



# PLANT LOCAL Martha's Vineyard

A nature-based landscaping guide

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Plant Local MV is a collective of conservation groups, botanists, gardeners, landscapers, nurseries, and community members focused on building the island's resilience to climate change by incorporating native plants into gardens, yards, and commercial landscapes.

We encourage you to use this guide to learn about the diverse and beautiful plants native to Martha's Vineyard and available for your gardens and landscape. Apply these guidelines to support nature-based landscaping and encourage others to join the "Plant Local" movement.

***It's the Vineyard Way.***

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## Why Plant Local?

As our climate changes, the island is experiencing more weather extremes that include droughts, extreme rainfall events, intense winds and severe storms.

**Native plants are naturally more resilient** to these extremes because they have adapted to the island's soils by developing deep root systems that require less water and make them drought tolerant. Their roots also control erosion of soil and filter rainwater to keep our groundwater and coastal ponds clean. Native meadows capture more carbon than traditional lawns and require less mowing and maintenance, which reduces CO2 emissions and leaves you more time to enjoy the diverse butterflies, bees, and birds that visit your blooming landscape.



### Native plants are under threat

Sadly, our native plants are under threat from habitat loss to development and the introduction of non-native plants to our landscapes. A 2022 botanical study by Polly Hill Arboretum found that we have lost nearly 80 native plant species since 1998 while non-native plants increased by over 200 species! These changes degrade the health of our ecosystems and make them less resilient to weather extremes. Some imported plants have brought new pest species and diseases, while others have become invasive here because they are free from the grazers and insect pests that control them in their native lands. Japanese Knotweed, Autumn Olive, Wineberry, and Multiflora Rose are just a few of these species that spread extensively and smother our native plants in every town on the island.

### Taking Action

Taking action to protect and strengthen our green spaces, wherever they occur, is one of the best tools we have to create climate resilience. Community members and landscape professionals around the island are taking action by prioritizing native plants in their landscapes and "Planting Local".



## Your Yard Matters

We all have a part to play in protecting our island and helping our environment have the best chance of withstanding impacts from climate change. The shrublands, grasslands, forests, and wetlands here are home to a wide variety of beautiful plants and animals that are regionally or globally rare, and each of us can help them survive and thrive. People grow plants for ornament, food and shelter; unfortunately, we have long neglected planting for wildlife in support of our local ecology. When you practice nature-based landscaping, your yard becomes a stepping stone of habitat that is part of the web of life for pollinators and other wildlife; connecting natural communities across the island.

## Common Misconceptions about Native Plants

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- #1 They are “messy.”** Native plants come in a diverse array of flowering perennials, ground covers, tall grasses, and fruiting shrubs that offer just as much beauty and choice as non-native species. While some native plants can look more unkempt than others you can have a stunning garden that also provides habitat for birds, butterflies, and other wildlife by using thoughtful design tenets, such as massing groups of plants in pleasing combinations.
- #2 They will take over your yard.** While some native plants grow vigorously, those we recommend here do not. Native plants coexist in harmonious ecological balance within the regions they have evolved. Conversely, plants from other parts of the world can become invasive when planted here. Free from the herbivores and seed predators that control them in their homeland, these invasives spread easily where they overwhelm native plants and deplete local diversity.
- #3 They attract ticks.** The vast majority of insects attracted to native plants are beneficial pollinators and predators that help control pest populations. Ticks are found in native and non-native vegetation where deer, mice, rabbits, skunks, raccoons, and turkeys travel. Unless you can exclude all of these animals from your yard, you will have ticks. You can find balance by mowing and maintaining the walking paths or areas of your yard you need while growing and maintaining native plants in the rest of your yard. A daily tick check is your best way to prevent tick-borne illness. For your best tick bite prevention practices, visit [www.mvboh.com/prevention](http://www.mvboh.com/prevention).
- #4 They require more work.** Native plants require similar effort to plant and maintain until they mature, but once they are established they are less work than their imported counterparts. Since they flourish naturally in the right soil, sun, and moisture conditions, native plants are known for being low-maintenance. However, you need to select native plants that are right for your location. We’ve made it easy to select plants adapted for sun or shade, dry or wet conditions in this booklet. We’ve also provided planting guides.
- #5 They are difficult to find in nurseries.** While this was once the case, sources of native plants are now becoming more common with each growing season. You can purchase plants on-island and ask our local nurseries for the plants listed in this guide. And if you don’t see a native plant you are looking for please ask! Every time a nursery hears a request for native plants it makes it more likely that they will expand their selection.



# Getting Started

## Building a new home?

- **Prioritize preserving your property’s native plants and character**, leaving as much intact as possible. Let your architect and landscape designer know you want plans that include minimal site disturbance as well as salvaging and replanting native plants from your building site post-construction.
- **Discuss how much lawn and garden space you will need**, and plan a native meadow or pollinator patch with walking paths in other areas around your home.
- **Remove any invasive species as part of your site preparation.**
- **Before any land clearing or construction begins**, meet with your builder and excavation company to make your plan for saving and protecting natural areas on your property clear to them. Ask that your topsoil be stored on site. Don’t let it be hauled away.

