

The 9 Natives program was created to promote native plants that bring year-round color and beauty to gardens while providing food and homes for birds, bees, and butterflies.

The Coastal Prairie Conservancy is pleased to have collaborated on this project with Clark Condon, Houston-Native Prairies Association of Texas, and The Nature Conservancy in Texas.

The Coastal Prairie Conservancy is helping to sustain a resilient Texas by preserving coastal prairies, wetlands, farms, and ranches to benefit people and wildlife forever.

OPEN SPACES FOREVER

We're proud of what we've accomplished so far, and are working to preserve an additional 10,000 to 20,000 acres of coastal prairie across a nine-county region west and south of Houston.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Restored and enhanced protected lands serve as vibrant wildlife habitat, and offer increased carbon capture, greater flood prevention, and improved air and water quality for people.

NATURE FOR ALL

Public programming on the prairie includes family activities and educational adventures. These events encourage individuals and families to get outside and enjoy nearby wide-open spaces.

TO LEARN MORE AND TO JOIN US IN PRESERVING THE PRAIRIE, VISIT coastalprairieconservancy.org



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**Coastal
Prairie** 
Conservancy

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**9 NATIVES
FOR YOUR
SHADE
GARDEN**

Plant for Pollinators



TO ADD NATIVE PLANTS TO
AN EXISTING BED OR
TO BUILD A NEW NATIVE GARDEN,
FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE STEPS:

1.

SELECT THE PLANTS

Depending on the amount of light at your location, select the plants from either the 9 Natives for Sun or 9 Natives for Shade list. Most native plants bloom for a short span and then set seeds. For an attractive native plant garden, install plants with appealing

features (bloom, berries, seedhead, etc.) that appear at different times of the year to offer a succession of attractions. The 9 natives in this guide have been selected for these traits; you may wish to also include others.



2.

SELECT A LOCATION

The sunny parts of your garden should be open sites with native soil where the pollinator plants will not compete with tree roots. The shady parts of your garden should be areas underneath a tree or shaded from direct sun by physical structures. Select a location that offers some protection from the wind and that will not be overwatered.

3.

REMOVE EXISTING VEGETATION

Various mechanical and chemical techniques exist to remove existing vegetation to create a flower bed. The soil can be covered with clear plastic (solarization) or black plastic until the vegetation dies; treatment may need to be repeated. For a small bed, the existing vegetation can be physically dug out. For larger areas, mow and then treat with chemical herbicide; treatment may need to be repeated to remove all weeds. Tilling is generally not recommended as to avoid bringing weed seeds to the surface.

Alternatively, you may make a raised bed: surround the area with a raised border, cover the area with cardboard or 8 pages of newspaper, and add soil/compost inside the border and on top of the cardboard/newspaper, which will decompose (sheet mulching).



4.

PLANT OR SEED

Purchase small plants or seeds sourced locally, if possible. Local resident and migrant pollinators have adapted over thousands of years to local plants.

Using small plants will produce faster results. Transplants must be watered until the roots are established. For larger areas, seeding is less expensive. Seeds are best planted in fall or early spring. Use a mechanical broadcaster or hand spread seeds like chicken feed, then use a roller or step and dance on the seeds to ensure good seed to soil contact. Water the area and keep watering until seeds germinate and seedlings become established. If using seeds, add a few transplants for instant visual effects until the seeds germinate and grow.



5.

MAINTENANCE TIPS

Weed, trim, and water until the plants become established. Cut the vegetation back to about 8 inches in January or February so that plant seeds provide food for winter birds and remove dead plant material in time for the sun to reach new spring growth. Learn to recognize desired seedlings and spring shoots of perennials, so they are not removed as weeds. Most plants will tolerate pruning, if they get leggy. If reseeding is desired, allow seed heads and seed stalks to mature (to turn brown or tan). Leave mature seeds on the plant as food for wildlife. No need for pesticides or fertilizers.

6.

BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR

If the native pollinator bed is to be in the front yard, learn about your local "weed" ordinance and HOA rules. For example, in the city of Houston plants between the sidewalk and curb must be fewer than 9 inches tall, or you will need to obtain a Natural Area Permit. Add borders and signage, if allowed, to make the garden appear intentional.

