

Common Invasives and Native Replacements

Invasive Species	Native Replacement
garlic mustard (<i>Alliaria officinalis</i>)	wild ginger (<i>Asarum canadense</i>)
bush honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera maackii</i>)	spicebush (<i>Lindera benzoin</i>) American holly (<i>Ilex opaca</i>) pawpaw (<i>Asimina triloba</i>)
Japanese honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera japonica</i>)	trumpet creeper (<i>Campsis radicans</i>)
purple loosestrife (<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>)	blazing star (<i>Liatris spicata</i>) obedient plant (<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>) great blue lobelia (<i>Lobelia siphilitica</i>)
burning bush (<i>Euonymus alatus</i>)	spicebush (<i>Lindera benzoin</i>)
English ivy (<i>Hedra helix</i>)	Virginia creeper (<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>)
multiflora rose (<i>Rosa multiflora</i>)	staghorn sumac (<i>Rhus hirta</i>) smooth sumac (<i>Rhus glabra</i>)
wintercreeper (<i>Euonymus fortunei</i>)	wild ginger (<i>Asarum canadense</i>) allegheny spurge (<i>Pachysandra procumbens</i>)



Purple Loosestrife taking over wetland habitat

Lexington Greenways

Greenways are connecting strips of land that usually contain trails and serve as a way to link a community together in a natural setting. These trail-ways are located in natural areas, such as stream corridors, or are human created, such as along abandoned railroad beds.

Greenways serve as vegetative buffers, which protect natural habitats, improve water quality, and reduce the impacts of flooding in floodplain areas. Most greenways contain trails, which enhance existing recreational opportunities, provide routes for alternative transportation, and are thought to improve the overall quality of life in the area.

LFUCG hopes to restore native plant species in greenways to reinforce their goal of environmental stewardship and habitat restoration.



Contact Information:
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Why Plant Natives?



*University of Kentucky
Natural Resources Conservation
and Management Curriculum*

What are Natives?

Natives are plants that evolved over geologic time and are distributed across the landscape largely in response to climatic episodes and adaptation to site conditions related to land formation. European settlement to North America resulted in the introduction of a variety of “exotic” plant species.

What are Exotics?

Exotic plants (also known as non-native or alien) are directly or indirectly, deliberately or accidentally introduced by human action. Exotic plants are not necessarily introduced from a different continent; they are considered exotic if they are not a natural element of a regional landscape .

What are Invasives?

Although many exotic plant species are harmless, some can pose a significant threat to native flora and fauna of an ecosystem. Such plants can invade native plant communities, spread, out-compete, and displace natives; hence they are termed invasive. This disturbs natural ecosystem functions, which ultimately leads to a loss in biodiversity.

Benefits of Natives...

- Native plants are adapted to regional conditions and may require less maintenance.
- They are hardy, withstand extreme winter cold, and do not suffer from die back.
- Due to their natural adaptations, natives require fewer pesticides and fertilizers, deeming them environmentally friendly.
- Natives provide food and shelter for native wildlife; thereby, promoting biodiversity.
- By utilizing native plants we restore regional landscapes and promote stewardship of our natural heritage.



American holly

Wildlife and Natives...

Native plant species have an natural hardiness which allows them to endure Kentucky’s growing seasons and to which native wildlife has become adapted to over thousands of years. Unlike mowed lawns, native plants provide food and shelter for wildlife. Native plants can make a beautiful, diverse, hardy, and low maintenance yard or greenway by requiring no fertilizers, fewer pesticides, and less water than lawns.

Attracting Butterflies...

There have been 143 species of butterflies and 2,200 species of moths observed in Kentucky. Native plants attract several of these species by providing habitat and food. Butterflies are attracted to spicebush, sassafras, asters, goldenrods, poplars, willows, wild cherries, hawthorns, joe-pye-weeds, purple coneflowers, dogbanes, and blazing stars.



blazing star

Attracting Birds...

It has been estimated that every year, 50 billion birds make migratory journeys. Using native trees, shrubs, vines, and flowers can help attract some of these species to your yard or local greenway.



trumpet creeper

Birds are attracted to the berries of spicebush, serviceberry, American holly, and black gum. They are also attracted to the nectar of trumpet creeper, Virginia creeper, coneflower, and coreopsis.