## Selecting Native Plants

Know where you plan to grow. Is the planting area in sun or shade? Is the soil sandy and dry or more clay-like and damp? Is it exposed to salt spray or high winds? You may have areas with different soil, sun and moisture extremes. Also, think about these microhabitats that you could create or may exist already that you can enhance with native plants.

- **Walkways**
- **Shade gardens**
- **Rain gardens**
- **Pollinator patches**
- **Pocket meadows**
- **Woodland edge**

Use these sites and resources to select your plants:

- **Our Top 20 plants in this guide**
- **Native Plant Trust Plant Finder**  
([plantfinder.nativeplanttrust.org/Plant-Search](http://plantfinder.nativeplanttrust.org/Plant-Search))
- **Polly Hill Arboretum’s List of Native Plants**

# Top 20 Native Plants

The following pages introduce you to our top 20 local native plants for Martha's Vineyard. These plants were chosen for their ecological benefits, growth characteristics, ease of care, beauty, and availability at local nurseries. Sample planting guides using these top 20 native plants are provided in the pages that follow the plant descriptions.



## Perennials:

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Blue flag Iris	<i>Iris versicolor</i>
Cardinal flower	<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>
Joe Pye weed	<i>Eutrochium dubium</i>
New England aster	<i>Symphotrichum novae-angliae</i>
Orange butterfly weed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>
Red columbine	<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>
Seaside goldenrod	<i>Solidago sempervirens</i>
Swamp milkweed	<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>
Swamp rose-mallow	<i>Hibiscus moscheutos</i>

## Grasses:

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Little bluestem	<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>
Pennsylvania sedge	<i>Carex pensylvanica</i>
Switchgrass	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>

## Trees:

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American holly	<i>Ilex opaca</i>
Beetlebung	<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>
Eastern red cedar	<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>

## Shrubs:

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Arrowwood	<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>
Beach plum	<i>Prunus maritima</i>
Bearberry	<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>
Inkberry	<i>Ilex glabra</i>
Sweet pepperbush	<i>Clethra alnifolia</i>



# Blue Flag Iris

*Iris versicolor*



# Cardinal Flower


*Lobelia cardinalis*



## Description:

**Height:** 2 - 3 feet

**Spread:** 2 - 3 feet

**Light:** Part shade 

**Soils:** Wet, acidic

**Blooms:** May - August


## Benefits

- Important food source for pollinators
- Spread via rhizomes
- Host Plant for American Ear Moth and Iris Borer Moth.
- Nectar source for hummingbirds

## Description:

**Height:** 1 - 4 feet

**Spread:** 1 - 2 feet

**Light:** Sun - Part & Full 

**Soils:** Moist to wet

**Blooms:** May - October

## Benefits

- Important food source for pollinators
- Great plant for rain gardens
- Spread via rhizomes
- Host Plant for Pink-washed Looper Moth and Plevie's Aquatic Moth
- Nectar source for swallowtail butterflies, hummingbirds.



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Shade Garden



Wetland Loving



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Shade Garden



Wetland Loving

# Joe Pye Weed

*Eutrochium dubium*



# New England Aster

*Symphotrichum novae-angliae*



## Description:

**Height:** 1 - 5 feet

**Spread:** 2 - 4 feet

**Light:** Sun - Part shade 

**Soils:** Moist, sandy, acidic

**Blooms:** July - October


## Benefits

- Important food source for pollinators
- Great plant for rain gardens
- Spreads via self seeding
- Host Plant for Burdock Borer ,Red Groundling, and Ruby Tiger Moths
- Birds consume the seeds

## Description:

**Height:** 1 - 4 feet

**Spread:** 2 - 3 feet

**Light:** Part Shade 

**Soils:** Moist

**Blooms:** August - November

## Benefits

- Native wildflower species
- Great plant for rain gardens
- Great for pocket meadows
- Host Plant for Aster-head Phaneta and Pearl Crescent



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Shade Garden



Wetland Loving



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Pocket Meadow



Drought Tolerant



# Butterfly Weed

*Asclepias tuberosa*



# Eastern Red Columbine


*Aquilegia canadensis*



## Description:

**Height:** 1 - 2 feet

**Spread:** 1 - 2 feet

**Light:** Sun 

**Soils:** Dry/moist, well-drained, sandy

**Blooms:** May - September



## Benefits

- Important food source for pollinators
- Great plant for pocket meadows
- Host plant for Grey Hairstreak and Monarch Butterflies. Host plant for Lined Ruby Tiger Moth.
- Nectar source for bees, hummingbirds, and butterflies

## Description:

**Height:** 0.5 - 3 feet

**Spread:** 0.5 - 1 feet

**Light:** Full - Part shade  

**Soils:** Dry/moist, well-drained, sandy

**Blooms:** May - July

## Benefits

- Important food source for pollinators
- Perfect for a shade garden
- Host plant for Plant for Columbine Duskywing and Columbine Borer Moth
- Nectar source for source for bees and hummingbirds



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Pocket Meadow



Drought Tolerant



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Shade Garden



Drought Tolerant

# Seaside Goldenrod

*Solidago sempervirens*




# Swamp Milkweed

*Asclepias incarnata*



## Description:

- Height:** 2 - 6 feet
- Spread:** 2 - 3 feet
- Light:** Sun 
- Soils:** Moist, well-drained
- Blooms:** August - October

