



Adding Color to Your Garden with Native Plants

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Rutgers Master Gardener and Environmental Steward

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Agenda



The importance of native plants



Transforming your yard



Adding color with native plants



References

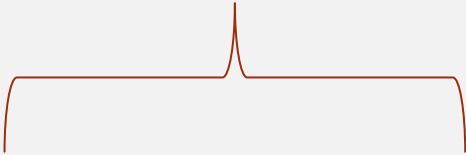
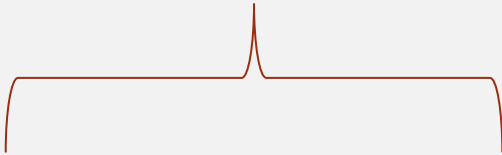
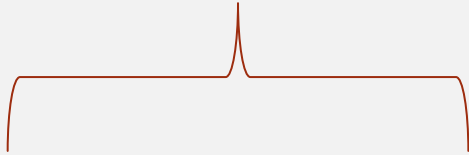
Native Species

USDA

With respect to a particular ecosystem, a species that, other than as a result of an introduction, historically occurred or currently occurs in that ecosystem



Scientific Nomenclature

Genus	Species	Cultivar
		
<i>Asclepias</i>	<i>incarnata</i>	'Ice Ballet'

Why Natives?

- ▶ Plants are foundation of all terrestrial ecosystems
- ▶ Most animals don't eat plants directly, rather indirectly through insects
- ▶ 90% of insect herbivores are specialists
- ▶ Slow adaption over millions of years has enabled insect-host plant relationships

Without native plants & insects,
entire food web collapses



Monarch caterpillar eating Swamp
Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)

How Many Natives?

- ▶ 96% of birds rear their young on insects, mostly caterpillars
- ▶ Carolina chickadees: 6000 – 9000 caterpillars until fledging
- ▶ Suburban yards need at least 70% native biomass to sustain bird populations



Which Native Plants?

www.nwf.org/NativePlantFinder

Justin Meissen

Native Plant Finder
[BETA]

FIND NATIVE PLANTS

FIND BUTTERFLIES

MY LIST

Native Plants (By Zip Code)

Discover native plants, ranked by the number of butterfly and moth species that use them as host plants for their caterpillars.

FLOWERS AND GRASSES

SAVE

12100

goldenrod
Solidago
Asterales

SAVE

7600

strawberry
Fragaria
Rosales

SAVE

6500

sunflower
Helianthus
Asterales

SAVE

3200

joe-pye weed, thoroughwort, do ...
Eupatorium
Asterales

SAVE

2900

violet
Viola
Violales

SAVE

2800

lupine
Lupinus
Fabales

SAVE

2700

deer vetch, trefoil
Lotus
Fabales

SAVE

2600

geranium
Geranium
Geraniales

VIEW ALL

TREES AND SHRUBS

SAVE

51300

oak

SAVE

41400

beach plum, cherrv, chokecherr ...

