spring Z2-6
- Amelanchier* Serviceberry ~20 species Sun – Part Shade 3’ – 30’+ Spring Z2-8 Brilliant fall foliage Berries are rich in antioxidants. *A. alnifolia* ‘Standing Ovation’ 15’ x 4’ *A. alnifolia* ‘Regent’ 3’-6’
- **Calycanthus floridus* ‘Burgundy Spice’ (left, 6’-8’, Z6-9) and *f.* ‘Simply Scentsational’ (6’, Z4-9) Sweet Shrub late spring-Early Summer Fragrant Deer resistant
- Aronia melanocarpa* Black Chokeberry (1’-6’, Z3-8, ‘Low Scape Mound’) and *A. arbutifolia* Red Chokeberry (6’-10’, Z4-9) Sun-Part Sun Spring (white flowers) Fall Fruit Both have brilliant red-orange fall foliage. ‘Low Scape Mound’ 12”-2’ ‘Brilliantissima’ 6’-8’
- *Left, *Pieris floribunda* (3’-6’, Flowers are more upright, versus drooping) and *f.* ‘Forest Flame’ (4’-7’ new spring foliage is bright red) Part Sun – Shade Spring Z5-8 Holly-tone by Espoma is a great fertilizer for acid loving shrubs like Pieris, Holly, Rhododendron, Azalea, blueberries, Boxwood and more!
- *Cornus alternifolia* Pagoda Dogwood ‘Golden Shadows’ (10’-12’, Z3-8 Great Garden Plants) and *a.* ‘Argentea’ (10’-15’, Z4-8) Part Sun-Part Shade Spring

-Hydrangea *arborescens* 'Haas Halo' 3'-5' flowers can be 14" across, #1 performer Mt Cuba trials Seaside Serenade 'Bar Harbor' 3'-4' Sun – Part Shade Summer Z3-8

*Diervilla x *splendens* Kodiak 'Orange' (cross between Northern Bush Honeysuckle *Ionicera* & Southern Bush Honeysuckle *sessilifolia*) Sun–Shade 3'-4' Summer Z4-7 Orange new foliage plus orange-red fall foliage.

*Hypericum *kalmianum* St. John's Wort 'Blues Festival' Sun 2'-3' Summer Z4-7

*Physocarpus *opulifolius* Ninebark Sun-Part Shade Heights from 3'-10' Late Spring-Early summer Z2-7 Chicago Botanic Garden started a 6-year trial on 26 cultivars in 2019. These two were a few that stood out 1/2 through trial. 'Amber Jubilee' and 'Festivus Gold'

-Oxydendrum *arboretum* Sourwood Sun-Part Sun 20'-25' Summer Z5-9 Fragrant flowers Spectacular fall foliage Tree or multi-stem shrub

*Symphoricarpos *albus* Snowberry (left, 3'-6', Z3-7) and Coralberry *S. orbiculatus* (2'-5', Z2-7) Sun-Part Sun Summer (pinkish-white flowers) Fall fruit Bluish-green leaves flowers loved by pollinators

-Some resources for finding regionally native plant (in addition to State provided resources):

-National Wildlife Foundation –Native Plant Finder <https://www.nwf.org/nativeplantfinder/plants>

-Audubon –Native Plants Database <https://www.audubon.org/native-plants>

-Home Grown National Park (Doug Tallamy's initiative) <https://homegrownnationalpark.org/native-plants-finder> -American Beauties Native Plants <https://abnativeplants.com/>

-A few informative websites for learning more about native plants:

-Mt. Cuba Center www.mtcubacenter.org/ -Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

www.wildflower.org/plants-main -Dr. Annie White's research on natives versus nativars, and more

www.pollinatorgardens.org/ -Home Grown National Park (Doug Tallamy's initiative)

www.homegrownnationalpark.org/

-Finally, some mail order sources for purchasing native plants (in addition to your local garden centers)

Prairie Moon Nursery Nearly Native Nursery OPN Seed Izel Plants Ernst Seeds

NOTE: if you are not familiar with a mail order gardening company, check their status on The Garden Watchdog <https://davesgarden.com/products/gwd/#b>

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*Kerry's Four Gardening Books. \$20 per book includes shipping. <https://pyours.com/product-category/book/>

* Please check out the SPECIAL 22 HOW-TO GARDENING VIDEOS & BUNDLE <https://pyours.com/product-category/video/>

*Fine Gardening Institute. May 6, 2023 at Heritage Museums & Gardens on Cape Cod. 6+ hour, in-depth design, plants, and garden care program. <https://pyours.com/fine-gardening-institute/>

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