## Benefits

- Important food source for pollinators
- Great plant for pocket meadows
- Spreads by seed dispersal
- Host Plant for Goldenrod Gall Moth, the Asteroid, & Brown hooded Owllet
- Provides nectar for monarch butterflies



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Pocket Meadow



Drought Tolerant

## Description:

- Height:** 1 - 5 feet
- Spread:** 1.5 - 2 feet
- Light:** Sun - Part shade  
- Soils:** Moist/Wet, Sandy to clay
- Blooms:** June - October

## Benefits

- Important food source for pollinators
- Great plant for pocket meadows
- Perfect for a rain garden
- Host Plant for Unexpected Cynia and Milkweed Tussock moths
- Host for Monarch butterflies



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Pocket Meadow



Wetland Loving

# Swamp Rose-Mallow

*Hibiscus moscheutos*



# Little Bluestem

*Schizachyrium scoparium*



## Description:

**Height:** 3 - 8 feet

**Spread:** 2 - 4 feet

**Light:** Sun - Part shade  

**Soils:** Moist to wet, slightly acidic

**Blooms:** July - September

## Benefits

- Important food source for pollinators
- Great plant for rain gardens
- Caterpillar host plant for Painted lady and Grey Hairstreak butterflies, Io Moth, and Glossy Black Idia
- Nectar source for bees, swallowtail butterflies, and hummingbirds



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Shade Garden




Wetland Loving

## Description:

**Height:** 1.5 - 2 feet

**Spread:** 1 - 2.5 feet

**Light:** Sun - Part shade  

**Soils:** Well-drained, sandy

**Blooms:** June-December

## Benefits

- Important food source for pollinators
- Perfect for a pocket meadows
- Spreads by rhizomes
- Host Plant for Crossline Skipper and Leonard's Skipper
- Used as cover and nesting material for numerous wildlife species



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Pocket Meadow



Great for Livestock

# Pennsylvania Sedge

*Carex pensylvanica*



# Switchgrass

*Panicum virgatum*



## Description:

**Height:** 0.5 - 1.5 feet

**Spread:** 0.5 - 1.5 feet

**Light:** Sun, part & full shade



**Soils:** Dry to moist

**Blooms:** May - June


## Benefits

- Important food source for pollinators
- Great plant for pocket meadows
- Spreads via rhizomes
- Host Plant for Mulberry Wing

## Description:

**Height:** 3 - 6 feet

**Spread:** 1 - 2 feet

**Light:** Part shade 

**Soils:** Dry/moist, all textures

**Blooms:** August - November

## Benefits

- Important food source for pollinators
- Perfect for a pocket meadows
- Can be pollinated by wind
- Host Plant for Hobomok and Delaware Skippers
- Birds feed on seeds and use the grasses for nesting



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Pocket Meadow



Drought Tolerant



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Pocket Meadow



Great for Livestock

# American Holly

*Ilex opaca*



# Beetlebung

*Nyssa sylvatica*



## Description:

**Height:** 25 - 60 feet

**Spread:** 1 - 15 feet

**Light:** Sun 

**Soils:** Moist, Acidic, well drained

**Blooms:** Mar - June



## Benefits

- Important food source for birds
- Great plant for shade garden
- Host Plant for Henry's Elfin, Io Moth, and Polyphemus Moth
- Berries attract small mammals and birds

## Description:

**Height:** 30 - 60 feet

**Spread:** 1 - 10 feet

**Light:** Sun, part & full  

**Soils:** Moist, Acidic

**Blooms:** April - June

## Benefits

- Important food source for birds
- Perfect for a shade garden
- Host Plant for The Hebrew, False Underwing, and Luna Moth
- Many birds and small mammals forage on the fruits



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Shade Garden



Drought Tolerant



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Shade Garden



Drought Tolerant

# Eastern Red Cedar

*Juniperus virginiana*



# Southern Arrowwood

*Viburnum dentatum*



## Description:

**Height:** 30 - 40 feet

**Spread:** 10 - 30 feet

**Light:** Sun 

**Soils:** Dry, various

**Blooms:** Mar - May

## Benefits

- Important food source for birds
- Host Plant for Juniper Hairstreak, Juniper Seed Moth, and Juniper Geometer
- Cedar Waxwings favor the berries



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Shade Garden



Drought Tolerant

## Description:

**Height:** 6 - 8 feet

**Spread:** 5 - 15 feet

**Light:** Sun, part & full shade



**Soils:** Dry to wet, Acidic soils and sands

**Blooms:** May - July

## Benefits

- Important food source for pollinators
- Flood, fire, and insect resistant
- Perennial shrub
- Host Plant for Spring Azure, Brown Scoopwing, and Green Marvel
- Nectar source for bees and butterflies. Birds eat the berries



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Shade Garden



Drought Tolerant

# Beach Plum

*Prunus maritima*



# Bearberry

*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*



## Description:

**Height:** 3 - 6 feet

**Spread:** 4 - 20 feet

**Light:** Sun 

**Soils:** Dry, sandy

**Blooms:** April - June


## Benefits

- Important food source for pollinators
- Plums are edible by wildlife & humans
- Host Plant for Coral Hairstreak and Isabella tiger moth, and Red-spotted Purple
- Fruits loved by numerous wildlife species