SAVE

35700

birch

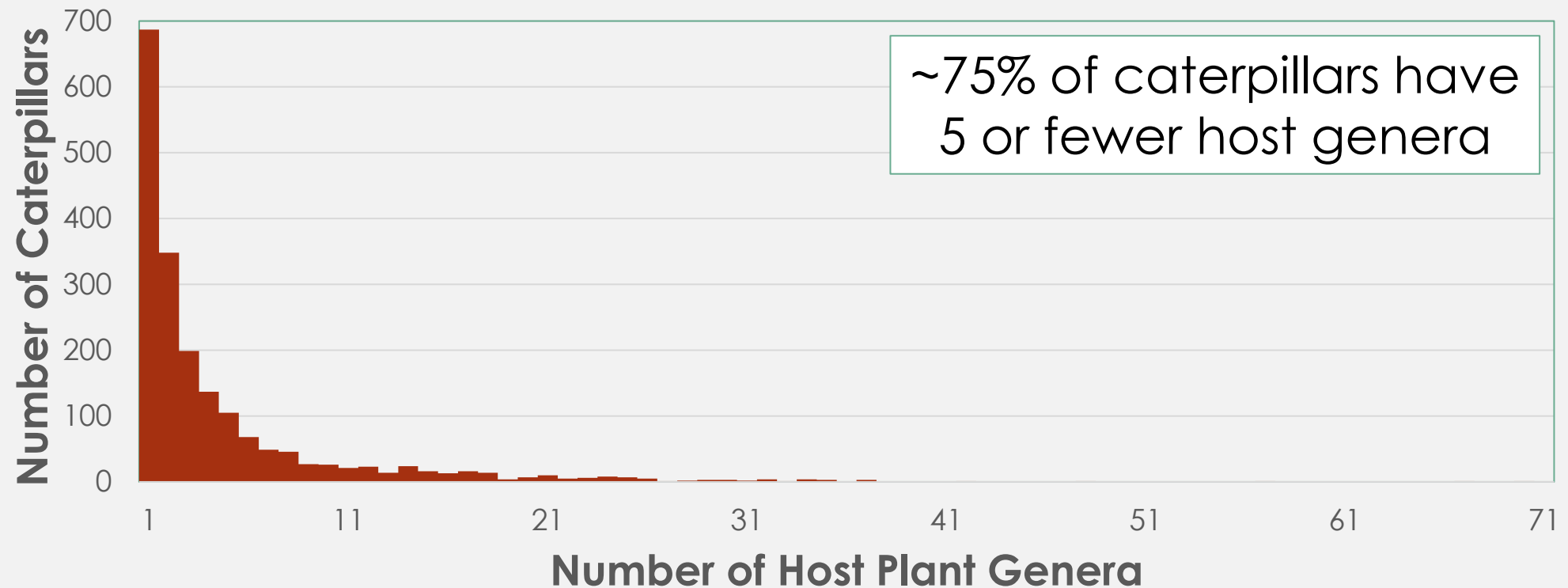
SAVE

35400

willow

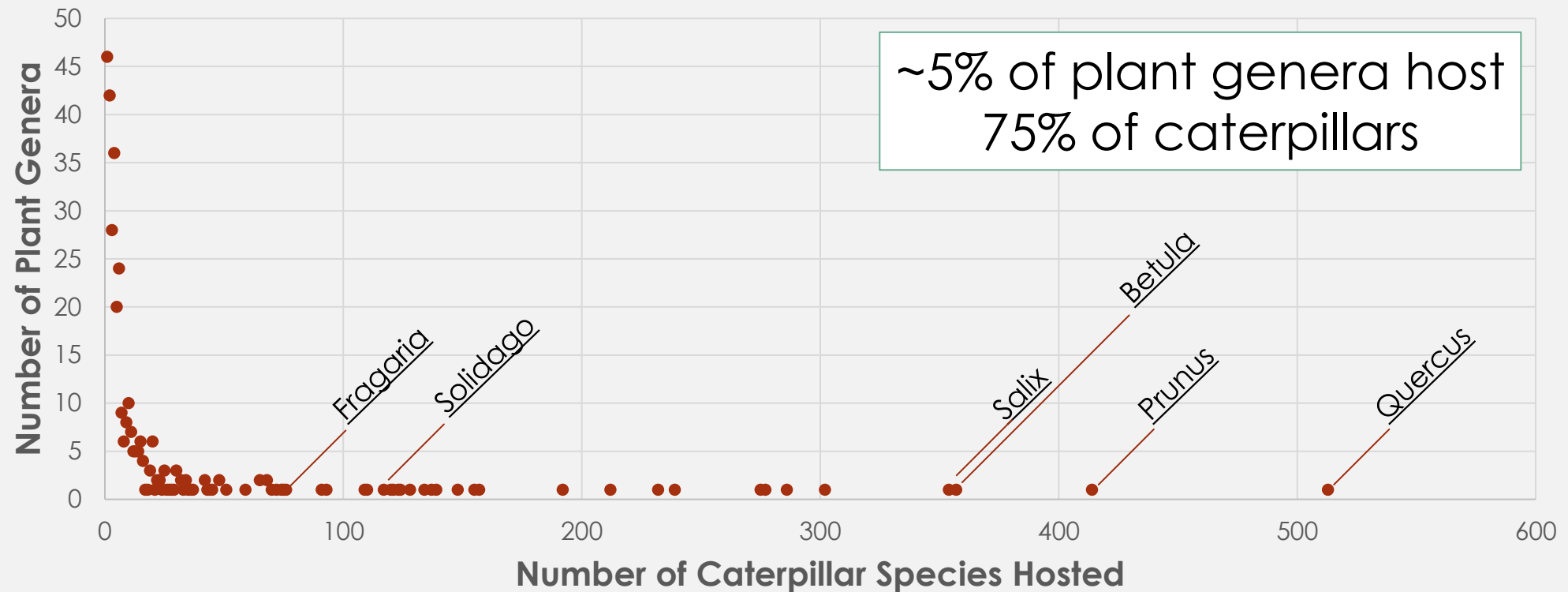
Caterpillar Specialization

Middlesex County



Best Plants for Caterpillars

