10 Native Wetland Plants

Water gardens can bring calming sounds and peaceful views. In containers or ponds, with plants that can vary from full sun to partial shade, there are many native plants to make your water garden shine.

Find this list online at www.USBG.gov/NGfavorites

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**Golden club**  
*Orontium aquaticum*  
Yellow, club-like inflorescences rise in early spring followed by handsome blue-green leaves. Non-spreading and a great choice for small ponds.

**Yellow pond-lily**  
*Nuphar advena*  
Simple, elegant yellow flowers rise just above the water, complimenting the floating, arrowhead-shaped leaves of this water lily relative.

**Morningstar sedge**  
*Carex grayi*  
In summer, wands of inflated, spiny pale green fruit give this species another common name, mace sedge, because of their resemblance to medieval clubs. Semi-evergreen grassy leaves bring winter beauty.

**Virginia iris**  
*Iris virginica*  
Purple spring growth is followed by fans of bright green leaves and graceful lilac-blue flowers. Related species *I. versicolor* (northern blue flag) and *I. prismatica* (slender blue iris) are equally lovely.

**Pickerelweed**  
*Pontederia cordata*  
A summer beauty featuring tall leaves and stalks of lilac-blue flowers. Attractive to bees and butterflies, including the native bee Dufour's bee, for which it is the sole nectar source.

**Rose mallow**  
*Hibiscus moscheutos*  
Cultivated worldwide with many stunning hybrids, this American native species features large white or pink flowers that are spectacular in summer.

**Duck potato**  
*Sagittaria latifolia*  
Robust, arrow-shaped leaves are complimented by white flowers that bloom throughout summer. The common name is a nod to the edible underground tubers.

**Cardinal flower**  
*Lobelia cardinalis*  
A mid-summer showstopper with intensely red blooms, cardinal flower's nectar is a favorite of hummingbirds who pollinate the flowers while probing for food.

**Swamp rose**  
*Rosa palustris*  
Soft-pink spring flowers give way to showy red fruits ("hips") in fall and winter. Glorious red fall foliage on shiny mahogany twigs makes for an all-season beauty.

**Buttonbush**  
*Cephalanthus occidentalis*  
Globes of white, fragrant flowers peak in June, attracting pollinators including Swallowtail butterflies. A large shrub, it is great for rain gardens due to its preference for average-to-wet soils.

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# 10 Native Plants for Critters

Plants are important sources of food and shelter for many birds, mammals, and insects. Here are 10 of our favorite native plants to help bring animals to your garden.

Find this list online at www.USBG.gov/NGfavorites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant Name</th>
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<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td><em>Amelanchier spp.</em></td>
<td>Spring flowers supply nectar to early pollinators, and leaves are favored by many butterfly larvae including the beautiful Red-spotted Purple butterfly (<em>Limenitis arthemis</em>). Creatures great or small, feathered or furred favor the tasty fruit.</td>
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<td><strong>Pawpaw</strong></td>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>Oak</strong></td>
<td><em>Quercus spp.</em></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wild senna</strong></td>
<td><em>Senna hebecarpa</em></td>
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**Pawpaw** *Asimina triloba*

A small tree with large leaves that bears the biggest edible fruit of any American native plant. For delicious and abundant fruit that is sought after by both humans and animals alike, plant two or more grafted cultivars because this tree is not self-fertile.

**Swamp milkweed** *Asclepias incarnata ssp. pulchra*

Clusters of dusty-rose flowers highlight this pollinator magnet, which also serves as a good larval host for the Monarch butterfly.

**American beautyberry** *Callicarpa americana*

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**Winterberry holly** *Ilex verticillata*

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**Golden Alexanders** *Zizia aurea*

A native host for Black Swallowtail butterfly larvae, golden Alexanders attract a bounty of pollinators with late spring golden flower clusters.
10 Native Wildflowers

Native wildflowers have evolved to thrive in a variety of local conditions: very hot, dry, humid, or wet. Here are 10 of our favorite native wildflowers to try in your garden.

Find this list online at www.USBG.gov/NGfavorites

- **Common dittany**  
  *Cunila origanoides*  
  Tidy and compact this dry land species has lilac flowers, in autumn, sometimes called "fruit flowers" for opening on chilly mornings. Crush its leaves to produce an earthy, spicy aroma.

- **Butterfly weed**  
  *Asclepias tuberosa*  
  Drought-tolerant with clusters of delightfully bright orange flowers that bloom from late spring to early autumn and attract butterflies. The plant is also a host for Monarch butterfly larvae.

