



Conservation Series #2

Recommendations for NATIVE PLANTS FOR HOME AND FARM LANDSCAPING AND RESTORATION IN ALBANY TOWNSHIP, BERKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

[rev. 2/6/2023]

Planting regulations are addressed in the Albany Township Zoning Ordinance in section 514 on pages 12-14, section 804 on pages 6-7, and in the Albany Township Weed Ordinance of 1978, as amended in 1982. The advisory below augments current regulations to improve the environment in the township.

Why Natives?

Plants provide important ecosystem services within our community. These services are often taken for granted and include:

- * Providing clean air
- * Storm water runoff mitigation/water filtration
- * Pollination
- * Wildlife habitat

Native plants are adapted to a local ecosystem's food web to efficiently collect energy from the sun and convert it into energy that sustains all life, including people. Non-native plants can cause harm to native-plant communities. Such plants that cause harm are referred to as *invasive* plants. Most invasive plants causing harm within our communities are referred to as *non-native* invasive plants.

It once was common practice to remove native plants within our landscapes and introduce non-native plants, many of European or Asian origin. Today, more people realize native plants are as beautiful and often more productive in our landscape. As mentioned above, non-native plants do not support our intricate food webs we need to sustain biodiversity within our communities. Insects or other herbivores typically don't eat them. This allows the plants to prosper, become aggressive, and eventually dominate the landscape and, as a result, greatly reduce or even eliminate native plants, resulting in a loss of biodiversity within our plant community.

There can be considerable economic losses due to the presence of non-native invasive species. A significant threat to the economy through a loss of forest biological diversity by invasive-plant impact is the reduction of timber production. Currently, many forests are suffering from a lack of timber regeneration due to invasive-plant impacts and deer over-browsing. This is easily seen in our community's forests and woodlots with the understory consisting of only a few species, primarily of non-native invasive woody and herbaceous plants, with once-numerous wildflowers and shrubs much reduced.

How You Can Help.

Following is a list of web links with recommended native plants to utilize. These plants provide aesthetic beauty but also the important ecosystem services mentioned above.

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center: Pennsylvania Native Plants Directory

Allows species to be filtered by type (trees, flowers, grasses, and ferns) and site (dry, wet, sun, and shade) specifications:

<https://www.wildflower.org/collections/collection.php?collection=PA>

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP): Native Plant List

Organizes species by type (trees, flowers, grasses, and ferns) and site (dry, wet, sun, and shade) specifications:

https://www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/subject/advoun/stormwater/Manual_DraftJan05/Appendix-B-jan-rev.pdf

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR) Plant Native Plant Lists:

Native plants for shady dry sites:

http://elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocumentdocId=4106404&DocName=Native_Plants_for_a_Shady_Dry_site.pdf

Native plants for shady moist sites:

http://elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=4106405&DocName=Native_Plants_for_a_Shady_Moist_site.pdf

Native plants for sunny dry sites:

http://elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocumentdocId=4106400&DocName=Native_Plants_for_a_Sunny_Dry_site.pdf

Native Plants for sunny moist sites:

http://elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=4106402&DocName=Native_Plants_for_a_Sunny_Moist_site.pdf

DCNR: Landscaping with Native Plants

Provides information on native plants for landscaping, restoration buffers, and meadow establishment:

https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Conservation/WildPlants/LandscapingwithNativePlants/Pages_/default.as

Penn State Extension: Pennsylvania Native Plants for the Perennial Garden

Information on native plants for perennial flower gardens:

<https://extension.psu.edu/pennsylvania-native-plants-for-the-perennial-garden>

You can also find native plants at local commercial nurseries. Below are several reliable sources that can also offer expertise on plants. More can be found on the DCNR website.

Native Plant Distributers:

Edge of the Woods Native Plant Nursery

2415 Route 100, Orefield, PA 18069

<https://edgeofthewoodsnursery.com/>

Silver Maple Nursery

1172 Red Dale Road, Orwigsburg, PA 17961

<https://silvermaplenursery.com/>

Go Native Tree Farm

2310 Chestnut View Drive, Lancaster, PA 17603

<https://www.gonativetrees.com/>

Keystone Wildflowers

675 Hill Road, Robeson, PA 19551

<https://www.keystonewildflowers.com/>

Ernst Seeds

8884 Mercer Pike, Meadville, PA 16335

<https://www.ernstseed.com/>

Octoraro Native Plant Nursery

6126 Street Road, Kirkwood, PA 17536

<https://www.octoraro.com/>

North Creek Nurseries
388 North Creek Road, Landenberg, PA 19350
<https://www.northcreeknurseries.com/>

Hawk Mountain Sanctuary (limited weekends in May and September)
1700 Hawk Mountain Road, Kempton, PA 19529
www.hawkmountain.org

Glossary:

Ecosystem:

A biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment.

Ecosystem Services:

These services are the many and varied benefits to humans provided by the natural environment and from healthy ecosystems.

Pollination:

The act of transferring pollen grains from the male anther of a flower to the female stigma of the same species, thus allowing seeds (offspring) to be produced.

Stormwater runoff:

Precipitation (rain or snowmelt) that flows across land. Damage can be exacerbated when flowing over impervious surfaces, such as roads, parking lots, or bare soil, especially when on steep slopes.

Food web:

This is the unique interactions and relationships which are involved in the transportation of energy.

Native plant:

A plant that is a part of nature as developed over hundreds or thousands of years in a particular region or ecosystem. Plants found in the United States before European settlement are considered native.

Non-native (or alien) plant:

A plant introduced with human help (intentionally or accidentally) to a new place or new type of habitat where it was not previously found.

Invasive Plant:

A plant not native to its setting and whose introduction does, or is likely to, cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.

Biodiversity:

The variability among living organisms from all sources, including terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part, including diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems.

Forest biological diversity:

A broad term that refers to all life forms found within forested areas and the ecological roles they perform.

Timber regeneration:

The act of renewing desired tree cover by establishing young trees naturally or artificially.