

Rain Gardens of West Michigan
<http://www.raingardens.org>

Michigan Native Plants List
For Use in Rain Gardens and Landscaped Bioretention Areas

Plants that thrive in areas of periodic flooding, such as flood plain perennials, trees and shrubs, are very suitable for the wet and moist zones of rain gardens. Grasses and wildflowers that are adapted to grow in moist to dry conditions will also do well. A rain garden with wetland plants (plants that thrive in very wet soils) may need supplementary watering during dry periods. All rain gardens need to be watered until plants are established. Additional water for your rain garden can be provided by the use of rain barrels. This list is intended as a starting point; there are many other native plants suitable for rain gardens. See <http://plants.usda.gov/> or www.raingardens.org for detailed information about plant species.

Get plants from professional plant providers, not from wild populations.

Native Trees

Note: some trees are only native to lower Michigan.

Wet to Moist Conditions

River birch	<i>Betula nigra</i>
Hackberry	<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>
Green Ash	<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>
Basswood	<i>Tilia Americana</i>
Black willow	<i>Salix nigra</i>
Sycamore	<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>
Yellow birch	<i>Betula alleghaniensis</i>
Blackgum	<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>
Northern white cedar	<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>
Eastern hemlock	<i>Tsuga Canadensis</i>
Black maple	<i>Acer nigrum</i>
Red maple	<i>Acer rubrum</i>
Musclewood	<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>
Pawpaw	<i>Asimina triloba</i>
Redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>
Tulip tree	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>
Shingle oak	<i>Quercus imbricaria</i>
Swamp white oak	<i>Quercus bicolor</i>
Tamarack	<i>Larix laricina</i>

Moist to Dry Conditions

Trembling Aspen	<i>Populus tremuloides</i>
Blue Ash	<i>Fraxinus quadrangulata</i>
White Ash	<i>Fraxinus Americana</i>
Beech	<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>
Eastern red cedar	<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>
Black cherry	<i>Prunus serotina</i>
Wild crab apple	<i>Malus coronaria</i>
Flowering dogwood	<i>Cornus florida</i>
Bitternut Hickory	<i>Carya cordiformis</i>
Pignut Hickory	<i>Carya glabra</i>
Shagbark Hickory	<i>Carya ovata</i>
Ironwood	<i>Ostrya virginiana</i>
Sugar maple	<i>Acer saccharum</i>
Black oak	<i>Quercus velutina</i>
Bur oak	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>
Chinquapin oak	<i>Quercus muehlenbergii</i>
Red oak	<i>Quercus rubra</i>
White oak	<i>Quercus alba</i>
Sassafras	<i>Sassafras albidum</i>

Native Shrubs

Wet to Moist Conditions

Speckled alder	<i>Alnus rugosa</i>
American bladdernut	<i>Staphylea trifolia</i>
Buttonbush	<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>
Red-osier dogwood	<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>
Silky dogwood	<i>Cornus amomum</i>
Meadowsweet	<i>Spiraea alba</i>
Ninebark	<i>Physocarpus opulifolius</i>
Michigan holly	<i>Ilex verticillata</i>
Swamp rose	<i>Rosa palustris</i>
Spicebush	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>

Moist to Dry Conditions

Downy arrow-wood	<i>Viburnum rafenesquianum</i>
Maple leaf viburnum	<i>Viburnum acerifolium</i>
Chokecherry	<i>Prunus virginiana</i>
Gray Dogwood	<i>Cornus foemina</i>
New Jersey tea	<i>Ceanothus americanus</i>
Serviceberry	<i>Amelanchier arborea</i>
Fragrant sumac	<i>Rhus aromatica</i>



Grasses and Sedges

Short (Four Feet and Under)

Wet to Moist Conditions

Fox grass
Cotton grass
Rushes
Satin grass
Sedges

Carex vulpinoidea
Eriophorum angustifolium
Juncus spp.
Muhlenbergia spp.
Carex spp.

Moist to Dry Conditions

Little bluestem
Pennsylvania sedge
June grass
Purple lovegrass

Schizachyrium scoparium
Carex pensylvanica
Koeleria macrantha
Eragrostis spectabilis

Tall (Over Four Feet)

Wet to Moist Conditions

Hardstem bulrush
Prairie cordgrass
Indian grass

Scirpus acutus
Spartina pectinata
Sorghastrum nutans

Moist to Dry Conditions

Big bluestem
Bottlebrush grass
Wool grass
Switchgrass
Canada wild rye
Virginia wild rye

Andropogon gerardii
Hystrix patula
Scirpus cyperinus
Panicum virgatum
Elymus canadensis
Elymus virginicus

Wildflowers

Short (Three Feet and Under)

Wet to Moist Conditions

Canada anemone
Hairy beard-tongue
Golden alexanders
Great blue lobelia
Marsh marigold
Blue flag iris
Jack in the pulpit
Marsh blazing star
Obedient plant
Pink turtlehead

Anemone canadensis
Penstemon hirsutus
Zizia aurea
Lobelia siphilitica
Caltha palustris
Iris versicolor
Arisaema tryphyllum
Liatris spicata
Phytostegia virginica
Chelone lyonii

Moist to Dry Conditions

Smooth aster
Butterflyweed
Black eyed susan
Prairie smoke
Blue-eyed grass
Columbine
Spiderwort
Lupine
Bee balm
Purple coneflower

Aster laevis
Asclepias tuberosa
Rudbeckia hirta
Geum triflorum
Sisyrinchium angustifolium
Aquilegia canadensis
Tradescantia ohioensis
Lupinus perennis
Monarda fistulosa
Echinacea purpurea

Tall (Over three feet)

Wet to Moist Conditions

Swamp milkweed
Boneset
Joe pye weed
Cardinal flower
Sneezeweed
Michigan lily
Blue vervain
Culvers root
Ironweed
New England aster
Lizard's tail
White False Indigo

Asclepias incarnata
Eupatorium perfoliatum
Eupatorium purpureum
Lobelia cardinalis
Helenium autumnale
*Lilium michiganense**
Verbena hastata
Veronicastrum virginicum
Vernonia spp.
Aster novae-angliae
Saururus cernuus
Baptisia lactea

Moist to Dry Conditions

Giant hyssop
Bergamot
Blue false indigo
Bee balm
Agastache foeniculum
Monarda fistulosa
Baptisia australis
Monarda didyma

*protected species



Invasive, Non-native Species to Avoid

These plants aggressively replace our native species in the wild, and should not be used.

Autumn olive	<i>Elaeagnus umbellata</i>
Barberry	<i>Berberis spp.</i>
Buckthorn	<i>Rhamnus cathartica, Rhamnus frangula</i>
Crown vetch	<i>Coronilla varia</i>
European alder	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera tatarica, L. morrowi, L. x-bella, other cultivars</i>
Multiflora rose	<i>Rosa multiflora</i>
Norway maple	<i>Acer plananoides</i>
Oriental bittersweet	<i>Celastrus orbiculatus</i>
Periwinkle (myrtle)	<i>Vinca minor</i>
Privet	<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>
Purple loosestrife	<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>
Siberian elm	<i>Ulmus pumila</i>
Orange daylily	<i>Hemerocallis fulva</i> (other species, and hybrids, are not invasive)

References:

Henderson, C.L., C.J. Dindorf, F.J. Rozumalski. Lakescaping for Wildlife and Water Quality. Nongame Wildlife Program-Section of Wildlife, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program, 2000-2001 Annual Report, Appendix D. Buffer Strip Fact Sheets.

Smith, Tom. Grassroots, Inc. East Lansing, Michigan.



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