

Go Native!

This spring and summer, consider installing native plants to create diversity in your home landscape. Native plants, by definition, are plants that existed in the Great Lakes region prior to the arrival of European settlers.

Native shrubs contribute to the natural environment in important ways:

- ***Natural vigor:*** When properly planted, native shrubs adapt well to the variable weather conditions of Southeast Michigan and once established, typically require less maintenance than non-native species.
- ***Filtering air pollutants:*** Wildflowers and tall grasses may grow 2 or 3 feet tall and are more efficient at trapping pollutants than turf grass. Once pollutants are trapped by vegetation, they are less likely to run off into streams and rivers.
- ***Water quality enhancement through soil stabilization:*** Native plants and shrubs have extensive root systems, which can be very useful for streambank erosion areas. Natives absorb nutrients which might otherwise run off into waterways and provide suitable conditions for other plants – including the next generation of trees.
- ***Habitat for birds, insects, and other beneficial wildlife:*** Native plants provide food, shelter and hiding places for birds, butterflies, insects and other beneficial wildlife.

Certain native plants and flowers can be purchased at your local nursery. A number of nurseries are located throughout Southeast Michigan. For more information, contact the Southeastern Oakland County Water Authority (SOCWA) office at: 248-288-5050, or visit their website at: www.socwa.org.