How to Incorporate Native Plants into an Urban Landscape

A Starter Guide for Plant Selection

Presented by The City of Ankeny and the Polk Soil and Water Conservation District
WHY NATIVE PLANTS?

A native plant is generally described as a plant that occurs naturally in a particular region, state, ecosystem or habitat without human actions.

Iowa’s historic landscape was once dominated by tall grass and native prairie plants. Even though the landscape has changed, native plants are suited to Iowa’s climate and can be easily integrated into urban landscaping. Native plants are hardy; they withstand extreme fluctuations of temperature and rainfall. Once native plants are flourishing, they also require less care and expense than non-native ones; less watering because their roots are deeper and pesticides aren’t needed since many have evolved to thrive and resist predators. Planting native species is also good for the environment. The deep roots help prevent soil erosion, filter stormwater more effectively and provides ecosystems for nectar, seeds and pollen for neighboring flora and fauna.

Like any gardening project, native landscaping entails preplanning and design to cultivate a harmonious plant community. The first step is determining your soil, water and sunlight conditions and look for species that will match that. The next time you plan a landscaping project, consider using native plants!

NOTES
**Scientific Name:** *MERTENSIA VIRGINICA*  
**Height:** 2 feet  
**Bloom Color:** Blue  
**Bloom Range:** April-May  
**Sun:** Partial/Shade  
**Moisture:** Wet Mesic-Mesic  
**Notes:** Shade; Bell-shaped flowers that transition from pink to purple to blue.

**Scientific Name:** *AQUILEGIA CANADENSIS*  
**Height:** 2 feet  
**Bloom Color:** Red  
**Bloom Range:** April-July  
**Sun:** Partial/Full/Shade  
**Moisture:** Mesic-Dry  
**Notes:** Dainty spring flowers.

**Scientific Name:** *GEUM TRIFLORUM*  
**Height:** 8 inches  
**Bloom Color:** Pink  
**Bloom Range:** April-June  
**Sun:** Partial/Full  
**Moisture:** Wet Mesic-Dry  
**Notes:** Beautiful flower, attractive plant after blooming complete.

**Scientific Name:** *GERANIUM MACULATUM*  
**Height:** 1 foot  
**Bloom Color:** Purple  
**Bloom Range:** April-July  
**Sun:** Partial/Full  
**Moisture:** Mesic-Dry Mesic  
**Notes:** Graceful plant with multiple blooms.

**Scientific Name:** *ANEMONE CANADENSIS*  
**Height:** 1 foot  
**Bloom Color:** White  
**Bloom Range:** May-July  
**Sun:** Partial/Full  
**Moisture:** Wet Mesic-Mesic  
**Notes:** Pretty flowers, interesting foliage, spreading habit.

**Scientific Name:** *ARISAEMA TRIPHYLLUM*  
**Height:** 2 feet  
**Bloom Color:** Green  
**Bloom Range:** April-July  
**Sun:** Partial/Shade  
**Moisture:** Wet Mesic-Dry Mesic  
**Notes:** Shade; interesting.

**Scientific Name:** *ASARUM CANADENSE*  
**Height:** 6 inches  
**Bloom Color:** Red  
**Bloom Range:** April-June  
**Sun:** Shade  
**Moisture:** Wet Mesic-Dry  
**Notes:** Shade; low growing heart-shaped leaves

**Scientific Name:** *POLEMONIUM REPTANS*  
**Height:** 1 foot  
**Bloom Color:** Blue  
**Bloom Range:** April-June  
**Sun:** Partial/Shade  
**Moisture:** Wet Mesic-Dry  
**Notes:** Shade; blue to blue-violet to lavender blooms.

**Scientific Name:** *PENSTEMON GRANDIFLORUS*  
**Height:** 2 feet  
**Bloom Color:** Lavender  
**Bloom Range:** May-July  
**Sun:** Partial/Full  
**Moisture:** Dry Mesic-Dry  
**Notes:** Multiple blooms on single stalks
**SOLOMON’S SEAL**
Scientific Name: POLYGONATUM CANALICULATUM
Height: 4 feet  
Bloom Color: Green
Bloom Range: May-July
Sun: Partial/Shade
Moisture: Mesic-Dry Mesic
Notes: Shade; green-white to white flowers.

**BLUE FLAG IRIS**
Scientific Name: IRIS SHREVEI
Height: 1 foot  
Bloom Color: Purple
Bloom Range: June
Sun: Partial/Full
Moisture: Wet-Wet Mesic
Notes: Prefers wetter conditions, interesting foliage.

**OHIO SPIDERWORT**
Scientific Name: TRADESCANTIA OHIENSIS
Height: 3 feet  
Bloom Color: Purple
Bloom Range: May-August
Sun: Partial/Full
Moisture: Wet Mesic-Dry
Notes: Slender foliage with clumping flowers.

