



**Encouraged Native Planting Practices for  
the Town of Waynesville**

To ensure sustainable growth, it is essential to conserve open space and farmland by promoting infill development within urbanized areas. Protecting and enhancing water quality, forests, and rural lands is a priority, as well as preserving iconic views and mountain vistas. Encouraging the development of parks and greenways will safeguard watersheds and improve public access to open spaces.

Additionally, continuing to adopt and promote best management practices in energy use, efficiency, and waste management is vital for long-term environmental stewardship.

### **Waynesville Comprehensive Land Use Agenda**

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## Why are native plants so important?



Native plants are essential for the well-being of regional ecosystems and the environment. Biodiversity is crucial for local food webs that depend heavily on native plants, which give local species, such as insects, birds, and mammals, a place to live, feed, and shelter. Numerous native species have co-evolved with the local fauna. Certain insects and birds, for instance, depend on native plants for food or nesting locations. In the absence of these plants, these species may find it difficult to survive.

Milkweed, goldenrod, and coneflowers are just a few native plants that provide pollinators like bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds with nectar. The production of food crops and the reproduction of several plants depend on these pollinators. Supporting native plants contributes to the survival of these vital species.

Native plants are more inherently suited to the soil, water, and climate of their area, than compared to non-native plants. They are more sustainable and simpler to maintain because they often use fewer resources, such as water, fertilizer, and pesticides. Additionally, they are more resistant to illnesses and pests found in the area.

In places like hillsides and riverbanks, native plants' deep, broad root systems aid in halting soil erosion. Their roots facilitate water penetration and enhance soil structure, which lowers runoff and fosters healthier soil ecosystems.

Due to their millennia of adaptation to local climatic circumstances, native plants are generally more tolerant to the challenges presented by climate change, such as drought, severe

temperatures, or floods. As climatic conditions change, this resilience can support ecological stability. Because they support wildlife, preserve soil, and foster biodiversity, native plants are essential to the well-being of regional ecosystems. Through the integration of indigenous plants into landscapes and gardens, people can help ensure the long-term viability of their surroundings.

For a more comprehensive list of recommended natives to plant please visit [Waynesville Native Plant List](#).

## What is an invasive species and why is it bad?

An invasive plant is a species found outside its natural range that threatens the biological diversity, survival, or reproduction of native plants and animals. These species are introduced either intentionally or accidentally. Often, invasive species thrive because the ecological conditions in their new environment are like those of their native habitats. They will then compete with native species, eliminating ecological diversity and choking out native plants that pollinators need to thrive.

For example, much of Asia's ecosystem mirrors that of the southeastern United States, which has led to the introduction of many invasive species in the region. The best defense against



invasives is prevention. Simply avoid planting them in your garden or yard, no matter how attractive they seem. If invasive plants are already present, early detection and prompt action are essential. Managing a single invasive plant is far easier than dealing with an established infestation. Once plants like Kudzu have become widespread, controlling them can be incredibly challenging. Persistence is key; managing invasives often requires

consistent effort over several seasons. The rewards, however, are well worth the effort. Reducing invasive plants in your garden not only enhances the beauty of your space, but also promotes biodiversity, supports local wildlife, and fosters thriving ecosystems where people and animals can coexist.

Exotic Invasive plants to avoid – Kudzu, English Ivy, Vinca, Asiatic Jasmine, lirioppe, Japanese Stilt Grass, Miscanthus Grass, Chinese Wisteria, Oriental Bittersweet, Euonymus, Gooseneck Loosestrife.

## What general plants to thrive in the backyard:

The high elevations and environmental conditions of [Haywood County](#) are ideal for a wide variety of plants. An example of a tall shrub or small tree that thrives under these conditions is the Mountain Laurel, which grows well in partially shaded, acidic soil that drains well. Planting it in an area with space for growth is crucial. Once established, it usually requires little care. However, it might occasionally need to be pruned to keep its shape. Instead of acting as a host plant, Mountain Laurel mostly acts as a nectar plant. It yields lovely flower clusters with nectar that draw a variety of pollinators, such as hummingbirds, butterflies, and bees.