## Description:

**Height:** 0.5 - 1 feet

**Spread:** 1 - 15 feet

**Light:** Sun, part & full shade 

**Soils:** Dry to moist, acidic

**Blooms:** December - June

## Benefits

- Important food source for pollinators
- Great for a shade garden
- Spreads by rhizomes
- Host Plant for Cranberry Spanworm Moth, Hoary Elf, and Freija Fritillary
- Nectar attracts butterflies and hummingbirds



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Used for Jam



Drought Tolerant



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Shade Garden



Drought Tolerant

# Inkberry

*Ilex glabra*



# Sweet Pepperbush

*Clethra alnifolia*



## Description:

**Height:** 6 - 12 feet

**Spread:** 5 - 8 feet

**Light:** Part shade

**Soils:** Moist, acidic

**Blooms:** June - September

## Benefits

- Important food source for birds
- Great for shade gardens
- Host Plant for Holly Sallow and Pawpaw Shinx moths
- Nectar source for bees and butterflies
- Birds eat the fruits



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Shade Garden



Drought Tolerant

## Description:

**Height:** 6 - 12 feet

**Spread:** 3 - 4 feet

**Light:** Sun, part & full shade



**Soils:** Moist/wet, acidic

**Blooms:** July - August

## Benefits

- Important food source for pollinators
- Great for a shade garden
- Host Plant for Sweet Pepperbush Nola Moth and Large Lace Border
- Nectar used by bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds



Nectar Source



Host Plant



Seed Source



Shade Garden



Wetland Loving



# Tips for Buying Native Plants



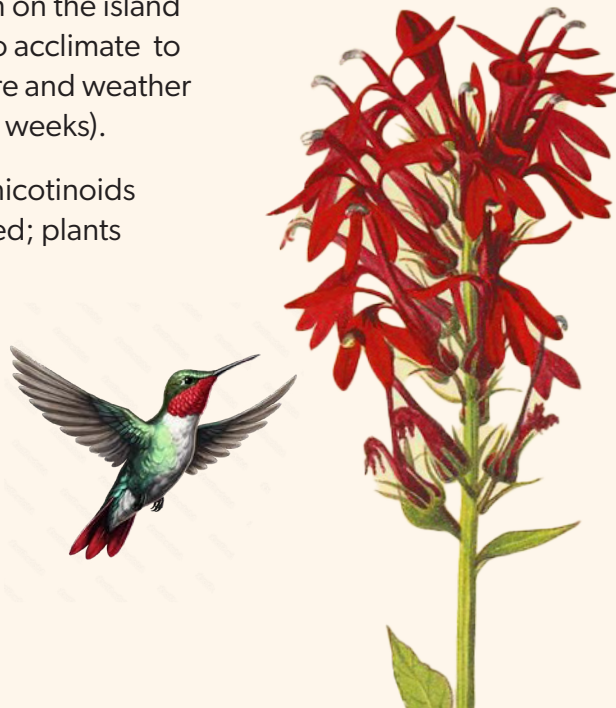
## Polly Hill Arboretum has native plants for sale from

**May to October (9:30am-4:00pm)  
while the Visitor Center is open.**

They use locally sourced seeds to grow MV WildType plants and also source some native plants from regional nurseries.

**Local nurseries also carry a variety of native plants. Try to find plants that meet these standards whenever possible:**

- 1** Grown from local native seeds.
- 2** Grown on the island and if not, they have been on the island long enough to acclimate to our temperature and weather extremes (4 - 6 weeks).
- 3** Free from neonicotinoids (seeds untreated; plants not sprayed).



## Caring for your Native Plants

Once they are established, native plants will require less water and maintenance. However, to thrive and flourish, they will need some of your attention for the first couple years in the form of weeding out invasive species that may compete with them.

- **Plant as soon as possible after you purchase your plants.** The best times to plant are during the spring or in the fall, as these seasons allow plants to get settled and grow new roots before or after summer's hot, dry weather.
- **Choose the right location.** Be sure to plant your plants in an area that matches their soil and sun conditions.
- **Water them immediately after planting.** The soil may seem moist, but watering freshly planted perennials will help them acclimate faster. Soil particles can settle easier when they are wet, so they have a better chance of binding to the new roots.
- **Set a watering schedule.** Plants are healthiest when they receive a consistent amount of water each week. Establish a watering schedule in the morning and evening, and water your plants according to their individual needs. Saturate the soil completely. If the soil is very dry from the sun or lack of rain, water the plants lightly. Once the water has soaked completely, water the plants again.
- **Protect your plants.** Rabbits and deer like to eat almost all young plants, and raccoons sometimes uproot new plantings. You can put chicken wire around and over your new plants, or use a non-toxic mammal repellent (such as Bobex) regularly.
- **To mulch or not to mulch.** While mulching around your plants can suppress some weeds, mulch can sometimes prevent native perennials from expanding and filling in a patch as you may intend. You need to decide your preference. If you do not mulch, you may need to keep up with weeding more frequently, but you will be rewarded with a denser pollinator patch.