**PALE PURPLE CONEFLOWER**
Scientific Name: ECHINACEA PALLIDA
Height: 3 feet  
Bloom Color: Lavender
Bloom Range: June-July
Sun: Partial/Full
Moisture: Mesic-Dry
Notes: Blooms early summer, attracts butterflies and hummingbirds.

**PRAIRIE PHLOX**
Scientific Name: PHLOX PILOSA
Height: 2 feet  
Bloom Color: Pink
Bloom Range: May-August
Sun: Partial/Full
Moisture: Wet Mesic-Dry
Notes: Pretty plant with multiple blooms.

**BUTTERFLY MILKWEED**
Scientific Name: ASCLEPIAS TUBEROSA
Height: 2 feet  
Bloom Color: Orange
Bloom Range: June-August
Sun: Partial/Full
Moisture: Mesic-Dry Mesic
Notes: Very late to emerge, attracts monarchs.

**PRAIRIE SPIDERWORT**
Scientific Name: TRADESCANTIA BRACTEATA
Height: 1 foot  
Bloom Color: Purple
Bloom Range: May-August
Sun: Full
Moisture: Dry Mesic-Dry
Notes: Shorter version of spiderwort with clumping flowers.

**LONG-HEADED CONEFLOWER**
Scientific Name: RATIBIDA COLUMNIFERA
Height: 3 feet  
Bloom Color: Yellow
Bloom Range: Yellow
Sun: Partial/Full
Moisture: Mesic-Dry Mesic
Notes: Long seed head.

**MISSOURI EVENING PRIMROSE**
Scientific Name: OENOTHERA MACROCARPA
Height: 1 foot  
Bloom Color: Yellow
Bloom Range: May-September
Sun: Partial/Full
Moisture: Dry Mesic-Dry
Notes: Pretty flowers, spreading habit

**PRAIRIE COREOPSIS**
Scientific Name: COREOPSIS PALMATA
Height: 2 feet  
Bloom Color: Yellow
Bloom Range: June-August
Sun: Partial/Full
Moisture: Mesic-Dry
Notes: Pretty yellow with lots of flowers.
# FLOWERS: Mid to Late Bloom Range

## WILD PETUNIA
**Scientific Name:** RUELLIA HUMILIS  
**Height:** 1 foot  
**Bloom Color:** Purple  
**Bloom Range:** June-August  
**Notes:** Pretty purple blooms.

## NODDING ONION
**Scientific Name:** ALLIUM CERNUUM  
**Height:** 2 feet  
**Bloom Color:** Lavender  
**Bloom Range:** July-August  
**Notes:** Graceful plant in onion family, drooped seed head, spreading habit.

## WILD SWEET WILLIAM
**Scientific Name:** PHLOX MACULATA  
**Height:** 3 feet  
**Bloom Color:** Pink  
**Bloom Range:** June-August  
**Sun:** Partial/Full  
**Moisture:** Mesic-Dry  
**Notes:** Lots of blooms on tall, stalky plants, prefers wetter conditions.

## PRAIRIE ONION
**Scientific Name:** ALLIUM STELLATUM  
**Height:** 2 feet  
**Bloom Color:** Pink/Purple  
**Bloom Range:** July-August  
**Sun:** Partial/Full  
**Moisture:** Mesic-Dry  
**Notes:** Graceful plant in onion family, spreading habit.

## HAREBELL
**Scientific Name:** CAMPANULA ROTUNDIFOLIA  
**Height:** 1 foot  
**Bloom Color:** Purple  
**Bloom Range:** June - September  
**Sun:** Partial/Full  
**Moisture:** Dry Mesic-Dry  
**Notes:** Pretty plant with long bloom time.

## ROYAL CATCHFLY
**Scientific Name:** SILENE REGIA  
**Height:** 4 feet  
**Bloom Color:** Red  
**Bloom Range:** July-August  
**Sun:** Partial/Full  
**Moisture:** Mesic-Dry  
**Notes:** Great red color.

## MOUNTAIN MINT
**Scientific Name:** PETALOSTEMUM PUPRUREUM  
**Height:** 2 feet  
**Bloom Color:** Purple  
**Bloom Range:** July-September  
**Sun:** Partial/Full  
**Moisture:** Mesic-Dry  
**Notes:** Stalky with purple bloom.

## PURPLE PRAIRIE CLOVER
**Scientific Name:** PETALOSTEMUM PUPRUREUM  
**Height:** 2 feet  
**Bloom Color:** White  
**Bloom Range:** June-September  
**Sun:** Partial/Full  
**Moisture:** Mesic-Dry  
**Notes:** Stalky with white bloom.