[Cardinal flowers](#) are a great option for a pop of color on your landscape. They tend to thrive in partial shade over full sun and moist, healthy soil. Its vivid red blooms can draw butterflies and hummingbirds to your garden, and it's comparatively simple to grow from seeds or transplants. Higher elevations provide cool, humid conditions that are ideal for these plants.

[The Dutchman's Pipe](#) or Pipevine is a wonderful pollinator magnet. The Pipevine Swallowtail butterfly uses Pipevine as a host plant. The butterfly lays its eggs on the leaves of Pipevine plants, and the larvae eat the leaves as they develop. The Pipevine is a twining vine with distinctive pipe-shaped blooms and heart-shaped leaves. It favors well-drained soil and partial shade over full shade. In the early spring, usually from late March to early April, wildflowers bloom in the lower mountain elevations. The blooming season may continue into late spring and early summer as you rise in height, reaching its zenith in May and June.

## What trees to plant:

The adaptable Eastern Redbud tree can grow in a variety of soil types, including well-drained soils that are typical in hilly regions. It also does well in full sun to light shade making it a great option for areas with varying light. [Eastern Redbud](#) is a popular choice for both gardeners and wildlife enthusiasts because of its heart-shaped leaves and eye-catching pea-like blossoms, which also enhance the landscape's visual appeal. It is the perfect nectar tree for pollinators because of its blossoms.

Usually found beside streams, at the edges of woodlands, and in other damp, fertile places, the Pawpaw trees demand rich, well-drained soil. Temperate regions with warm summers and mild winters are ideal for them. Both the mountains and the Piedmont regions of North Carolina are suitable for the effective cultivation of [Pawpaw's](#). They offer food and habitat to a range of wildlife, including insects, birds, and mammals; these trees are regarded as host plants.

Very prevalent in the mountains, [Tulip trees](#) are incredibly adaptive and multipurpose trees that may be planted anywhere in North Carolina. They favor full sun over partial shade and well-drained soil. Large, eye-catching blooms that attract bees, butterflies, and other pollinators that consume their nectar are produced by tulip trees.



## What to plant for privacy:

A lot of house landscaping includes hedges or screens made from a single species planted in large quantities. However, this can lead to the screen's total removal if illness or bug issues arise. Alternatively, think about creating a mixed screen, which entails putting a range of screening plants along the perimeter of your property. By choosing a range of plants with flowers, fruit, or foliage colors that pop at different times of the year, you can not only make your screen more resistant to pests and other difficulties, but you can also add appeal.

[Hollies](#) are an excellent option for both screening and luring songbirds. Two choices are the Luster Leaf Holly and "Nellie Stevens" Holly, which have red berries on the shrub throughout the fall and winter with dense, evergreen foliage. Both Inkberry Holly and Yaupon Hollies are indigenous to regions of the southeast United States. Both species have a wide range of cultivar sizes. Yaupon Holly is a wonderful choice for a hedge because it can tolerate shearing. Although Inkberry Holly's natural shape is somewhat informal and suckering, more recent cultivars have been chosen to resemble boxwood's growth behavior and provide an option in situations where boxwood blight is an issue.

The blossoms of other Evergreens provide great appeal. Depending on the kind, [Camellias](#) (Camellia Sasanqua and Camellia Japonica) bloom in the fall, winter, or early spring. They have dark green leaves. When there may not be much else blossoming in the garden, Camellia flowers provide color. The white blooms of Osmanthus add a delightful sent to the garden, despite their lack of showiness. There are a few deer-resistant choices available for landscapes that are subject to



deer pressure. The deer-resistant Evergreen Hardy Anise plant can tolerate shade. The cultivar known as "Florida Sunshine" has eye-catching yellow leaves. Once established, [Chinda Viburnum](#) is a hardy plant that can tolerate drought-like circumstances. Several evergreen plants can be grown with the right upkeep and care, regardless of the landscape's difficulties you may be facing. Visit the [NC Extension Gardener Plant Toolbox](#) to find out more about these and other plant selections.

