

	Bloom Period	Common name	Scientific name	Flower Color	Light Needs	Water Needs	Height (ft.)	Benefits	Comments
1	Spring	Eastern bee balm	<i>Monarda bradburiana</i>	pink/purple/white	sun to shade	L, M	1-2	B, Bu, H	may form a colony
2	Spring	Eastern bluestar	<i>Amsonia tabernaemontana</i>	blue	sun to light shade	M	2-3	B, Bu	
3	Spring	Golden alexanders	<i>Zizia aurea</i>	gold	sun to light shade	L, M	1-2.5	B, Bu	Host plant for black swallowtail larvae
4	Spring	Wild bergamot	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	pink/purple	sun to light shade	M	2-4	B, Bu, H	Great plant for pollinators!
5	Spring	Woodland phlox	<i>Phlox divaricata</i>	purple	sun to shade	M	1-3	Bu, H	Great nectar source for butterflies!
6	Spring to Summer	Antelopehorn milkweed	<i>Asclepias viridis</i>	green/purple	sun	L, M	1-2	B, Bu	Spreads slowly
7	Spring to Summer	Butterfly milkweed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	orange	sun	L, M	1-2.5	B, Bu, M, H	Can bloom again in fall!
8	Spring to Summer	Culver's root	<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>	white/blue	sun to light shade	M, H	4-7	Bu	
9	Spring to Summer	Dutchman's pipevine	<i>Aristolochia tomentosa</i>	yellow/green	light shade to shade	M, H		Bu	Host plant for pipevine swallowtail larvae
10	Spring to Summer	Lanceleaf coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	yellow	sun to part shade	L	2-3	B, Bu, M	May take 2 years to establish.
11	Spring to Summer	Prairie milkweed	<i>Asclepias sullivantii</i>	rose/lavender	sun	M	2-3	B, Bu, M	
12	Spring to Summer	Rose vervain	<i>Glandularia canadensis</i>	pink	sun	L	0.5-1.5	B, Bu	Poor and well-drained soil needed
13	Spring to Summer	Swamp milkweed	<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	pink	sun	L, M	4-5	Bu, M	Native to NWA, can tolerate moisture
14	Spring to Summer	Wine cup	<i>Callirhoe involucrata</i>	dark purple-red	sun	L	0.5-1.5	B, Bu	Drought tolerant once established
15	Summer	Baldwin's ironweed	<i>Vernonia baldwinii</i>	purple	sun	L, M	3-5	B, Bu	
16	Summer	Black-eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia fulgida</i>	yellow	sun	L, M	2-3	B, Bu	
17	Summer	Black-eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	yellow	sun	M	1-2.5	B, Bu	Annual or short-lived perennial
18	Summer	Common milkweed	<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	lavender	sun to part shade	M	2-6	B, Bu, M	Vigorous spreader
19	Summer	Curlytop ironweed	<i>Vernonia arkansana</i>	purple	sun to light shade	M, H	3-4	B, Bu	
20	Summer	Foxglove beardtongue	<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>	white	sun to light shade	M, H	2-4	B, Bu, M, H	Great plant for moths!
21	Summer	Gray goldenrod	<i>Solidago nemoralis</i>	yellow	sun to light shade	L, M	1.5-2	B, Bu	Thrives in poor, dry soils in sunny locations
22	Summer	Joe Pye Weed	<i>Eutrochium purpureum</i>	pink-purple	sun to part shade	M, H	3-7	B, Bu	Good for rain gardens.
23	Summer	Pale purple coneflower	<i>Echinacea pallida</i>	lavender	sun to part shade	L, M	2-3	B, Bu	
24	Summer	Prairie blazing star	<i>Liatris pycnostachya</i>	purple	sun	L, M	2-4	B, Bu, H	Excellent nectar plant for butterflies!
25	Summer	Purple coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	purple	sun to part shade	L, M	2-5	B, Bu	
26	Summer	Rattlesnake master	<i>Eryngium yuccifolium</i>	white	sun	M	2-5	B, Bu	Good pollinator plant
27	Summer	Slender mountain mint	<i>Pycnanthemum tenuifolium</i>	white	sun	L, M	1-1.5	B, Bu	Excellent nectar plant for butterflies!
28	Summer	White wild indigo	<i>Baptisia alba v. macrophylla</i>	white	sun	M	2-3	B, Bu	
29	Summer	Woodland sunflower	<i>Helianthus divaricatus</i>	yellow	part shade to shade	L, M	2-6	B, Bu	may form colony
30	Summer to Fall	Azure blue sage	<i>Salvia azurea</i>	blue	sun to light shade	L, M	3-5	B, Bu	
31	Summer to Fall	Blue mistflower	<i>Conoclinium coelestinum</i>	blue-purple	sun to part shade	M, H	1.5-2	B, Bu	Can spread vigorously
32	Summer to Fall	Clustered mountain mint	<i>Pycnanthemum muticum</i>	white	sun to part shade	L, M	1-3	B, Bu	Excellent nectar plant for butterflies!
33	Summer to Fall	Common boneset	<i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i>	white	sun	M, H	4-6	B, Bu	Important for fall migration
34	Summer to Fall	Downy ragged goldenrod	<i>Solidago petiolaris</i>	yellow	part sun	L, M	1-4	B, Bu, M	Nectar source for monarch butterflies
35	Summer to Fall	Garden phlox	<i>Phlox paniculata</i>	pink/purple/white	sun to shade	M, H	2-4	B, Bu, H	Great nectar source for butterflies! Fragrant.
36	Summer to Fall	Purple prairie clover	<i>Dalea purpurea</i>	lavender-purple	sun to part shade	L	1-3	B, Bu	
37	Summer to Fall	Tall blazing star	<i>Liatris aspera</i>	purple	sun	L, M	2-3	B, Bu, H	Excellent nectar plant for butterflies!
38	Fall	Aromatic aster	<i>Sympphytum oblongifolium</i>	purple	sun	L, M	1-3	Bu	
39	Fall	Narrowleaf sunflower	<i>Helianthus angustifolius</i>	yellow	sun	M	1	B, Bu	
40	Fall	New England aster	<i>Sympphytum novae-angliae</i>	purple	sun	M	3-6	Bu	Great for migrating monarchs!
41	Fall	Wreath goldenrod	<i>Solidago caesia</i>	yellow	sun to part shade	L	1.5-3	B, Bu	Tolerates some shade
Shrubs and Trees									
42	Spring	Eastern redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	pink	sun to part shade	L, M	20-30	B, Bu	Small tree
43	Spring	Spice bush	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	yellow	shade	M, H	6-14	B, Bu	Host plant for spice bush swallowtail larvae! (small tree)
44	Spring to Summer	New Jersey tea	<i>Ceanothus americanus</i>	white	sun to light shade	L, M	3-4	B, Bu, H	Woody shrub
45	Spring to Summer	Red buckeye	<i>Aesculus pavia</i>	red	sun to shade	M	6-20	B, H	Small tree for rain gardens, but can also be drought tolerant
46	Summer	Buttonbush	<i>Cephaelanthus occidentalis</i>	white	sun to light shade	M, H	6-10	B, Bu, H	Woody shrub - good for rain gardens
47	Summer to Fall	Leadplant	<i>Amorpha canescens</i>	blue/purple	sun to light shade	L, M	2-3	B, Bu	Woody shrub