# Problem Plants (Avoid or Remove)

When you remove or avoid purchasing invasive plants, you are protecting the local flora and co-dependent fauna that define the Island's unique character.

Despite some of these plants being banned from sale in Massachusetts, they are occasionally still available. Avoid them at nurseries and make sure they are not included in your planting plan if you are working with a landscape designer.



## Bamboo

Bamboo spreads invasively and is very difficult to control. It crowds out native species and becomes a monoculture. Please enjoy your bamboo in pots indoors.

## Japanese silvergrass

(*Miscanthus sinensis*) (Invasive, banned plant)

Planted widely for its toughness and durability, this popular ornamental grass has escaped cultivation and threatens our globally rare sandplain grasslands. Spread by seeds, as well as by birds using it for nesting material, this popular grass has become a problem in numerous states over the last 20 years.



## Common and Japanese barberry

(*Berberis vulgaris*, *B. thunbergii*) (Invasive, banned shrub) Shrubs that grow in full sun to full shade. Birds relish the red fruits, which help them to spread along roadsides and disturbed woodlands. These two species will hybridize with the same results: Abundant fruits that help it spread through native habitats. This plant promotes tick abundance.



## Creeping myrtle, a.k.a periwinkle

(*Vinca minor*) is often used as an ornamental plant for its evergreen foliage and blue, purple, or white flowers. However, it can spread quickly by sending out trailing branches that root in moist soil, crowding out and smothering other plants. Creeping myrtle can also limit the growth of new saplings and inhibit the natural succession process in forests.



## English ivy

(*Hedera helix*) An aggressive invader threatening all levels of forested and open areas, growing along the ground as well as into the forest canopy. As a groundcover, it creates a monoculture that does not support native species. Vines climb up tree trunks and envelop branches and twigs, blocking sunlight from the host tree's foliage, impeding photosynthesis and causing branch death. An infested tree will exhibit decline for years before it dies. The added weight of the vines also makes trees susceptible to blowing over in storms, making them hazardous near homes and roads.



## Privets

(*Ligustrum sp.*) easily escape cultivation to invade adjacent areas, where they can form dense thickets that shade out and take the place of native shrubs and herbaceous plants. The shady thickets make conditions unsuitable for native seedlings. Compounds in the leaves protect plants from leaf-feeding insects which include native herbivorous species.



## Wineberry

(*Rubus phoenicolasius*) (Invasive, banned plant) While it produces delicious berries and is popular in 'food farms,' this plant quickly escapes gardens and spreads. Local birds eat the berries and spread wineberry throughout neighborhoods along road edges and into conservation lands where it smothers native plants. Infestations expand rapidly. This is a banned plant in Massachusetts.



### Japanese knotweed

(*Fallopia japonica*) forms stands that are so dense they shade out other plant species, reducing wildlife habitat for native species. This plant is extremely hard to eradicate once established, so the key is preventing establishment by manually removing immature clusters.



### Mugwort

(*Artemisia vulgaris*) spreads aggressively through an extensive rhizome system and will readily form large, mono-specific stands. Stands of mugwort displace native species, and can delay or disrupt succession in natural ecosystems. Mugwort pollen is a common cause of hay fever.



### Oriental bittersweet

(*Celastrus orbiculatus*) a vigorously growing vine that climbs over and smothers vegetation which may die from excessive shading or breakage. When bittersweet climbs high up on trees the increased weight can lead to uprooting and blow-over during high winds and heavy snowfalls.



### Autumn olive

(*Elaeagnus umbellata*) Over time, colonies of these shrubs can grow thick enough to crowd out native plants. Roadside plantings of these high-fruited species lure birds close to fast traffic, contributing to high mortality rates for some species of birds. The nitrogen-fixing capabilities of these species can interfere with the nitrogen cycle of native communities that may depend on infertile soils.



### Burning bush

(*Euonymus alatus*) (Invasive, banned shrub) A highly invasive shrub, burning bush distributes seeds at or near the base of plants or spreads it widely into both full sun or deep shade situations. Widely popular because of its fall color.



Japanese knotweed



### Multiflora rose

(*Rosa multiflora*) is extremely prolific and can form impenetrable thickets that exclude native plant species. This exotic rose readily invades open woodlands, forest edges, successional fields, and meadows that have been subjected to land disturbance.



### Japanese honeysuckle

(*Lonicera japonica*) Rapidly growing, dense stands climb and overwhelm native vegetation. It can girdle small saplings by twining around them and can form dense mats in the canopies of trees, shading everything below. Leaves appear early and remain late in the season, providing a photosynthetic advantage.



### Norway Maple

(*Acer platanoides*) produces large numbers of seeds, grows quickly, and is extremely hardy. The ability of this species to grow in deep shade makes it particularly threatening to native forest habitats. Norway maple is a strong competitor in the forest understory; eventually it out-competes native tree species in the forest canopy. Its dense stands shade out native understory vegetation such as spring ephemerals and seedlings of native trees; thus, it can reduce native species diversity and change the structure of forest habitats.