## What types of grasses and ferns to plant:

The [Evergreen Christmas fern](#) is indigenous to the eastern region of North America. It may be grown in all three of North Carolina's regions and is found naturally in forests, marshes, streambanks, and other riparian environments. One to three feet is the maximum height for the upright, clumping Christmas fern. It resembles a fountain because of the modest arching of its fronds near the top. Planting these ferns in moderate to full shade is what they prefer. They do not thrive in soils with inadequate drainage, but they will adjust to both dry and moist soils. They give understory cover to the landscape, and these ferns make an ideal wildlife habitat for small birds, animals, and other creatures. Parts of the plant are occasionally used by birds to construct their nests. Christmas ferns can be used as an understory plant in a shade garden, woodland garden, or natural area, or they can be planted on slopes to assist in the reduction of erosion. Christmas ferns, like other ferns, don't bear fruit or flowers. Rather, they procreate using the spores on the underside of slender, verdant fronds.

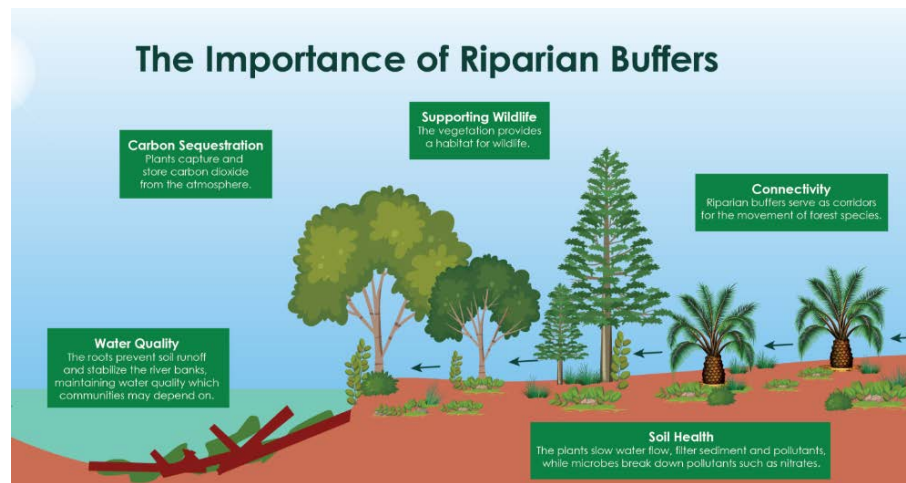


Native to the eastern part of North America, [Pink Muhly](#) grass is a warm-season annual that grows natively in prairies and sandy pine openings. Due to its drought tolerance and preference for dry to medium soils, Pink Muhly grass is a great addition to rocky or sandy gardens, which often have rapid drainage. For the finest display, plant it in either full sun or partial shade. With a maximum height of one to three feet, this clumping grass is an excellent choice for garden borders or large plantings. The stunning blooms of pink muhly grass, which appear in late October as pink, fluffy plumes, are its most notable feature. These massive inflorescences float above the grass's thin, dark green blades. Though its pollen doesn't draw many pollinators due to its wind-pollinated nature, Pink Muhly grass nonetheless provides a great deal of benefit to wildlife. The seeds may be consumed by songbirds and small mammals, although deer usually leave the shrub alone. Additionally, this grass provides wildlife with great cover and nesting materials. It can be used in many types of gardening, including rain gardens, meadow gardens, cottage gardens, and more. When sown in large quantities, pink muhly grass creates an incredibly beautiful spectacle.



