

Climate Proofing Your Yard

This is a resource guide to complement the **Climate Resiliency @ Home: Climate Proof Your Yard Workshop on April 29, 2021**.

Evaluate Your Yard and Lawn

- **Create Three Zones for Your Yard**
 1. **Areas Where You Will Keep Lawn**
 2. **Areas Where You Want Ground Cover, but not Grass**
 3. **Areas Where You Want Native Plant Gardens**

Climate Proofing Tips for Areas Where You Keep Your Lawn

- Mow your lawn at the highest height possible: between 3-4 inches
 - Longer grass means deeper roots and will require less irrigation
- Use a mulching mower which will return nutrients to the lawn so you have to fertilize less or not at all
- Aerate your soil in the fall. This will promote deeper roots, less compacted soil, and great absorption of water.
- Replace thirsty grass with a drought tolerant species mix

- *Sources for Low Maintenance Lawn Blend Grass*
 - Information about low mow or no mow lawns <https://www.prairienursery.com/resources-guides/about-no-mow-lawn/>

Climate Proofing Tips for Areas Where You Want Green Ground Cover, but not Grass

- First consider site conditions
 - What is the sun exposure?
 - Full Sun (6+ hours)
 - Partial Sun (3-6 hours)
 - Shade (Less than 3 hours)
 - How much water does the area received? How well does the water drain?

- Choose a native mat-forming perennial ground cover. **Native ground covers will require much less maintenance, require no fertilizer, and little supplemental watering (if any). Native plants support native pollinators, caterpillars, and birds.**
 - For Sunny Spots
 - Wild Strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*)
 - Semi-evergreen, mat-forming, tolerates many growing conditions and does best in the sun
 - Supports pollinators and dozens of moth and butterfly species
 - Moss phlox (*Phlox subulata*)
 - Purple lovegrass (*Eragrostis spectabilis*)
 - For Shady Spots
 - Barren strawberry (*Geum fragarioides*)
 - Canada mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense*)
 - Creeping phlox (*Phlox stolonifera*)
 - Foamflower (*Tiarella cordifolia*)

- Pennsylvania sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*)

Climate Proofing Tips for Areas Where You Want Green Ground Cover, but not Grass

- First consider site conditions
 - What is the sun exposure?
 - Full Sun (6+ hours)
 - Partial Sun (3-6 hours)
 - Shade (Less than 3 hours)
- Ground cover
 - Good native ground cover perennials for spring color, especially in the shade. Species act as a living mulch, stabilize the soil, and keep weeds under control
 - Creeping Phlox (*Phlox stolonifera*)
 - Foam flower (*Tiarella cordifolia*)
 - Good, native, grasslike ground cover
 - Appalachian Sedge (*Carex appalachica*)
 - Little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)
 - Native Shrub or two that fits with your color scheme
 - Ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*.)
 - Red chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia*) – will require pruning in landscape situations
 - Serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis*)
 - New Jersey Tea (*Ceanothus americanus*)
 - Oak-leaf Hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*)
 - Common Winterberry (*Ilex verticillate*)
 - Shorter to mid height Perennial Plants
 - Woodland Sunflower (*Helianthus divaricatus*)
 - Geranium (*Geranium maculatum*)
 - Blue flag iris (*Iris versicolor*)
 - Red columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*)
 - Blue mist flower (*Conoclinium coelestinum*)
 - Ox eye (*Heliopsis helianthoides*)
 - Sundial lupine (*Lupinus perennis*)
 - Spotted bee balm (*Monarda punctata*)
 - Foxglove beardtongue (*Penstemon digitalis*)
 - Taller Perennial Plants
 - Tall larkspur (*Delphinium exaltatum*)
 - Spotted Joe Pye weed (*Eutrochium maculatum*)
 - Jerusalem artichoke (*Helianthus tuberosus*)
 - New England Aster (*Symphotrichum novae-angliae*)
 - Ironweed (*Vernonia noveboracensis*)

WILDLIFE GARDENING AND LANDSCAPING PLANTS

Developed by Mark Faherty, Science Coordinator Mass Audubon Wellfleet Bay

Basic premise: Landscaping primarily with native plants helps support the full diversity of native insects, including those that pollinate our plants and feed the birds. Homeowners have a lot of collective power to help maintain our native biodiversity with their landscaping decisions, including both plant and chemical choices.