Native Selections for Shade



1. CHEROKEE SEDGE, *Carex cherokeensis*

Perennial that forms narrow, grass-like, deep green leaves and produces red, yellow, and brown wheat-like seed spikes that mature May to August. Grows 12-18 in. tall x 6-12 in. wide in medium to wet soils in part shade. Larva host for Satyr, Eufala Skipper, and Common Roadside Skipper butterflies.



2. SPEARBRACT BLUE-EYED GRASS, *Sisyrinchium sagittiferum*

Perennial with clumps of narrow, light-green leaves. Flattened leaf-like flower stems bear light-blue, star-shaped flowers with yellow centers that appear from March through July. Grows 8-12 in. tall x 6-12 in. wide in shade to sun in moist to wet conditions and tolerates a variety of soils. Attracts Halictine Bees, bumblebees, and other native bees.



3. INLAND SEA OATS, *Chasmanthium latifolium*

Perennial grass most distinguished by the flat, drooping seed heads which hang in clusters from slightly arching stems. Bright green leaves turn a coppery color after frost and eventually turn brown in winter. Grows 24-60 in. tall x 24-36 in. wide in average, medium to wet, well-drained soil in part shade to full shade. Its stems and leaves are often used as nesting material by birds.



4. BLUE MISTFLOWER, *Conoclinium coelestinum*

Perennial that typically shows downy purplish stems with coarsely-toothed leaves. This species has numerous small, tubular blue-purple flowers that bloom from July to October. Grows 18-36 in. tall x 18-30 in. wide in full sun to part shade and prefers moist loam, sand, or clay soils. Blue Mistflower can spread aggressively, making it a potential pest if not controlled.



5. PIGEONBERRY, *Rivina humilis*

Perennial known for its striking pink and white blooms and the following showy red berries that are a favorite of local birds from March to October. Grows 12-14 in. tall x 12-24 in. wide with light shade and moist but well-drained soil. Leaves and roots and probably the berries of pigeonberry are poisonous to the gastrointestinal system.



6. HEARTLEAF SKULLCAP, *Scutellaria ovata*

Perennial species that features snapdragons-like, tubular, two-lipped, blue-violet flowers that bloom in the April to June months. Grows 12-24 in. tall x 9-18 in. wide in dry to medium, well-drained soils in part shade to full shade and flowers longer under average moisture. This species is easily grown from seed and will self-seed in the garden.



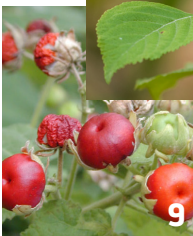
7. CHRISTMAS FERN, *Polystichum acrostichoides*

Evergreen that grows a fountain-like clump and features leathery, lance-shaped fronds. Grows 12-24 in. tall x 12-24 in. wide in dry to medium moist, well-drained soil in full shade. This species does not like standing water and is ideal for border plantings, accent plantings, and large groundcovers.



8. AMERICAN BEAUTYBERRY, *Callicarpa americana*

Deciduous shrub most valued for its spectacular fruits. The small, short-lived flowers bloom in the May to July months and develop into white and pink to deep purple. Grows 36-72 in. tall x 36-72 in. wide with part sun or part shade in moist clay soil or enriched sand. Can be cut to 12 inches above the base each winter to encourage more compact growth, flowers, and fruit.



9. TURK'S CAP, *Malvaviscus arboreus var. drummondii*

Deciduous spreading shrub characterized by bright-red pendant, hibiscus-like flowers that never fully open. Flowers bloom in late summer to fall, July to September. Grows 24-36 in. tall x 24-36 in. wide in part to full shade. Provides nectar for hummingbirds, butterflies, and moths. Turk's Cap fruit is edible either raw or cooked and is said to taste like apple.

BROCHURE PHOTOGRAPHY BY: Chuck Duplant, Coastal Prairie Conservancy | Norman G. Flaigg, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center | Jaime González, Coastal Prairie Conservancy | Bruce Leander, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center | Campbell and Lynn Loughmiller, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center | Joseph Marcus, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center | Ray Mathews, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center | Sally and Andy Wasowski, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center