Keystone Plants



Bees

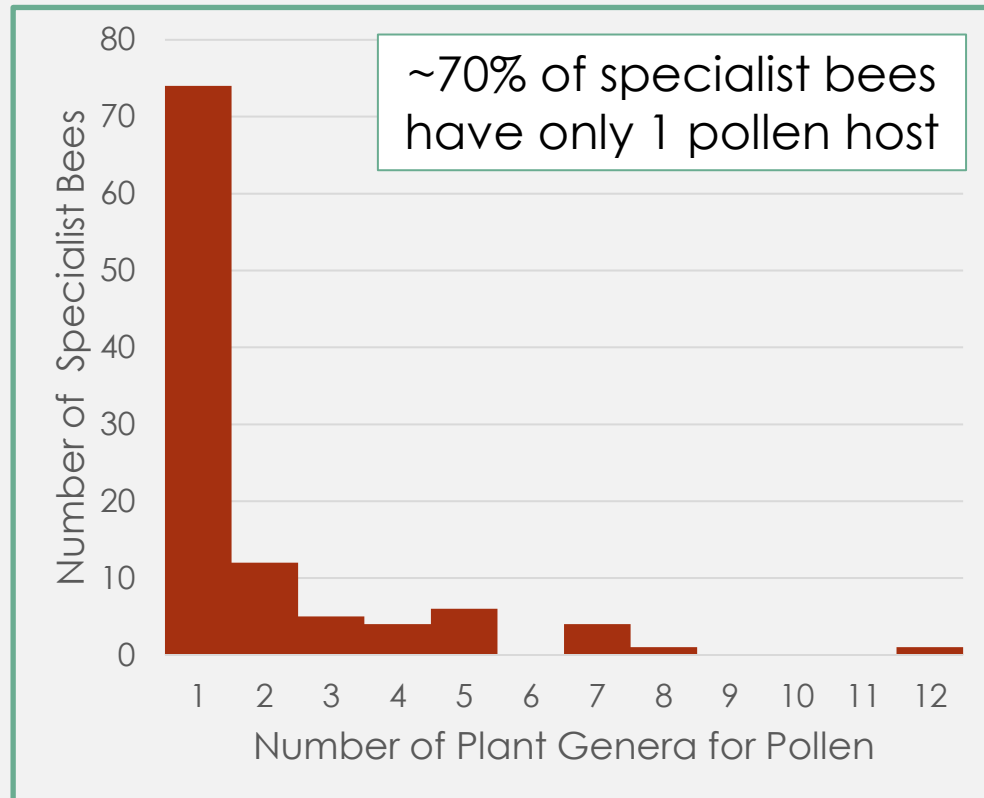
- ▶ ~90% of plants pollinated by animals, mostly bees
- ▶ 25% of native bees are pollen specialists*
- ▶ ~100 specialist native bees in NJ*