Native to most of North America, [Switchgrass](#) is a perennial grass. In open forests, meadows, and grasslands, switchgrass grows naturally. Since it is a warm-season grass, the warmer months are when it grows the most. Switchgrass is a multipurpose plant that can thrive in a range of soil types, from clay to sandy soils, and in both full sun and partial shade. It can withstand times of drought or flooding and thrives in both moist and dry soils. Switchgrass is a great option for slopes, ditches, or roadside gardens since it can resist erosion and air pollution. Switchgrass's upright, thin blades create a columnar structure that is three to four feet high. Early autumn sees the emergence of loose panicles of green or brown blooms. Since switchgrass is pollinated by the wind, the flower stalks usually emerge above the grass blades. The seeds have a lovely reddish-purple or brown hue that lasts all winter long once they are ripe. Terrestrial birds and other creatures feed on the seeds during the fall and winter. Switchgrass can be used in naturalized areas, rain gardens, borders, and prairie or meadow gardens. The plant will maintain its shape throughout the winter, but it goes dormant in late fall. To provide space for new growth, be careful to trim any old growth in late winter or early spring.

# What to plant around my stream?



A stream's ecology can benefit greatly from native aquatic plants. In addition to providing habitat for a variety of aquatic creatures and eliminating excess nutrients from the water, they can also have an appealing appearance.

[The Blue Flag Iris](#) is a visually appealing plant that is resistant to being consumed by ducks, muskrats, and other animals. Over time, they can split off and disperse their dense clusters of rhizomes, which are expanded underground roots. They rarely reach a height of three feet in water deeper than a foot. As a result, they effectively prevent coastline erosion while rarely interfering with recreation.

In addition to its hardiness and beauty, the [Weed Pickerel](#) plant produces rhizomes that are easily divided and multiplied. They may grow in water up to two feet deep and reach heights of three to four feet. The clusters of violet-blue flowers have huge spikes that are highly decorative. They also draw butterflies, bees, and other pollinators.

[Duck Potato](#), growing 6 to 12 inches deep in water, is an adaptable and fast-reproducing plant that can thrive. Wildlife can eat its leaves, seeds, and rhizomes. Once established, the dense plant clumps remove a lot of nutrients from the water and coastal soil, minimize shoreline erosion, and offer cover for aquatic creatures. The plants have a 4-foot growth potential.

[Lizard Tail](#) uses underground runners to grow in tiny colonies. The white blossoms, which are 4 to 6 inches long, resemble drooping bottle brushes. The plants thrive in partial shade and usually reach a height of one to three feet. About 18 inches is the maximum water depth for growth. In water that is up to four feet deep, Water Willows can reach a height of three feet. Although the plants don't grow as densely as most others, they nonetheless make great habitat for fish. The leaves resemble weeping willow leaves quite a bit. From May to October, the pretty little white or light lavender blossoms blossom. The plants may grow farther out from the beach

than many property owners would like, even though they are excellent at safeguarding shorelines.

North Carolina is home to numerous water sedges and rushes that resemble grass. White-top sedges, bulrushes, and soft rushes are a few examples. Sedges typically have triangular stems and grow in shallow water. Rushes often have cylindrical stems and frequently grow in clusters. Their spreading surface is shallow. Shoreline soil is retained by roots, which also lessen erosion. The white-top sedge is a striking spreading sedge that grows to a height of two feet and produces lovely white blooms all summer long.

## Non-toxic plants

If you have young children or pets, creating a safe and inviting environment in your garden is essential. While allowing them to explore freely can be nerve-wracking, it is important to recognize that this natural curiosity is healthy and part of their development. To ease your concerns about potentially harmful plants, consider planting non-toxic, native species that will be both safe and beneficial for the local ecosystem.



[Asters](#), such as the Bluebird variety, are a wonderful choice. These classic meadow flowers not only provide a stunning display in your garden but also make beautiful cut arrangements. Asters are multipurpose native perennials, offering abundant blooms that attract pollinators like bees and butterflies. These plants also serve as a habitat for birds and insects. Thankfully, both the leaves and blooms are non-toxic, making them safe for children and pets.

Another excellent option is the [Garden Wine Cup](#). This heat-tolerant groundcover is known for its vibrant color, which draws bees and butterflies to its nectar-rich blooms. Additionally, it serves as a host plant for the Gray Hairstreak butterfly larvae. Its non-toxic nature means it is safe for both children and pets to interact with, providing a colorful and wildlife-friendly addition to your garden.

