



The How and Why of NATIVE PLANTS

The How

Plant your plugs as soon as possible. Until then, find a protected spot outside out of direct sun for most of the day. Check daily to see if they need water. The soil should be slightly moist but not soggy. If in a tray, make sure they do not sit in water all day.

Chose a location that meets each plant’s requirements:

<u>Tiarella</u>	<u>Tradescantia</u>	<u>Echinacea</u>	<u>Ascepias</u>
P-sun to full shade	P-sun to p-shade	Full to p-sun	Full sun
Height: 8-12 inches	24-36 inches	24-36 inches	18-24 inches
Spacing: 12 inches	12 inches	12 inches	12-18 inches
Bloom: White	Violet	Rose pink	Orange



Ascepias tuberosa
butterfly weed

Terminology:

P-sun (Part-sun): 4-6 hours of direct sun, some in the (hot) afternoon

Full shade: Fewer than 4 hours of sun, most in the morning. Note: “Dense shade” is the term for no sun.

P-shade (Part-shade): 4-6 hours of sun, most in the cooler mornings

Full sun: at least 6 hours of direct sun

Loosen the soil. Dig a hole slightly larger than the plug to allow fast root growth. Lightly sprinkle compost across the whole planting area. Pinch the bottom of the cell and gently force the plug out. If the root ball is dense and tight, gently loosen and “tease” out ends to encourage root growth.

Place the plug in the hole so that the crown, where the roots and plant connect, is level with the soil. Don’t plant too deeply. Press down on the soil to create firm, snug soil-to-root contact. If there is any medium from the pot left, sprinkle it around the top and again tamp down until firm.

Surround with a layer of organic mulch 1”-2” deep between plugs. Make sure the mulch is about 1” away from the plug to avoid smothering.

Water the area thoroughly to reduce air pockets in the soil. Plugs should be watered every few days if the weather is warm and dry. Water long and deep to make sure water goes into the soil as deep as the roots. Watering can be reduced in the fall as temperatures drop.

For “The Why” of native plants and how to request this Pollinator Pathway sign, read the other side.



You may find this information sheet at wpbf.org in the right column under “Smell the Roses”



Please help us continue to promote Pollinator Pathways in White Plains by making a donation on the wpmf.org donate page and indicate that it should go toward the Pollinator Pathways project. All donations are tax deductible.



Echinacea pur. 'Ruby Star'
purple coneflower

Tradescantia ohiensis
Ohio spiderwort

Tiarella cordifolia
foam flower

The Why of NATIVE PLANTS

Native plants are essential to maintaining biodiversity, the rich variety of life on Earth. Since native insects evolved along with native plants, everything about the structure, makeup and bloom time of plants is in sync with the native insects' needs, not delivered by ornamental plants from other regions. Without native insects, there would be no higher forms of life, i.e., birds that need insects to feed nestlings; birds and mammals that need fruits and nuts to fortify them for migration or hibernation; and the world food supply would be in big trouble. The U.S. Department of Agriculture says 75% of the world's flowering plants and 35% of the world's food crops depend on animal pollinators to reproduce, including more than 3,500 species of native bees.

Does My Garden Qualify for the Pollinator Pathway?

It does if you are committed to the following "healthy yard" practices. The smallest of green spaces, flower boxes, curb strips are welcome also.

- Choose nectar- and pollen-rich flowers native to our region, in a range of shapes, sizes, colors focusing on "straight species" rather than modern hybrids
- Make sure to have perennials, shrubs or trees blooming throughout all growing seasons
- When possible remove non-native ornamentals and especially invasives
- Plant enough of each species in a group so that pollinators can easily find them; balance that with a variety of species to attract different types of pollinators
- Your lawn – mow higher, less often; consider replacing lawn (a wasteland) with native shrubs, trees, a mini-meadow; leave some bare ground/dead wood for nesting native bees
- "Leave the leaves" in fall in beds for overwintering eggs/pupae of pollinating insects; do spring cleanup only after temperatures are consistently above 50-degrees F.
- On lawn, mulch mow leaves to provide nature's own fertilizer; if you have excess leaves in fall, start a leaf bin to create unbelievably amazing leaf mulch (black gold)

If you are committed to these practices, request a sign at pollinatorswp@gmail.com. Provide your name, street address and brief description of the garden. We ask that it be visible to passersby.

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