



## Why use native plants?

### Native Plants...

- Require little to no watering or fertilizing and no pesticides, which improves air, habitat and water quality.
- Reduce or avoid the need for mowing, which saves fuel, thus reducing air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Promote biodiversity by providing food and shelter for wildlife.
- Create a stable landscape by decreasing erosion and invasive plants.
- Provide public education through learning more about the local environment, as well as how different parts of a landscape are connected to each other.
- Create a sense of place by connecting us with Bloomington's unique natural splendor.
- Help you save more money when compared with other landscaping options.

***To be whole. To be complete. Wildness reminds us what it means to be human, what we are connected to rather than what we are separate from.***

-Terry Tempest Williams



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

## For More Information...

*Below are additional sources to help further your knowledge of natural landscaping:*

### **Center for Sustainable Living:**

<https://www.simplycsl.org/>

### **Environmental Protection Agency:**

[www.epa.gov/greenacres](http://www.epa.gov/greenacres)

### **Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society:** [www.inpaws.org](http://www.inpaws.org)

### **National Wildlife Federation, Backyard Wildlife Habitat:** [www.nwf.org/backyard](http://www.nwf.org/backyard)

**eNature:** [www.enature.com/native\\_invasive/](http://www.enature.com/native_invasive/)

**Wild Ones:** [www.for-wild.org](http://www.for-wild.org)

**Plant Conservation Alliance:**  
[www.nps.gov/plants/](http://www.nps.gov/plants/)

**Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center:**  
[www.wildflower.org/](http://www.wildflower.org/)

**Center for Plant Conservation:**  
[www.centerforplantconservation.org/](http://www.centerforplantconservation.org/)

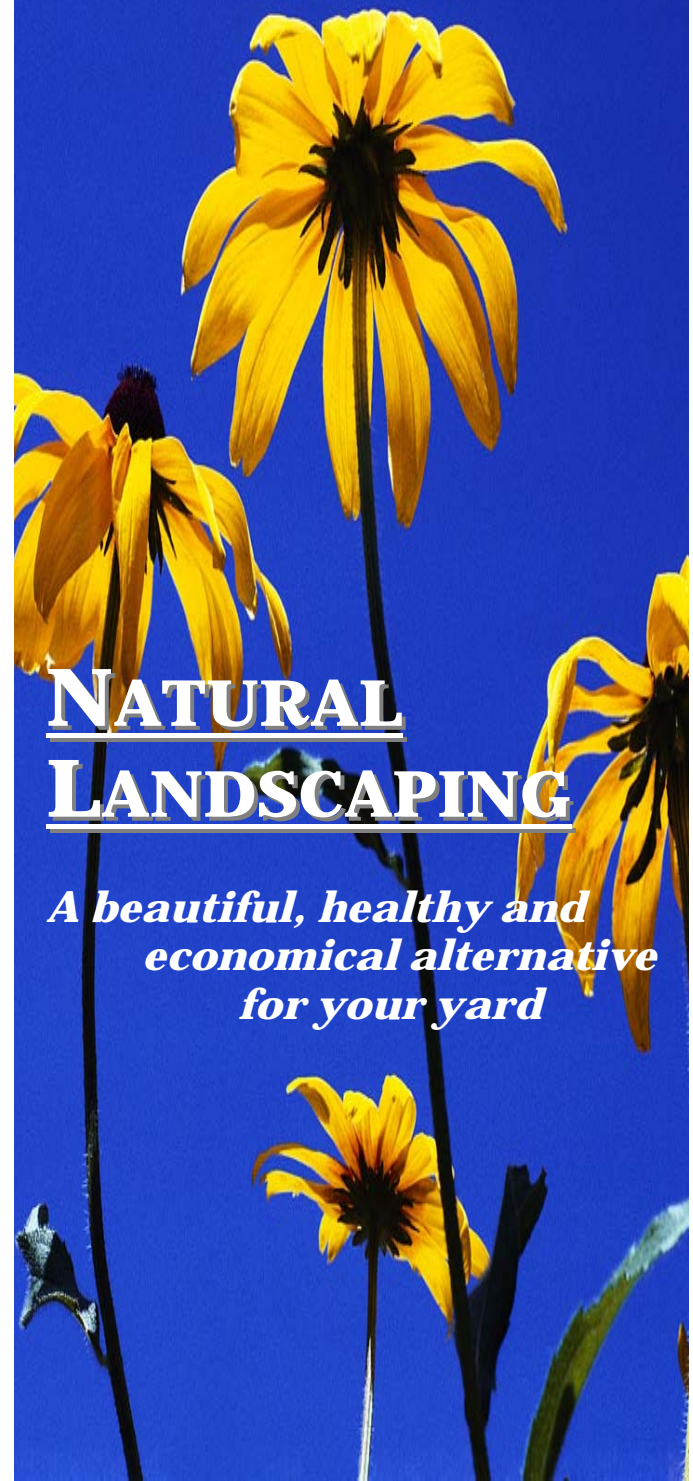
**National Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides:**  
[www.beyondpesticides.org/main.html](http://www.beyondpesticides.org/main.html)