Colletes species

* Jarrod Fowler, www.jarrodfowler.com

Specialist NJ Native Bees*



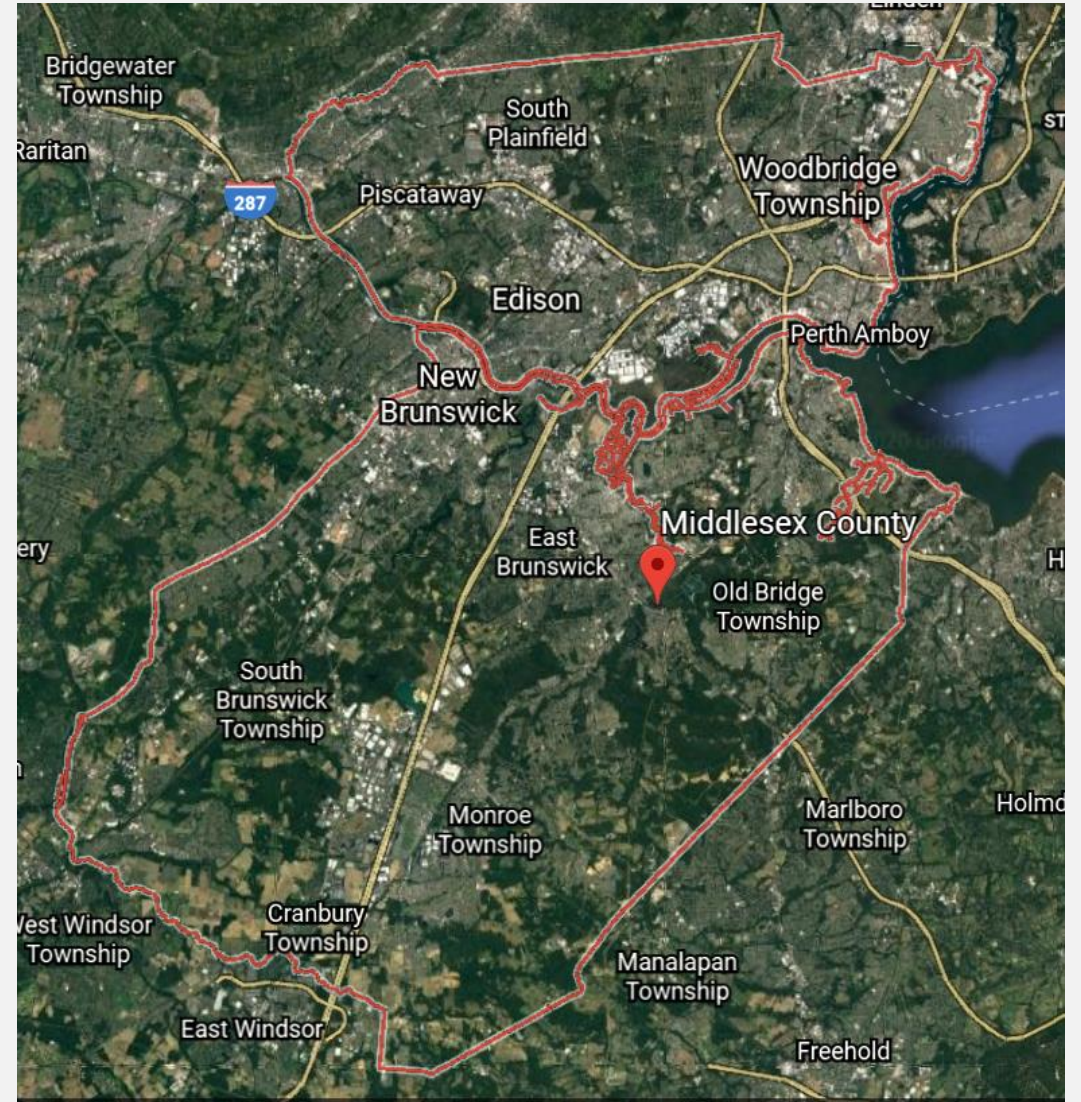
Top Plant Genera	Number of Bees
Solidago	23
Helianthus	16
Rudbeckia	12
Chrysopsis, Grindelia	10
Euthamia, Salix	8
Coreopsis, Symphyotrichum	7
Cirsium	6
Erigeron, Heterotheca, Vaccinium	5
Physalis, Ratibida, Silphium	4

* Jarrod Fowler, www.jarrodfowler.com

Connectivity Matters

- Native preserves
 - Too small and too separated to sustain biodiversity
- Habitat fragmentation
 - Small populations with natural population fluctuations → extinction
- Biological corridors needed
 - Habitat creation where we live and work

Homegrown National Park®



Agenda



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Transforming your yard



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References

Suburban Yards in Transition

Today

- Big lawns
 - High water & fertilizer requirements
- Mostly non-native plants
 - Pest free
- Low value to food web

Future

- Minimal lawn
 - 20% reduction from today
- Mostly native plants
 - No fertilizer or watering needed once established
- Biological corridor to natural areas