- **Eastern blueestar**  
  *Amsonia tabernaemontana*  
  Ice-blue flowers in spring and bright yellow foliage in autumn make this neatly clumping plant a knockout. For dry, sandy soils, try the finer-textured *A. ciliata* (fringed blueestar).

- **Crested iris**  
  *Iris cristata*  
  Tiny creeper that naturally thrives in dry, wooded environments and impresses with a profusion of blue, lilac, or lavender spring flowers.

- **Bowman’s root**  
  *Gillenia trifoliata*  
  Shrubby, shade-loving perennial features reddish-purple fall foliage and delicate, stary white spring flowers.

- **Swamp sunflower**  
  *Helianthus angustifolius*  
  Late season golden blooms are accented against dark green leaves on this beautiful perennial.

- **Anise-scented goldenrod**  
  *Solidago odora*  
  Slower to spread than other goldenrod species, this goldenrod thrives in sun and well-drained soils. Beyond being beautiful, its glossy, licorice-scented leaves are also used in herbal teas.

- **Trailing phlox**  
  *Phlox nivalis*  
  For a pop of white-to-pink in early spring, seek out this slowly spreading, evergreen groundcover. Its flowers sometimes open earlier, bringing a splash of color during mild winter weather.

- **Rattlesnake plantain**  
  *Eryngium yuccifolium*  
  Rosettes of gray-green foliage highlight greenish-white globes of summer flowers that are a favorite of many pollinators.

- **Smooth aster**  
  *Symphyotrichum laeve*  
  ‘Bluebird’  
  Attractive clumps of blue-green foliage on graceful stems yield abundant late-summer flowers featuring violet-blue rays with vibrant yellow centers.

- **Common dittany**

- **Butterfly weed**

- **Eastern blueestar**

- **Crested iris**

- **Bowman’s root**

- **Swamp sunflower**

- **Anise-scented goldenrod**

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- **Crested iris**

- **Bowman’s root**

- **Swamp sunflower**
10 Native Shrubs

Shrubs can form a foundation for a garden. Some shrubs are great for their foliage, while others provide additional flowers to the garden. Here are 10 of our favorite native shrubs to try in your garden.

Find this list online at www.USBG.gov/NGfavorites

**Southern wax myrtle**
*Myrica cerifera*
Pale-green foliage abounds on this large evergreen that is happiest in poor soils and needs little attention. The crushed leaves offer a warm scent similar to eucalyptus, and female specimens have gray-blue, wax-coated berries.

**Ninebark**
*Physocarpus opulifolius*
Bright green leaves showcase round, white clusters of flowers in the late summer and early spring. Mature branches feature peeling bark, showcasing layers of red-to-light brown inner bark, most visible and vibrant during the winter.

**Possum haw viburnum**
*Viburnum nudum*
Clusters of flat-topped white blooms transition to colorful ripening fruits through late summer into autumn. Smooth and shiny burgundy foliage joins this autumnal display.

**Shrubby St. John’s wort**
*Hypericum prolificum*
A profusion of bright gold summer flowers sprinkled across a palate of dark green leaves make this compact and soil-adaptable plant a fine addition to any landscape.

**Dwarf witchalder**
*Fothergilla gardenii*
This slow-growing dwarf ornamental is amenable to a variety of garden environments, featuring white bottlebrush blooms in spring and colorful foliage in autumn.

**Mountain azalea**
*Rhododendron canescens*
An abundance of sweet-scented spring flowers and a tolerance for moist or dry environments make this deciduous native a great choice for Southeastern and Mid-Atlantic gardens.

**Sweet pepperbush**
*Clethra alnifolia*
White-to-pink spikes of small, sweetly-scented summer flowers make way for dark brown seed capsules that can last until winter. Popular with butterflies and bees alike.

**New Jersey tea**
*Ceanothus americanus*
This small shrub features white blooms in spring and fixes its own nitrogen, making fertilizer unnecessary. The leaves can be used to brew a caffeine-free herbal tea.

**Red chokeberry**
*Aronia arbutifolia*
‘Brilliantissima’
Though quite tall in the wild, this cultivar has a small stature and abundant shiny, red fruit that persist throughout winter.

**American holly**
*Ilex opaca ‘Maryland Dwarf’*
Slow-spreading, attractive evergreen groundcover that comes alive with a scattering of lovely red berries in autumn and winter.
10 Native Large Trees

Trees can provide vertical height, shade, and sources of food and shelter for people and critters. Here are 10 of our favorite large trees to bring plentiful shade to your garden.

