

Native plants boring? Unattractive? Never!

Native plants (also called indigenous plants) are those that have evolved over thousands of years in a particular region, in this case Southern Ontario and especially the Scugog watershed.

Because they can be found in fields and roadsides, Nurseries often don't grow many of them, and when they do they often breed a hybrid that may or may not fulfill the needs of the local fauna as habitat, or from stock that originates in another area. Because native plants can't be obtained easily in pots and containers, designers and landscapers do not use them in their projects. However, that does not mean they are not highly attractive.

This attitude is changing rapidly as new plant sources arise.

Why use native plants?

- ☆ Because native plants thrive on no care or maintenance even in these dry summers. They interact perfectly with the local soil microbes to provide each native plant with natural insect and disease protection. They, therefore, need no pesticides or herbicides which saves money, problems with chemicals and your energy. Also, because they need no fertilizers to be healthy, they spare Lake Scugog from more nutrients.
- ☆ Because native plants give your home and landscape a sense of place. Rather than a generic, anywhere-in-America yard, your landscaping will call out that you are home in southern Ontario, in Scugog.
- ☆ Because you will be planting things that are needed as habitat for all manner of interesting creatures ranging from deer down to the lowliest of native insect that feeds the birds we love to watch. The flower colours of native plants, their scents, nectar

and pollen are recognized by a wide range of butterflies and pollinating insects. Their flowers, nuts and seeds bring in song birds, shore birds and migrating fowl. Frogs and toads have places to hide and live safely providing intriguing spring sounds. This entertainment and enjoyment on our properties is vastly diminished in areas of cut lawn and exotic ornamentals.

- ☆ Because, if native plants are raised in landscape settings, they are very beautiful and have a wide variety of flowers, fruits, autumn colours, interesting shapes and sizes; and there are so many to choose from.
- ☆ Because native plants provide interest year around because their seeds, fruit and natural protection that draws birds, rabbits, owls and muskrats. In fall and spring, in-water native plants draw water fowl, and also provide habitat for tiny fish that feed the herons, osprey, mergansers, kingfishers and terns. All this makes living on the shores of Scugog so attractive and dynamic.
- ☆ Because by planting native plants you help to provide another remnant of balance in the natural ecological circles of life in the watershed; soil microbes which provide food for native plants, which provide food for local specialist insects, which provide food for larger and larger creatures within the natural environment; all in relationships that evolved thousands of years. Only a small percentage of southern Ontario vegetation is truly native. The rest is farmed land or naturalized imports such as Queen Anne's lace, ragweed, canary reed grass, Canada thistle, loosestrife, Scots pine, Norway maple, and many, many other imported forage grasses and invasive weeds.
- ☆ Because by allowing or planting native in-water plants you can clean the water of unburned oils and gasses, or other chemicals and help reduce e-coli pollution. By planting only natives you can also ensure that you will not be responsible for possibly introducing a destructive invasive exotic, a real problem when working next to water.

Sources of Native Plants

Local businesses that sell native plants:

Chalk Lake Greenhouses, Lakeridge Road, Uxbridge, (905) 649-5284

Grow-wild Natural Heritage Plant Nursery, Bobcaygeon & Pickering, (705) 875-5941

Rockwood Forest Nurseries, (705) 374-4700, hort@rockwoodforest.com.

Cullen Gardens, Native Plant Section, Erica Thimm, (905) 985-2866

A few other sources in Ontario:

Ontario Native Plants, Downsview (416) 633-1797 onp@nativeplants.ca

Native Plant Source, Kitchener (519) 748-2298 jthompson@kw.igs.net

Wildflower Farm, Schomberg, (1-866-GRO-WILD) www.wildflowerfarm.com

Local Consultants for design and installation:

Martin Galloway, Chalk Lake Greenhouses, (905) 649-5284

Erica Thimm, Prince Albert, (905) 985-2866

For a complete list of responsible dealers in Ontario contact the Society for Ecological Restoration, (905) 985-2263, www.ser.com or the North American Native Plant Society, nanps@nanps.org or Seeds of Diversity, (905) 623-0353, mail@seeds.ca

Questions about your own shoreline restoration?

Call the **Shoreline Restoration Co-ordinator, Kawartha Conservation**, 1-800-668-5722 or ...

Barbara Karthein, Scugog Shores Millennium Project, (905) 985-2263, bkarthein@yahoo.ca

Scugog Shores Millennium Project, September 2002.

Why native plants are
best for your
restoration project!

Information for planting healthy shorelines in the Scugog watershed

Developed by The Scugog Shores
Millennium Project
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Partners in shoreline restoration
Kawartha Conservation
Durham Land Stewardship Council
Victoria Land and Water Stewardship Council

Kawartha Fisheries Association