# Plant this, Not that:

# Recommended plants to replace problem plants

## 👍 Arrowwood | Burning bush 👎



**Arrowwood** (*Viburnum dentatum*) adds plenty of seasonal interest to any landscape. Creamy white flowers appear in late spring, bundled into lovely flat-topped clusters. Blue-black berry-like drupes follow the flowers in the summertime, ripening completely in early fall. And as fall marches on, the lustrous dark green leaves take on lovely fall shades of yellow, glossy red, or reddish-purple. If you're looking for a larger statement piece in your space, the arrowwood viburnum should be on the list of contenders.



**Burning bush** a.k.a. Winged euonymus (*Euonymus alatus*) (Invasive, banned shrub) is a highly invasive shrub, burning bush distributes seeds at or near the base of plants or spreads it widely into both full sun or deep shade situations. Widely popular because of its fall color.

## 👍 Bayberry | Privet 👎



**Bayberry** (*Morella pensylvanica*) is a semi-evergreen shrub that will retain some leaves during mild Vineyard winters. The berries are used in bayberry candles and remain on the plant through winter, and due to this long life they are an important reserve food source for chickadees, red-bellied woodpeckers, bluebirds, and yellow-rumped warblers as other berries run out over the winter months. Bayberry branches loaded with fruit and leaves can be used as a fragrant indoor decoration.



**Privets** (*Ligustrum sp.*) easily escape cultivation to invade adjacent areas, where they can form dense thickets that shade out and take the place of native shrubs and herbaceous plants. The shady thickets make conditions unsuitable for native seedlings. Compounds in the leaves protect plants from leaf-feeding insects which include native herbivorous species.

## 👍 Bearberry | Vinca 👎



**Bearberry** Bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) is a ground-hugging, wildlife-friendly evergreen with green, leathery leaves that darken to a reddish-purple color in the fall. Springtime clusters of tiny, bell-shaped, pink to white flowers bloom on red stems that attract hummingbirds, butterflies, and have special value for native bees. Bearberries ripen to a bright red color in the fall and persist into the winter providing food for birds and other wildlife. Bearberry is a host plant for 14 species of butterfly and moth larvae.



**Creeping myrtle**, a.k.a. periwinkle (*Vinca minor*) is often used as an ornamental plant for its evergreen foliage and blue, purple, or white flowers. However, it can spread quickly by sending out trailing branches that root in moist soil, crowding out and smothering other plants. Creeping myrtle can also limit the growth of new saplings and inhibit the natural succession process in forests.



# Plant this, Not that:

# Recommended plants to replace problem plants

## 👍 Blueberry | Japanese barberry 👎



**Highbush Blueberry** (*Vaccinium corymbosum*) is valued for its fruit and brilliant fall foliage. It is naturally abundant on Martha's Vineyard and a keystone plant in the ecosystems found on the island. Bees are the primary pollinator for blueberry flowers and an essential partner in producing blueberries. Rich in nectar, their flowers also attract butterflies and moths. It flowers in May, providing a spring nectar source for native insects and its fruits ripen in July.



**Common and Japanese barberry** (*Berberis vulgaris*, *B. thunbergii*) (Invasive, banned shrub) Shrubs that grow in full sun to full shade. Birds relish the red fruits, which help them to spread along roadsides and disturbed woodlands. These two species will hybridize with the same results: Abundant fruits that help it spread through native habitats. This plant promotes tick abundance.

## 👍 Blue flag irises | Daylilies 👎

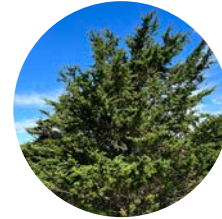


**Northern Blue Flag** (*Iris versicolor*) Blooming in the early summer, this iris has lovely, lavender blue flowers over upright sword-like foliage. Eye-catching and showy, it is a vigorous perennial that can form spreading clumps in wet areas, yet remains tame in the backyard environment.



**Daylilies** (*Hemerocallis fulva*) are so popular that they are ubiquitous along roadsides. The common orange daylily is non-native, and has infested natural sites in every eastern state, usually escaping from homes. When daylilies overtake natural areas they displace native plants and form dense groups that can be extremely hard to remove.

## 👍 Eastern red cedar | Leyland cypress 👎



**Eastern red cedar** (*Juniperus virginiana*) This rugged, native evergreen is the most widely distributed conifer in the eastern part of North America, which is a testament to its hardiness. The dense branches of the eastern red cedar provide important refuge and shelter for songbirds and the soft, silvery bark peels off in long, flexible strips which squirrels and other small mammals use in their nest materials. The berries are an important source of food for more than 50 bird species as well as a variety of mammal species.



**Leyland cypress** (*Cupressus × leylandii*) roots grow very aggressively, often causing damage to nearby buildings, driveways, and sidewalks. The roots can also grow into sewer pipes or water lines, which can cause significant problems that require expensive repairs.



# Plant this, Not that:

# Recommended plants to replace problem plants

## 👍 Goldenrods & Asters | Oxeye daisy 👎



**Goldenrods & Asters** are among the most important native pollinator plants in a natural ecosystem, serving as food and host plants for multitudes of beneficial insects. By incorporating an assortment of these plants (there are many species to choose from) into your landscape you are creating the building blocks of a healthy functioning environment.