Cultivated Plants Available for Sale Locally or online that have some potential bird benefit by providing seeds, fruits, or nectar for hummingbirds

New England Natives

- Smooth beardtongue, *Penstemon digitalis*
- Wild Columbine, *Aquilegia canadensis*
- Lowbush blueberry, *Vaccinium angustifolium*
- Purple Coneflower, *Echinacea purpurea*
- Obedient Plant, *Physostegia virginiana*
- Orange Coneflower *Rudbeckia fulgida*
- Northern Blazing Star, *Liatris scariosa*
- Beebalm, *Monarda fistulosa*, *M. punctata*,
- Golden alexanders, *Zizia aurea*
- American spikenard, *Aralia racemosa*
- Cardinal Flower, *Lobelia cardinalis*
- Trumpet honeysuckle *Lonicera sempervirens*
- New England Aster, *Symphotrichum novae-angliae*
- Fall aster, *Aster oblongifolius* ('October Skies' is highly rated)
- Smooth Aster, *Aster laevis* ('Bluebird' is highly rated)
- Woodland aster, *Aster divaricatus*
- any Sunflower, *Helianthus spp*
- Turtlehead, *Chelone glabra*
- Cutleaf Coneflower, *Rudbeckia laciniata*
- Black-eyed Susan, *Rudbeckia fulgida*, var. *fulgida* or *R. hirta*
- New York Ironweed, *Vernonia novebracensis*
- Joe Pye Weed, *Eupatorium maculatum*
- Boneset, *Eupatorium perfoliatum*
- Helen's Flower/Sneezeweed, *Helenium autumnale*
- Dwarf honeysuckle. *Diervilla lonicera*
- Wild strawberry, *Fragaria virginiana*
- Common Yarrow, *Achillea millefolium*
- Barren strawberry, *Waldstenia (Geum) fragarioides*
- Goldenrods, various, *Solidago spp.*

New England Native Grasses and Sedges

- Prairie dropseed, *Sporobolus heterolepis*
- Little bluestem, *Schizachyrium scoparium*
- Switchgrass, *Panicum virgatum*
- Side Oats Grama, *Bouteloua curtipendula*
- Tufted Hairgrass, *Deschampsia cespitosa* (a subspecies is Endangered in MA)
- Wavy Hairgrass, *Deschampsia flexuosa*
- Pennsylvania Sedge, *Carex pensylvanica*

Native Wetland Shrubs

- Buttonbush, *Cephalanthus occidentalis*
- Winterberry Holly, *Ilex verticillata*
- Sweet Pepperbush, *Clethra alnifolia*
- Swamp Azalea, *Rhododendron viscosum*
- Chokeberries, *Aronia spp.*
- Native Dogwoods (4 species)
- Black Tupelo
- Virginia Creeper (late summer/fall)
- American Holly (winter)
- Winterberry and Inkberry hollies (winter)

For Seed-eating Birds:

- Evening primrose **W**
- Asters, goldenrods, anything else daisy family
- Birches
- Native grasses – various
- “Hard mast” producers: oak, beech, American hazelnut

Don't dead-head those last blooms of garden plants! Finches and sparrows will thank you.

For Hummingbirds:

- Wild Columbine, *Aquilegia canadensis*
- Trumpet honeysuckle, *Lonicera sempervirens*
- Beebalm, *Monarda didyma* and other *Monarda sp.*
- Cardinal Flower, *Lobelia cardinalis*
- Great Blue Lobelia, *Lobelia siphilitica*
- Giant Hyssop, *Agastache foeniculum*

Other Habitat Elements for pollinators and birds

- Bare sand for solitary nesting bees/wasps
- Dead wood for nesting bees and wasps
- Mud/water for moisture and nest material
- Wood piles/flaking bark for overwintering

Doug Tallamy lecture and research on native plants, birds, and insects:

- Maine Audubon Talk by Doug Tallamy: <http://bit.ly/TallamyTalkAudubon>
- Biodiversity for Birds: <http://bit.ly/TallamyBirds>

Books

- Bringing Nature Back Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants by Doug Tallamy
- Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation that Starts in Your Yard by Doug Tallamy

Native Plant Trust, including garden plant finder and Garden in the Woods

Native Plant Finder from the Native Plant Trust

- <https://plantfinder.nativeplanttrust.org/Plant-Search>
Native Plant Trust – Native Plants for Sale
- <https://www.nativeplanttrust.org/for-your-garden/buy-native-plants/>

Retail native plant sources, including mail order:

- <https://grownativemass.org/Great-Resources/nurseries-seed>
- <http://nenativeplants.uconn.edu/nativePlantSources.php>

Garden cleanup advice for wildlife gardening:

- <https://savvygardening.com/6-reasons-not-to-clean-up-your-garden-this-fall/>
- <https://savvygardening.com/spring-garden-clean-done-right/>