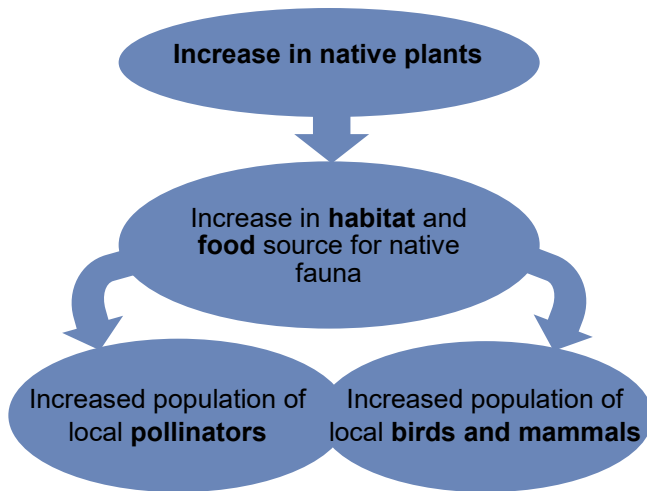


Benefits of Native Plant Gardens

Native plants benefit pollinators and other local wildlife.

Local insects and animals often rely on certain local plants for food and habitat.



Landscaping with native plants is sustainable.

Fewer resources are needed to maintain native plants. Artificial fertilizers and pesticides are not used and mulching and watering are done sparingly.

Native gardens provide great educational opportunities.

People who connect with the local ecosystem are more likely to advocate for the conservation of native plants and animals in their own backyard.

Landscaping Objectives & More Information

We promote environmentally healthy landscaping practices to **enhance biodiversity** through the preservation, restoration, & establishment of native plant communities.



Swamp rose-mallow
Hibiscus moscheutos

Contact Us

Phone: 607-387-7041

Web: <https://parks.ny.gov/regions/finger-lakes/default.aspx>

Are you interested in **native landscaping** in your own yard? Here are some good sites to get you started!

Finger Lakes Native Plant Society

<http://flnps.org/>

New York Floral Association

<http://www.nyflora.org/>

Habitat Gardening in CNY

<http://www.hgcny.org/>

Native Plants for Gardening and Landscaping

https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/factnatives.pdf

Landscaping with Native Plants in New York State Parks



Supporting healthy ecosystems by **employing ecological principals & utilizing native species.**



Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Native Plants, Birds & Pollinators

Populations of native insects and animals are declining dramatically due to pesticide use and **habitat loss**. Replacing lawns and exotic gardens with native plants reduces this decline and increases **natural habitats** and **food sources**.



Northern Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) is one of a few food sources for spicebush swallowtail caterpillars.

Many native insects and animals **rely on native plants for habitat and food**. By increasing the number of native plants, we are providing resources for native insects and small animals that might feed off those plants, or that might shelter in those plants.

Why should we care about native insects and small animals? Many of them are **pollinators** that play essential roles in ensuring our native plants can produce healthy seed and our crops continue producing food for us.

How are native plant gardens maintained?

Native plant gardens mimic natural processes. Flowers naturally reseed themselves, creating an ever-changing, **dynamic landscape**.

Weeding is kept to a minimum, only problem species and invasive plants, which may outcompete other plants for space, are removed. The weeds remaining are often short-lived and keep invasive species such as garlic mustard from occupying the space.

Native shrubs and flowers need time to establish themselves and grow into their **natural height & form**. Once they mature, they will shade out surrounding weeds.

Most of the dead plant material is left in place during the winter to **recycle nutrients** back into the soil. The plant material also provides shelter and food for native pollinators and animals during the winter months.



The pollinator garden at the Taughannock Falls Overlook is meant to mimic the conditions of a native meadow.

Interested in supporting healthy ecosystems?

Plant native plants! There are a growing number of nurseries specializing in native plants. If you cannot find one, contact your local native plant society to help. The Finger Lakes Native Plant Society can be found at www.flnps.org.



Native species in the mint family are pollinator magnets.

Want to support pollinators?

- Grow a wide diversity of native flowering plants and plants with overlapping bloom time to support pollinators from spring through fall.
- Create a home for growing pollinators by leaving patches of bare ground and brush piles or install nesting blocks & plant caterpillar host plants (natives).
- Grow plants without using pesticides and herbicides

Fun fact – Native oak trees support over 500 species of caterpillars, whereas Ginkgo, a commonly planted landscape tree from Asia, host only 5 species. This makes a big difference when it takes over 6000 caterpillars to raise a nest of chickadees!