

NATIVE PLANTS

DESCRIPTION

A native plant is a species that naturally occurs in a specific region, ecosystem, or habitat without human intervention. These plants have evolved and adapted to the local climate, soil, and other environmental conditions over a long period of time. Whether you're in need of a shade tree, street tree, shrub, groundcover, ornamental grass, or perennial, there's a native plant that can meet your needs. In addition, there are many native species that can provide the same qualities (bloom time and color, fall color, plant texture) as some invasive, non-native plants that have been incorporated into landscapes in the past.

Benefits of native plantings include but are not limited to:

- Providing food, shelter and places to raise young for wildlife such as insects, birds and other animals
- Attracting pollinators which are crucial for reproduction of both edible and non-edible plants
- Having deep roots to help break up compacted soil to encourage water infiltration and reduce runoff
- Filtering pollutants in stormwater
- Managing water levels in wetlands or riparian areas
- Regulating climate by aiding in amending local temperature and air quality by absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen
- Requiring lower maintenance by needing less water, nutrients and care than nonnative species

While “native plant” is not always explicitly defined in municipal zoning ordinances, municipalities often refer to “specimen vegetation” as any living tree or plant deemed of specimen quality. This quality can be defined as unique, culturally

valuable, or historically significant, as assessed by a registered landscape architect, arborist, horticulturist, or the Township itself. Definitions may specify diameter at breast height (DBH) as a determination of a tree's specimen quality.



Blazing Star - *Liatris Spicata*

APPLICABILITY

Native plantings can be used to support the following Goals:

1. **Conservation:** Native plantings protect and improve natural resources including land, waterways, woodlands, and wetlands within the watershed. They maintain, enhance and restore habitat corridors and riparian buffers while supporting water quality.
2. **Education and Public Engagement:** Promoting and fostering education about native plants of the Brandywine Creek and its watershed raises awareness of conservation and best land practices, including engaging audiences in ongoing stewardship of parks and trails.
3. **Climate Resiliency and Sustainability:** Incorporating native plants into green infrastructure plans reduces impervious surfaces and increases stormwater infiltration, reducing runoff and maximizing evapotranspiration in developed areas.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Recommend using a native plant species from “list of recommended native plants” sourced from local “native plant nurseries list” for the following purposes
 - Landowner plantings
 - Land Development
 - Municipal plantings
 - Landscaping Contractors for municipalities
- Discourage use of non-native plant species and noxious weeds for residents, landowners, and developers
- General
 - Supplement existing vegetation
 - Select native trees and shrubs to satisfy screening and landscaping requirements meeting minimum standards for size
 - Encourage prohibiting use of invasive species



RESOURCES

Brandywine Native Garden Hub:

- A free, user-friendly website that serves as both an educational guide and an interactive database for anyone interested in incorporating native plants specific to Pennsylvania and northern Delaware into their landscapes.

WeConserve PA's Native Plant Lists:

- Includes approximately 2,100 vascular plant species recommendations of commercially available plants native to Pennsylvania and immediately adjacent areas of New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Ohio, and New York for use in natural land restoration, urban and container plantings, and landscaping. Visit www.weconservepa.org for more information.

Scan the QR Code to visit the
Brandywine Native Garden Hub.



1 Hoffman's Mill Road
P.O. Box 141
Chadds Ford, PA 19317

610.388.2700
conservancy@brandywine.org
www.brandywine.org/conservancy