[Native Coral Bells](#) are another great choice. While their striking foliage is what often catches the eye, their small, pink, bell-shaped flowers are the real highlight. These flowers produce abundant nectar, attracting hummingbirds, butterflies, and other pollinators. The flowers and foliage are both beautiful and safe for children and pets to explore, making them an ideal addition to any garden.

Lastly, [Bee Balm](#) is a versatile native perennial that appeals to a variety of wildlife, including butterflies and hummingbirds. Known for its fragrant foliage and tall blooms, Bee Balm is not only a beautiful garden plant but also offers food and shelter for small animals. This

non-toxic plant adds fragrance, color, and privacy to your garden, while being completely safe for your family and pets.

By incorporating these non-toxic native plants into your landscape, you can create a safe, vibrant, and wildlife-friendly environment where both children and pets can explore and enjoy the natural world around them.

## What to plant around a parking lot?

The medium-sized shrub known as the [American Beautyberry](#), or *Callicarpa Americana*, is indigenous to central and southeast North America. It can be found growing in thickets, meadows, and open forests. The American Beautyberry can reach a height of 3 to 8 feet and enjoys full sun or light shade. Its upright, arching habit can give garden beds or borders height and texture. This native loves moist, well-draining soils, but it can tolerate drought well.



All three regions of North Carolina are suitable for cultivation. Blooms might be white, pink, or purple. These blossoms will develop into vivid purple berries that cluster and whorl around the stem after being fertilized.

Native to eastern and central North America, [Bushy St. John's Wort](#) is a deciduous shrub. Wetlands, moist meadows, woodlands, ditches by the side of the road, and the sides of ponds, lakes, and streams are just a few of the places where it flourishes. This small to medium-sized shrub has an upright, compact growth habit and can grow to 2 to 7 feet. It can be trimmed to the appropriate size and shape in the early spring. Bushy St. John's wort is frequently planted as a foundation plant or in shrub borders. It can tolerate a range of soil types and likes full sun to light shade.

Native to the southeastern part of the United States, [Carolina Allspice](#) is a shrub. It grows in all three of North Carolina's regions, including woodlands, forests, and along stream banks. Carolina allspice typically reaches a height of 6 to 12 feet and has an upright, rounded growth habit. Although it can tolerate full sun and full shade, it thrives in partial shade or dappled sunlight. Once established, it prefers moist, well-draining soils that withstand occasional drought or flooding. To keep its shape after flowering, it can be trimmed. On old-growth wood in

the late spring, reddish-brown blooms appear on the tips of branchlets. Pollinators are drawn to the flowers, particularly beetles and butterflies.

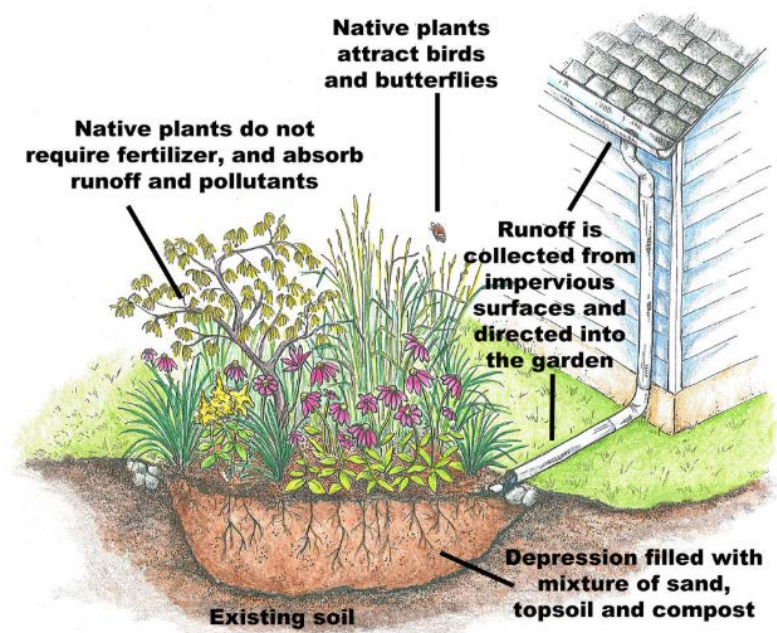
## Using plants to manage stormwater:

The purpose of rain gardens is to catch runoff from driveways, rooftops, and other surfaces. You can improve the aesthetics of your property and lessen the negative effects of impervious surfaces on the ecology of your neighborhood by planting them with native flowers, shrubs, and perennials.