What You Can Do



Don't plant invasives



Remove existing invasives



Reduce lawn size



Plant natives

Invasive Species

Non-native species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health



www.njisst.org

Photo: James H. Miller, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org



Winged Burning Bush, *Euonymus alatus*

Reduce Lawn

- Make incremental changes
 - Increase size of existing beds
 - Create hedgerows along property lines
 - Create island gardens
- Remove existing grass
 - Cover grass with cardboard & 3" mulch layer in spring & plant in fall
 - Dig up with spade (2 – 3" layer)



Moss Phlox
Phlox subulata



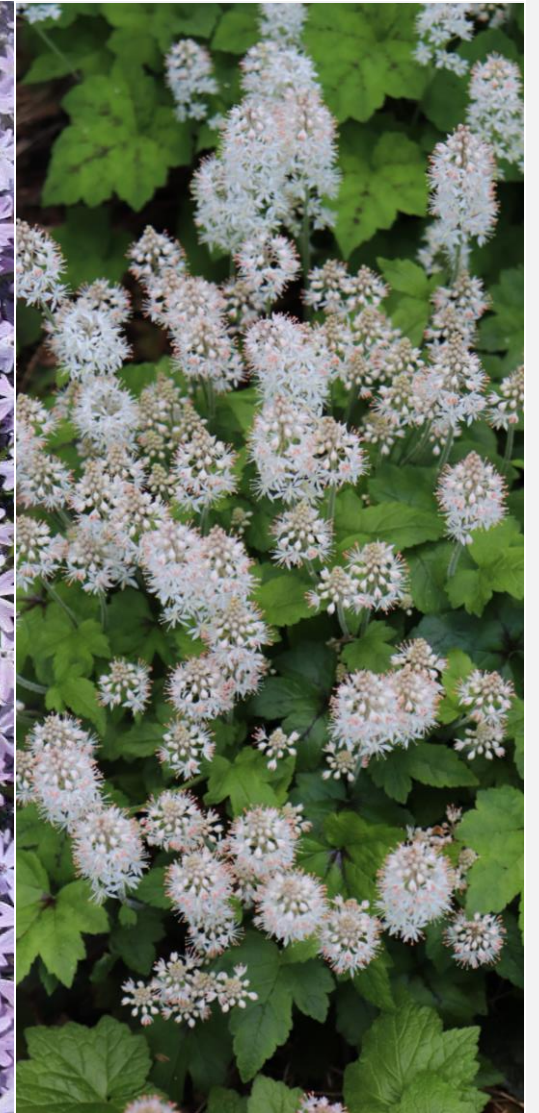
Foamflower
Tiarella cordifolia

Plant Natives

- Good garden design principles
 - Right plant in the right place
 - Select plants to get flowers spring – fall
 - Grasses, seeds & bark for winter interest
- Keystone plants
 - Bees like blue, purple, violet, white & yellow
 - Butterflies are attracted to red, yellow, orange, pink & purple
- Green mulch
 - Use plants to do the work of mulch