Light Needs:
Sun: An area that receives at least six hours of more of direct, mid-day sun, includes the south or west side of buildings and trees.

Part shade: Includes areas with dappled sunlight and bright areas underneath trees; i.e., open sky not directly overhead.

Shade: Dappled to dense shade; areas that receive morning and evening sun in summer; areas on north sides of buildings and underneath trees.

Benefits: Bees (B) Butterflies (Bu) Moths (M) Hummingbirds (H)

Water Needs: High (H) Medium (M) Low (L)

Photo Contributors: Allison Fowler, Cherrie-Lee Phillips, Dan Scheiman, Eric Hunt, Jay Randolph, Kitty Sanders, Leslie Patrick, MaryAnn King, Michael Weatherford



Why Choose Native Plants?

Natives plants provide important habitat

Gardening with native plants provides habitat for pollinators, including butterflies, moths, bees, birds, flies and beetles. Pollinator populations are declining and it's important to provide nectar and host plant sources wherever possible on the landscape to help maintain and boost populations. Just one or two native milkweeds in a garden, for instance, can provide a place for monarch butterflies to lay their eggs. Native wildlife evolved with native plants and rely on them for food, shelter and as host plants for breeding.



Eastern Beebalm
Mary Ann King

Natives plants require less maintenance

After they are established, native plants require less maintenance, which saves time and money! They have extensive root systems that can reach deeper than 15 feet. These deep root systems help stabilize the soil, reduce erosion and increase the soil's capacity to store water.

Natives also are adapted to the local climate, which results in less watering (though plants may need frequent watering during the first year to become established and during drought).

Natives also are locally adapted to drier sites with "poorer" soils so they do not need to be fertilized.

Establishing a Garden

Sunlight: Determine how many hours a day the garden area has full sun. This will help with the decision to use full-sun, part-sun or shade plants. A garden site is considered full sun as long as it gets at least six full hours of direct sunlight on most days. Plant shade plants in areas that receive less than three hours of direct sun per day.

Water: Is the soil usually wet, dry or somewhere in between? Some plants don't like to get their feet wet, so pick plants whose moisture preferences match the garden.

Soil: Good soil is literally the foundation of a healthy and productive garden. Most plants will thrive in moist but well-drained soil. With clay or sandy soils, compost may be used to help make the garden amenable to planting.



Buttonbush
Eric Hunt



Antelopehorn Milkweed
Eric Hunt



Aromatic Aster
Leslie Patrick

Spacing: Planting at least three of the same flowers together is helpful for butterflies because of how their vision works. Butterflies nectar at different heights, so vary the plants to include those that are low, medium and taller. It is better to plant swaths of color than to have a lot of single plants.