A rain garden is a low spot in the yard where rainwater from a driveway, roof, or street is collected and allowed to seep into the earth. Rain gardens can be an attractive and affordable solution to minimize runoff from your property when planted with grasses and floral perennials. In addition to giving butterflies, songbirds, and other species food and shelter, rain gardens can aid in filtering pollutants from runoff.

Rain gardens with drainage that are more intricate. The runoff from stormwater is highly contaminated. It can taint drinking water because it is full of pollutants. The compounds it contains have the potential to cause erosion as well. Polluted stormwater harms water systems in flood-prone places, such as watersheds and coastal settlements.

This harmful contamination returns to lakes, streams, and our water supplies in the absence of natural drainage and filtering. Lakes and reservoirs may experience hazardous and damaging algal blooms as a result. Additionally, it may harm the local wildlife and plants. These drainage solutions are rain gardens. Water is absorbed by the roots of trees, bushes, and other plants. Plants with deep, extensive root systems and high absorption rates are used in rain gardens. Rain gardens can provide difficult growing conditions for plants because of their continuous wet and dry environments. Note the yard's drainage patterns and the time that water remains in the area following a rainstorm to begin the process. Your rain garden can be made with a little self-observation and experimentation.



# residential rain garden

(keep 10 feet away from most structures)



## Resources & Helpful Links:

Highly recommended invasives to avoid

: <https://ncwildflower.org/invasive-exotic-species-list/>

Recommended Native species list:

<https://ncwildflower.org/recommended-native-species/>  
<https://www.lawnstarter.com/blog/north-carolina/native-plants-north-carolina/>

Where to buy native plants

: <https://gardenforwildlife.com/collections/native-plants-for-north-carolina>  
[https://www.hendersonvillenc.gov/sites/default/files/uploads/recommended\\_landscape\\_species\\_1](https://www.hendersonvillenc.gov/sites/default/files/uploads/recommended_landscape_species_1)

Other Resources:

<https://extensiongardener.ces.ncsu.edu/extgardener-rain-garden-plant-list/> References: GardenNP. (2024, November 5). Recommended native species. North Carolina Native Plant Society. <https://ncwildflower.org/recommended-native-species/> Getting started on your native species garden. The Nature Conservancy. (n.d.).

<https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/north-carolina/stories-in-northcarolina/native-plant-gardening-tips/> Low impact development. Reduce Impervious Areas | Low Impact Development. (n.d.).

<https://lidcertification.org/certification/reduce-impervious-areas> Native plants for your NC stream or pond. WATR -Watershed Association of the Tuckasegee River. (2023, August 17). <https://protectourwaters-wnc.org/native-plants-for-your-nc-stream-or-pond/> Recommended landscaping plant list. (n.d.-a).

[https://www.hendersonvillenc.gov/sites/default/files/uploads/recommended\\_landscape\\_species\\_list\\_revised.pdf](https://www.hendersonvillenc.gov/sites/default/files/uploads/recommended_landscape_species_list_revised.pdf) Riparian-plants-for-stream-bank-Stabilization.pdf. (n.d.-b).

<https://henderson.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Riparian-Plants-for-Stream-Bank-Stabilization.pdf?fwf=no> Why native plants are important. National Native Plant Month. (n.d.).

<https://nationalnativeplantmonth.org/why-native-plants-are-important> Written By Dr. Lucy Bradley Extension Specialist (Consumer & Community Horticulture) & Professor Call Dr. Lucy Email Dr. Lucy Horticultural Science NC State Extension. (n.d.). Rain Garden Plant List. NC State Extension News.

<https://extensiongardener.ces.ncsu.edu/extgardener-rain-garden-plant-list/>