Moss Phlox
Phlox subulata



Foamflower
Tiarella cordifolia

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References

Brilliant Whites



Penstemon pallidus
Pale Beardtongue



Penstemon digitalis
Foxglove Beardtongue



Prunus maritima
Beach Plum

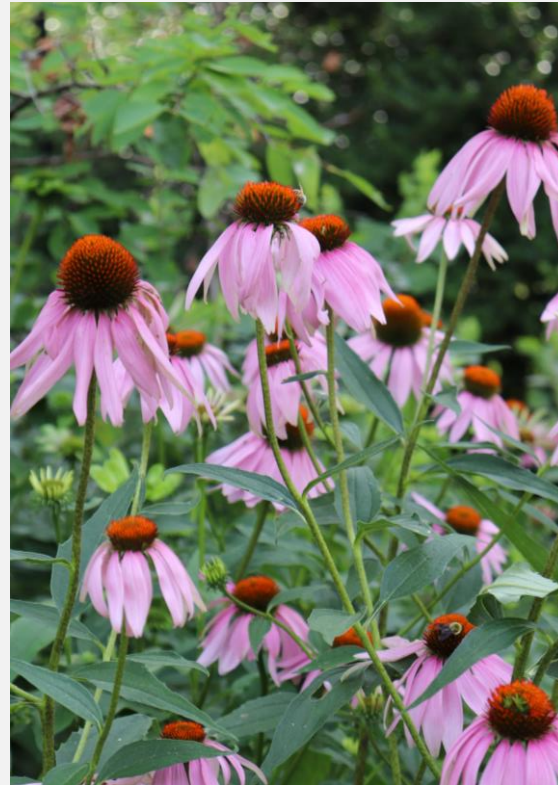


Symphyotrichum cordifolium
Heart-leaved Aster

Cool Purples and Blues



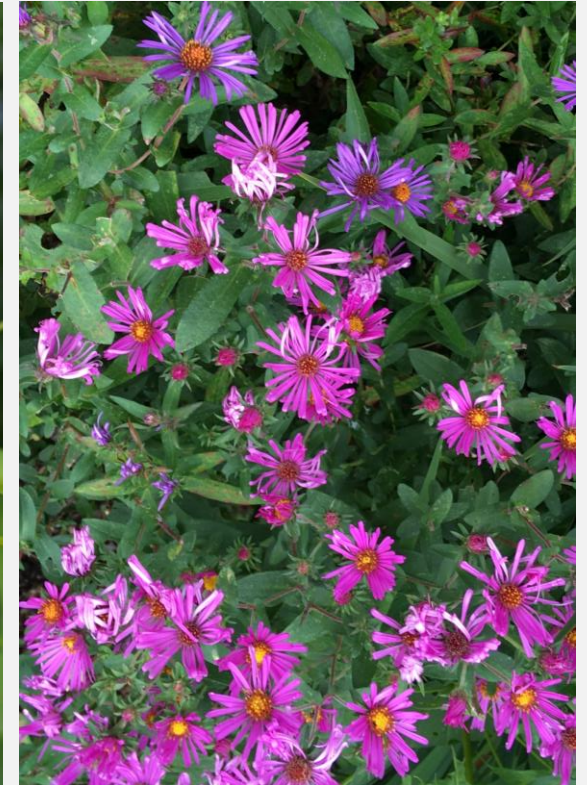
Liatris spicata
Dense Blazing Star



Echinacea purpurea
Purple Coneflower



Lobelia siphilitica
Great Blue Lobelia



Symphyotricum novae-angliae
New England Aster

Evergreens and Green Flowers



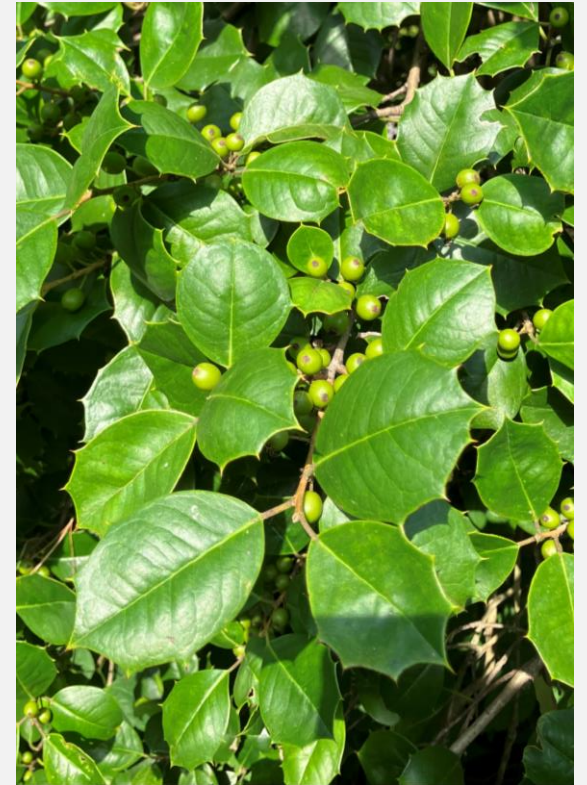
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi
Bearberry