Bare Ground: Consider leaving a small spot of ground bare for nesting bees. A muddy spot in the garden allows butterflies to "puddle," which means drawing minerals from the soil.

Chemicals: Avoid using broad-spectrum herbicides or insecticides in the garden. Herbicides intended for "weeds" can drift and harm nearby plants. Insecticides are not selective. If they are applied to get rid of one species (aphids, for instance), they will affect all of the insects in the treated area negatively. If they are systemic insecticides, they could be absorbed by plants and harm nontarget insects that eat them.

Remember, it's a good thing if plants are being eaten! It means that the garden is part of the ecosystem and those garden "pests" could be food for birds and other insects.

Choosing plants

When choosing plants, consider adding a variety of species that bloom from spring through fall. This will ensure that nectar, pollen and seed resources are available throughout the year. Selecting early- and late-blooming plants is especially important for native pollinators. Native bees are some of the first to emerge in early spring, and migrating monarchs rely on fall-blooming nectar plants to fuel their migration. The greater the variety of plants, the more diversity wildlife will benefit. Planting just a few native plants is worthwhile!

Provided within this guide are recommended native Arkansas plants that are beneficial for a variety of pollinators and birds. They are available from local native plant nurseries and provide a variety of bloom periods, heights and colors to add diversity to a garden. Indicated on the list are sun and water requirements, and the types of species the plant benefits. Also added, where appropriate, are plants that serve as hosts for particular species.



Woodland Phlox
Allison Fowler



Clustered
Mountain Mint
Mary Ann King



Black-eyed Susan
Mary Ann King



Red Buckeye
Eric Hunt

Plant Sources

One challenge when choosing natives is that they are not as readily available as non-natives. Arkansas has a handful of nurseries that offer native plants, and there are numerous plant sales that offer native species held throughout the state each year.

Plant Nurseries

- Pine Ridge Gardens, London: <https://www.pineridgegardens.com/>
- Grand Designs, Little Rock: <http://granddesigns.us/>
- Ozark Native Plants, St. Paul: <http://www.ozarknativeplants.com>
- Wild Streak Plants, Northwest Arkansas: www.facebook.com/wildstreakplants



Swamp Milkweed
Cherie-Lee Phillip

Plant Sales

Master Gardener chapters are in almost every county. Most groups host a plant sale, typically in spring (April/May), and many offer native plants.

- For a list of events, see: <https://www.uaex.edu/yard-garden/master-gardeners/events.aspx>
- Local chapters of the Arkansas Master Naturalists have plant sales each year. Follow the local chapter on Facebook for more information.
- Audubon Arkansas hosts native plant sales each year at the end of April and in October. Check out its website for more information: <https://ar.audubon.org/events>
- Compton Gardens in Northwest Arkansas has a sale each April: <https://www.peelcompton.org/events/native-tree-and-plant-sale/>

Additional Resources

With the increased popularity and awareness of the importance of native gardening, there are numerous tools available to help with plant selection and gardening tips.

- For additional recommended plant lists and tips, visit the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center website. Browse by state or see lists designed for specific animals. <https://www.wildflower.org/collections/>
- For gardening tips, recommended plants lists, landscape plans and native seed vendors that have species suitable for Arkansas, visit: <https://www.moprairie.org/GrowNative>
- National Wildlife Federation's Native Plant Finder: <https://www.nwf.org/NativePlantFinder/>



Purple Prairie Clover
Michael Weatherford



Dutchman's Pipevine
Kitty Sanders

Demonstration Gardens

Need inspiration to get started? There are many demonstration gardens across the state. Try a local state park (Pinnacle Mountain, Hobbs, Mount Magazine), Arkansas Game and Fish Commission nature centers (Witt Stephens Jr. in central Arkansas, Janet Huckabee Arkansas River Valley in Fort Smith) or the local library.



Wine Cup
Jay Randolph

Garden Certification Programs

Several organizations offer certification programs for gardens. This can be especially rewarding when so much effort has been expended to create a haven for wildlife. Each program has its set of guidelines, but all are aimed at helping put much-needed habitat for wildlife on the ground.

- Arkansas Audubon Society's Bird-Friendly Yard Certification Program: <http://www.arbirds.org/intro.htm>
- Audubon Plants for Birds Program: <https://www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds>
- National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitat Program: <https://www.nwf.org/garden-for-wildlife/certify>
- Monarch Watch Waystation Program: <https://monarchwatch.org/waystations/>
- Wild Ones Garden Certification Program: <https://wildones.org/butterfly-garden/certify-your-garden/>



Eastern Redbud
Dan Scheiman



Leadplant
Dan Scheiman



Butterfly Milkweed
Allison Fowler



Azure
Blue Sage
Eric Hunt



Narrowleaf
Sunflower
Mary Ann King