



Native Plants and Their Roots

What is a native plant?

A native plant is a species occurring in natural associations in habitats that existed prior to significant human impacts and alterations of the landscape.

Reasons to Use Native Plants

- ◆ Native plants have deeper root structures which protect the streambank and shoreline from erosion (see picture on back).
- ◆ Native plants reduce runoff, by filtering out sediment and pollutants before they reach our waterways.
- ◆ Native plants may reduce flooding by slowing runoff
- ◆ Native plant landscapes are naturally resistant to pests and disease which reduces the need for pesticides or fertilizers making the turf healthier for people and pets and increases water quality.
- ◆ Native plant landscapes need less water which saves money and resources.
- ◆ Native plants require less maintenance once established which reduces time spent mowing, raking, watering, and using gasoline-powered equipment.
- ◆ Native plants provide the best food and habitat for native wildlife which increases opportunities for wildlife viewing.
- ◆ Native plants survive better than many ornamental plants.
- ◆ Native plants reduce problems with weed species.
- ◆ Native plants give provide a true upper Midwest aesthetic.
- ◆ Native plants prevent the establishment and spread of exotics (non-native plants).

Don't native plants generally look weedy?

This is a common misconception. Many natives are fragrant, brightly colored, provide seasonal color changes, known for their hardiness, and are generally insect resilient. Using natives eliminates the monotony and lifelessness of the typical urban landscape.

Which plants will grow in my area?

Ask your nursery or local firms that specialize in native plants. Factors to consider include water needs, amount of sunlight required, soil type, and soil and water pH, and the USDA hardiness zone.

**This information,
plus a little time, money & sweat,
is all you need to build a great looking
native plant landscape.**

Your yard makes a difference!

For more information:

River Keepers
325 7th St. S. Ste 2A
Fargo, ND 58103-1846
701-235-2895
info@riverkeepers.org
www.riverkeepers.org

Cass Soil Conservation District
4660 Amber Valley Parkway
Fargo, ND 58104
701-282-2157 ext. 3
www.cassscd.org

Lakescaping for Wildlife and Water Quality and Restore Your Shore CD ROM - Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

U.S. Department of Agriculture—PLANTS Database
<http://plants.usda.gov/>

Environmental Protection Agency—Native Plant Fact Sheet
<http://www.epa.gov/greenacres/nativeplants/factsht.html#Why%20Should%20I>

Create a Healthy Habitat in Your Own Backyard
<http://www.biodiversityproject.org/5%20Ways%20Campaign/5waysbackyardpress.htm>

Audubon—Increase Backyard Diversity
http://www.audubon.org/bird/at_home/wildlife.html
& Rethink Your Lawn
http://www.audubon.org/bird/at_home/rethink_lawn.html

Plant Native—Designing for Wildlife
http://plantnative.com/how_wildlife.htm