Lindera benzoin
Spicebush



Ilex glabra
Inkberry



Ilex opaca
American Holly

Sunny Yellows and Golds



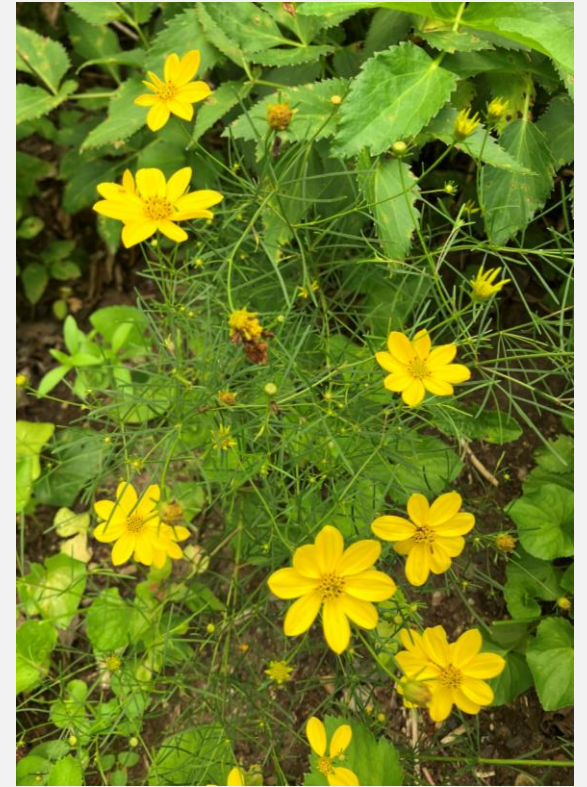
Packera aurea
Golden Ragwort



Zizia aurea
Golden Alexander



Coreopsis lanceolata
Lanceleaf Tickseed



Coreopsis verticillata
Threadleaf Tickseed

More Sunny Yellows and Golds



Heliopsis helianthoides
Oxeye Sunflower



Hypericum prolificum
Shrubby St. John's Wort



Rudbeckia fulgida
Orange Coneflower



Solidago speciosa
Showy Goldenrod

Fabulous Oranges, Reds and Pinks



Lonicera sempervirens
Coral Honeysuckle



Asclepias tuberosa
Butterfly Weed



Lobelia cardinalis
Cardinal Flower



Eutrochium purpureum
Sweet Joe Pye Weed

Native Plant Sources

- ▶ Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve, New Hope, PA
- ▶ Pinelands Direct, Columbus, NJ, www.pinelandsdirect.com
- ▶ Toadshade Wildflower Farm, Frenchtown, NJ, www.toadshade.com
- ▶ www.prairienursery.com
- ▶ www.prairiemoon.com
- ▶ Native Plant Society of New Jersey, www.npsnj.org – list of where to buy natives

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Why Natives?

- ▶ Tallamy, Douglas W. *Bringing Nature Home*
- ▶ Tallamy, Douglas W. *Nature's Best Hope*
- ▶ [Homegrown National Park](#)

Getting Started with Natives

- ▶ Jayne, Sarah W. *Nature's Action Guide*

Native Plants

- ▶ Leopold, Donald J. *Native Plants of the Northeast*
- ▶ [Missouri Botanical Garden Plant Finder](#)
- ▶ [Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center](#)
- ▶ [Native Plant Society of NJ](#)

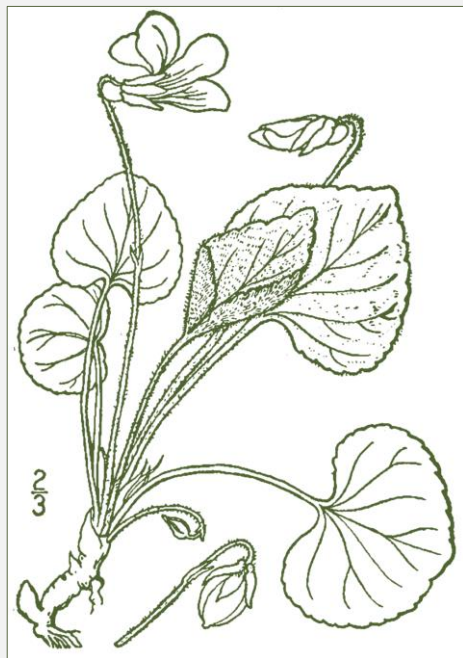
Photo Credits

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

- *Eutrochium purpureum*, George H. Bruso
- *Liatris spicata*, James L. Reveal
- *Lobelia cardinalis*, Stephanie Brundage
- *Lobelia siphilitica*, Julie Makin
- *Rudbeckia fulgida*, Sally & Andy Wasowski

Missouri Botanical Garden Plant Finder

- *Lindera benzoin*
- *Heliopsis helianthoides*



Viola sororia, Common Blue Violet
State Flower of New Jersey