Find this list online at www.USBG.gov/NGfavorites

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**Sweetgum**  
*Liquidambar styraciflua*

Eye-catching long needles make a bold statement for this evergreen conifer. Not ideal for colder, snowier climates, it thrives in warmer areas.

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**Southern magnolia**  
*Magnolia grandiflora*

Glossy, evergreen leaves with velvety, brown undersides highlight this southern belle’s spectacular plate-sized white summer flowers and cone-like, red-seeded fruits in fall and winter.

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**Longleaf pine**  
*Pinus palustris*

Eye-catching long needles make a bold statement for this evergreen conifer. Not ideal for colder, snowier climates, it thrives in warmer areas.

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**Sourwood**  
*Oxydendrum arboreum*

Somewhat weeping branches bear white summer flowers in elegant lily-of-the-valley-like sprays from which bees make sourwood honey. Yellow-to-maroon fall foliage is spectacular.

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**American holly**  
*Ilex opaca*

Sharp, pointy green leaves and the bright red berries of female trees are a familiar sight for many tree lovers. Tough as nails, this evergreen develops into a large pyramidal tree in full sun.

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**Eastern red cedar**  
*Juniperus virginiana*

Tough and fast growing, this evergreen has fragrant cedar-scented wood. Female trees bear waxy, blue cones relished by cedar waxwings and other birds. Short cultivars may be more suitable for home gardens.

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**Eastern hop-hornbeam**  
*Ostrya virginiana*

Medium height, a rounded crown, beautiful flaking bark, and tolerance of urban soils make this a great tree for space-limited landscapes.

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**American persimmon**  
*Diospyros virginiana*

Late spring blooms, beautiful fall foliage, and bark reminiscent of alligator skin lend interest in all seasons. The attractive, edible fruit is sweet and aromatic when fully ripe.

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**Pond cypress**  
*Taxodium ascendens*

Finely textured, bright green foliage fades to a decadent orange-brown in the autumn. This conical conifer can grow in the toughest of soil conditions and has the potential to form "knees."

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Prized red fall foliage on a majestic branching pattern, this beekeeper favorite is the nectar source for tasty tupelo honey.

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10 Native Small Trees

Sometimes you want the look and benefits of a tree, but don’t have a lot of space. These 10 favorite small trees will retain their size, perfect for compact gardens.

Find this list online at www.USBG.gov/NGfavorites

**Eastern redbud**  
*Cercis canadensis*

An elegant blush of edible spring flowers along the trunk and branches is followed by delicate, heart-shaped leaves emerging as the legume fruits mature.

**Red buckeye**  
*Aesculus pavia*

Large early-spring leaves are quickly followed by mid-spring showy spikes of deep red flowers that attract hummingbirds. Buckeyes are cluster-forming and can be grown as a screen.

**Sassafras**  
*Sassafras albidum*

Light green, mitten-shaped leaves change from yellow to orange to brilliant red in autumn. Greenish-yellow female flowers produce draping clusters of striking red and black fruits.

**Sweetbay magnolia**  
*Magnolia virginiana*

Cup-shaped, creamy-white flowers nicely contrast against matte-green leaves in the early summer. Come autumn, cone-like fruits with exposed red seeds put on a beautiful show.

**Downy serviceberry**  
*Amelanchier arborea*

Beautiful white flowers in early spring are followed by delicious red-to-dark-purple, edible fruits in late spring or early summer.

**Chalkbark maple**  
*Acer leucoderme*

Spectacular autumnal foliage and its easy care make this tree a delight for any garden. When mature, its smooth, pale bark earns its common name.

**Fringe tree**  
*Chionanthus virginicus*

A pleasantly rounded canopy, wispy white mid-summer blooms, and suspended purple autumn fruits highlight this adaptable and tough urban garden selection.

**American hornbeam**  
*Carpinus caroliniana*

Reddish fall foliage is a delight, and seeds are devoured by birds and small mammals. Smooth, gray bark on sinewy trunks imparts another common name, musclewood.

**Fox Valley® river birch**  
*Betula nigra ‘Little King’*

Impressive orange-brown bark sloughs away to reveal light brown inner bark, adding a pop of whimsy year round. Known for its disease resistance, it is also adaptable to a variety of environments.

**Flowering dogwood**  
*Cornus florida*

Revered for white-to-pink, flower-like springtime bracts, the open-branching, checkered bark and attractive, red-tinged autumn foliage are also stunning.

**Full Sun**  
**Part Shade**