This brochure was created by Becky Barrick with the City of Bloomington Environmental Commission and Indiana University City as Ecosystem Service-Learning students

[www.bloomington.in.gov/boards/environment](http://www.bloomington.in.gov/boards/environment)  
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# NATURAL LANDSCAPING

*A beautiful, healthy and  
economical alternative  
for your yard*

## What is Natural Landscaping?

The idea behind “natural landscaping” is to create yards and gardens that come as close as possible to what is found in nature. By mimicking what works naturally in our own geographic location, green spaces created by humans can bring the same benefits that natural, untouched areas bring, including rain and stormwater filtration, habitats for animals and low-maintenance ground cover. Use of natural landscaping favors local, native plant species over harmful invasive exotic species that are a threat to a stable ecosystem. By providing natural landscaping in Bloomington, you can promote healthier relationships between natural ecosystems and human communities, create beautiful spaces and save money too!

## What are Native Plants?

Native plants are species that have naturally evolved in a specific geography and climate. They are adapted to the local environment, including soil, moisture, weather conditions, microbes and animals. Native plantings promote natural biodiversity, or a rich variety of life at multiple scales, from genes to species to whole ecological systems. Native plants contribute a rich source of nutrients to the soil and also provide great food and habitat for native wildlife. You’ve probably seen these plants before or heard of them and not realized they were “native” to our area.

## What Native Plants should I use, and where?

The City of Bloomington Environmental Commission has created a list that will help you choose which native plants to use based on soil and sun conditions in your yard. The list is on our web site:

[www.bloomington.in.gov/environment](http://www.bloomington.in.gov/environment).

Also, a list of plants native to the Bloomington area can be found in the Natural Landscaping HANDBOOK, available from the HAND web site at: [www.bloomington.in.gov/hand](http://www.bloomington.in.gov/hand).



*“Landscaping with native wildflowers and grasses improves the environment. Natural landscaping brings a taste of wilderness to urban, suburban and corporate settings by attracting a variety of birds, butterflies and other animals. Once established, native plants do not need fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides or watering thus benefiting the environment and reducing maintenance costs. Gardeners and admirers enjoy the variety of colors, shapes and seasonal beauty of these plants.”*

-Environmental Protection Agency



## Are Native Plants weeds?

There is often confusion about what qualifies as natural landscaping. Bloomington has a weed ordinance to prevent land within city limits from becoming overrun with weeds. This ordinance is in place to protect public health and prevent unsightly yards. However, native landscaping, which involves clear intentions and goals, does not pose the same threat that simply neglecting your yard can cause. For example, unwanted pests attracted to unkept yards are not drawn to areas with well-designed natural landscapes. Due to the environmental and economic benefits of natural landscaping, many communities are attempting to modify weed ordinances to support naturalized yards. Planned natural landscaping will not be cited as violating Bloomington’s ordinance, and any concerns may be discussed with the Housing & Neighborhood Development (HAND) Department (349-3420). Additional clarification on this topic can be found in the Natural Landscaping HANDBOOK.

## Where should I purchase Native Plants?

- See the Natural Landscaping Factsheet “What to Know and Where to Go” created by the City of Bloomington Environmental Commission for a listing of local garden centers that sell native plants.
- You also may wish to contact the organizations listed on the back of this brochure or check the local Farmers’ Market.

*A community should not consider it an honor how much spontaneous vegetation it destroys; it should rather be a point of honor for every community to protect as much of its natural landscape as possible.*

-Friedensreich Hundertwasser