## RATTLESNAKE MASTER
**Scientific Name:** ERYNGIUM YUCCIFOLIUM  
**Height:** 4 feet  
**Bloom Color:** White  
**Bloom Range:** July-September  
**Sun:** Partial/Full  
**Moisture:** Wet Mesic - Dry Mesic  
**Notes:** Unique plant with spiky seed heads, no petals.
**TURTLEHEAD**
Scientific Name: CHELONE GLABRA
Height: 5 feet  
Bloom Color: Cream
Bloom Range: July - September
Sun: Full
Moisture: Wet - Wet Mesic
Notes: Interesting white/cream blooms, tall plant that prefers wetter conditions.

**GREAT BLUE LOBELIA**
Scientific Name: LOBELIA Siphilitica
Height: 3 feet  
Bloom Color: Blue
Bloom Range: July - October
Sun: Partial/Full
Moisture: Wet - Mesic
Notes: Good fall color, prefers wetter conditions.

**WILD BERGAMOT / BEE BALM**
Scientific Name: MONARDA FISTULOSA
Height: 4 feet  
Bloom Color: Lavender
Bloom Range: July - September
Sun: Partial/Full
Moisture: Wet Mesic-Dry
Notes: Butterflies love, spreading habit.

**BLACK-EYED SUSAN**
Scientific Name: RUDBECKIA HIRTA
Height: 2-3 feet  
Bloom Color: Yellow
Bloom Range: July - October
Sun: Full
Moisture: Wet Mesic-Dry
Notes: Long-lasting bloom time.

**BUTTON BLAZING STAR**
Scientific Name: LIATRIS ASPERA
Height: 3 feet  
Bloom Color: Purple
Bloom Range: July - October
Sun: Partial/Full
Moisture: Mesic - Dry
Notes: Attracts butterflies

**CREAM GENTIAN**
Scientific Name: GENTIANA FLAVIDA
Height: 3 feet  
Bloom Color: Cream
Bloom Range: August - September
Sun: Partial/Full
Moisture: Wet Mesic-Dry Mesic
Notes: Unique white flowers.

**SNEEZEWEED**
Scientific Name: HELENIUM AUTUMNALE
Height: 4 feet  
Bloom Color: Yellow
Bloom Range: August - October
Sun: Partial/Full
Moisture: Wet-Wet Mesic
Notes: Tall yellow with many long-lasting flowers, prefers wetter conditions.

**AROMATIC ASTER**
Scientific Name: ASTER OBLONGIFOLIUS
Height: 2 feet  
Bloom Color: Purple
Bloom Range: August - October
Sun: Partial/Full
Moisture: Dry Mesic - Dry
Notes: Aster that blooms from late summer until the first hard frost.

**HEATH ASTER**
Scientific Name: ASTER ERICOIDES
Height: 2 feet  
Bloom Color: White
Bloom Range: August - October
Sun: Partial/Full
Moisture: Mesic - Dry
Notes: Very easy to grow and blooms late into fall.
**SHRUBS & GRASSES**

### Shrubs

#### Lead Plant
- **Scientific Name:** AMORPHA CANESCENS
- **Height:** 6 inches
- **Sun:** Partial/Full
- **Moisture:** Dry Mesic-Dry
- **Notes:** Growing in shrubs with spike-like masses of purple blossoms.

#### New Jersey Tea
- **Scientific Name:** CEANOTHUS AMERICANUS
- **Height:** 3 feet
- **Bloom Color:** White
- **Bloom Range:** June - August
- **Sun:** Partial/Full
- **Moisture:** Mesic - Dry
- **Notes:** Deciduous shrub. Flowers loved by butterflies and hummingbirds and birds eat the seeds.

### Grasses

#### Blue Grama
- **Scientific Name:** BOUTELOUA GRACILIS
- **Height:** 6 inches
- **Sun:** Partial/Full
- **Moisture:** Dry Mesic-Dry
- **Notes:** Nice border/transition grass.

#### Little Bluestem
- **Scientific Name:** ANDROPOGON SCOPARIUM
- **Height:** 3 feet
- **Sun:** Partial/Full
- **Moisture:** Mesic-Dry
- **Notes:** Beautiful fall color/winter interest.

#### Bottlebrush Grass
- **Scientific Name:** HYSTRIX PATULA
- **Height:** 3 feet
- **Sun:** Partial/Shade
- **Moisture:** Mesic - Dry Mesic
- **Notes:** Interesting seed head.

#### Prairie Dropseed
- **Scientific Name:** SPOROBOLIS HETEROLEPIS
- **Height:** 3 feet
- **Sun:** Partial/Full
- **Moisture:** Wet Mesic - Dry
- **Notes:** Clumping grass.

#### Buffalo Grass
- **Scientific Name:** BUCHLOE DACTYLOIDES
- **Height:** 5 inches
- **Sun:** Full
- **Moisture:** Mesic - Dry
- **Notes:** Needs full sun.

#### Sideoats Grama
- **Scientific Name:** BOUTELOUA CURTIPENDULA
- **Height:** 2 feet
- **Sun:** Partial/Full
- **Moisture:** Mesic - Dry
- **Notes:** Graceful grass