**Oxeye daisy** (*Leucanthemum vulgare*) is an aggressive invasive species. Once established, it can spread rapidly by means of roots and seeds into undisturbed meadows, woodlands, and riparian areas. It forms dense stands that tend to displace native vegetation, especially wildflowers. The end result is a species-poor plant community of use to few wildlife species.

## 👍 Inkberry | Boxwood or Japanese holly 👎



**Inkberry** (*Ilex glabara*) It's bright red berries provide winter interest and are enjoyed by many species of birds and small mammals while its glossy, dark green leaves remain attractive throughout mild Vineyard winters. The greenish-white flowers that appear in spring attract many pollinators, and this plant serves as a host plant for native butterflies.



**Japanese holly** (*Ilex crenata*) (Candidate for invasive species list) This low-growing evergreen shrub can spread aggressively in disturbed areas. It tolerates dense shade. Although not designated by the state as an invasive species, our observations, along with our conservation partners on Island have noted a steady increase of this plant throughout Martha's Vineyard.

## 👍 Switchgrass | Silvergrass 👎

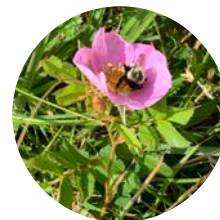


**Switchgrass** (*Panicum virgatum*) Bring a bit of the tallgrass prairie into your backyard with this handsome plant. Switchgrass produces a lovely cloud of airy seed heads in the fall and adds a lovely golden color to the autumn landscape, while creating valuable habitat, providing food and shelter for birds and other wildlife.



**Japanese silvergrass** (*Miscanthus sinensis*) (Invasive, banned plant) Planted widely for its toughness and durability, this popular ornamental grass has escaped cultivation and threatens our globally rare sandplain grasslands. Spread by seeds, as well as by birds using it for nesting material, this popular grass has become a problem in numerous states over the last 20 years.

## 👍 Virginia rose | Beach rose 👎



**Virginia rose** (*Rosa virginiana*) is the most common wild rose in eastern North America. This drought-tolerant, disease-resistant species works beautifully in hedges, or growing to 6 feet tall as a specimen plant. Its bright pink flowers are fragrant and bloom throughout the summer months attracting a bevy of native bees and hosting around 100 species of butterflies and moths.



**Beach rose** (*Rosa rugosa*) is so ubiquitous in the coastal landscape, that many believe this plant to be a local native, however since it can grow in salty coastal environments it is a threat to biodiversity and ecosystem function, outcompeting native plants and forming dense thickets that displace native species by shading and taking over space. Rugosa fruits, seeds, and rhizomes can also float on tides and wash up on distant shores, forming colonies all along the coast.

# Sample Pollinator Garden Plans

Much of the joy of native plants comes from the act of planting them, it can be a creative process and the time to experiment with arrangements. While we encourage you to follow your muse, there are some basic tenets that will give your plants room to grow and create a natural looking environment that will please the eye.

## Consider the following tips:

- Don't worry about copying the guide exactly.
- These plants spread naturally and the design reflects that.
- Focus on heights, short plants towards edges, tall plants towards center/rear.
- Roughly 12" - 16" spacing between plants, do not plant in straight lines.
- Plant in odd numbers, 3, 5, 7 to create an impact.
- Dig all holes first to establish spacing, then lay out plants.

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Here are a few sample planting plans to get you started on **Planting Local pollinator gardens** or "patches." Choose the right plan based on your yard conditions:

- **Sun Seekers**
- **Shady Stunners**
- **Damp Divas**
- **Waterless Wonders**





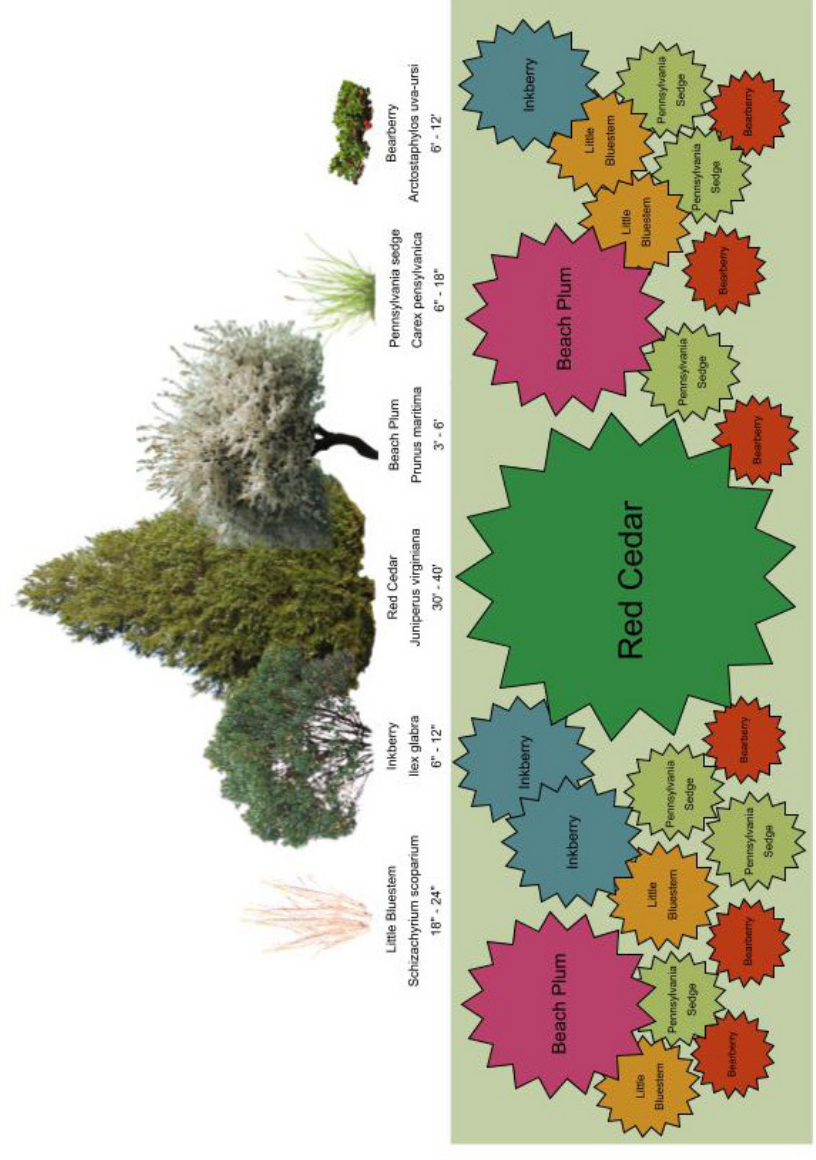
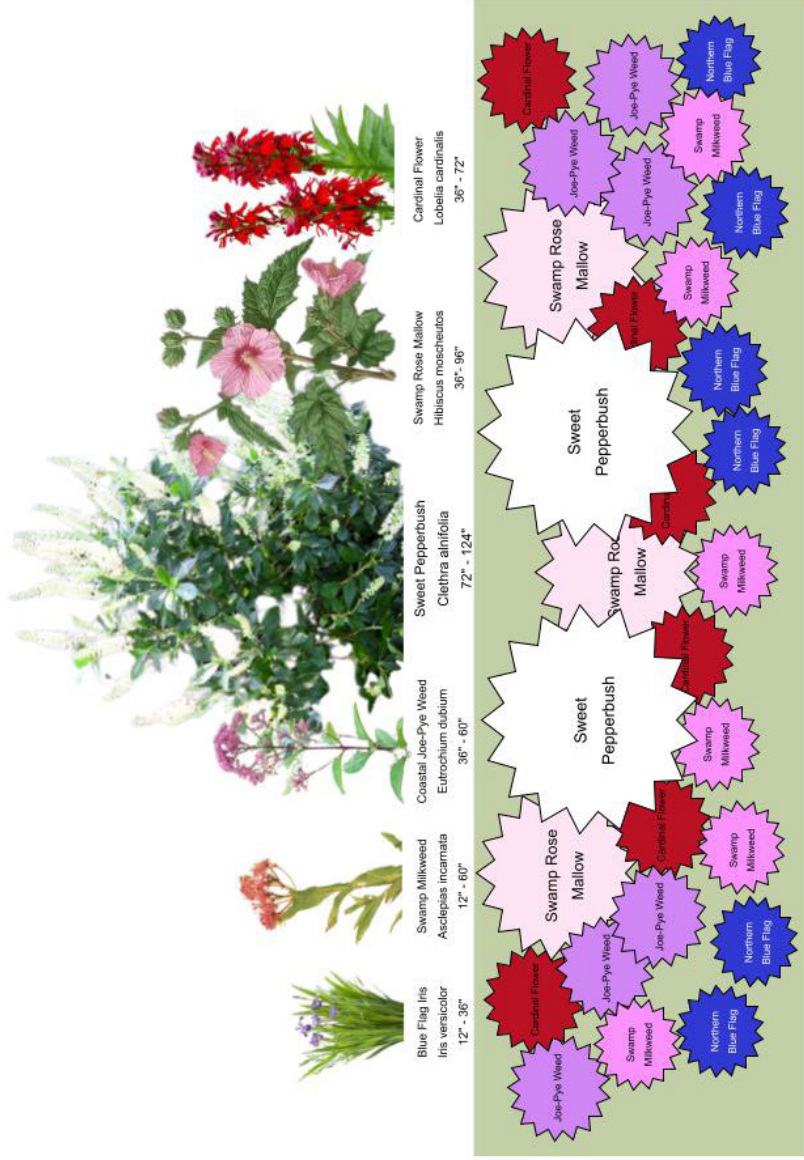


# Damp Diva Planting Guide

Our local damp divas can't help but show off their beauty whenever you get them anywhere near water. They love to get their feet wet, and once they do, just watch them grow! Soon they will each be trying to outcompete the other by putting forth the biggest, most spectacular blooms they can muster.

# Waterless Wonder Planting Guide

When it comes to serving drinks to these native locals you are better off offering them a glass of sand! Rather than supplemental waterings these beauties prefer to do their singing in the rain, and you will be humming a little ditty right along with them while you watch your water bill go down.





# Learn More and Share your Plant Local Effort with Us!



*Looking for more information?  
Use the QR code for the full list of  
plants native to Martha's Vineyard*



*Join the Natural Neighbors Network  
page on Facebook.  
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## THE VINEYARD WAY

