



Consider Native Plants to Attract & Support Pollinators

Many of us have heard and read how important pollinators like bees and butterflies are, not just for our gardens, but for fruit trees and food crops. Pollinators are at serious risk from loss of habitat, pesticides, and climate change. We can help these cute winged dynamos by providing them with native plants that provide food and homes.

On a large scale, volunteers have been re-wilding our forest preserves for years, cutting down non-native trees and shrubs, removing invasive weeds, and spreading seeds of native plants to provide more habitat for native birds, insects, and other animals. In Cook County, visit <https://fpdcc.com/volunteer/ecological-stewardship-workdays/> and scroll down and click on Search Volunteer Opportunities. There are workdays somewhere in the county every weekend. The closest restoration site to UCH is Bemis Woods; you can find the workday schedule by typing Bemis in the search box.

In DuPage County, visit <https://www.dupageforest.org/get-involved/volunteer> and scroll down to the Restoration Workdays section, and click on Register online. This leads to a list of locations and dates.

At home, we are promoting the use of native plants in our home landscapes. In the past year we have held a workshop on collecting and processing native plant seeds, a seed exchange, and a winter sowing workshop. In past years we've distributed native plants, and we plan to have more seed and plant exchanges in the future. Native plants are mostly perennial and hardy; they come in a wide variety of colors, shapes, and textures; and they add interesting structure over the winter. And do they attract the pollinators! You'll enjoy the visits from bees, butterflies of all kinds, even lightning bugs.

There are lots of native plant sales in our area. Some sales let you order on line, and some are open on the date of sale. Move early—inventories sell out in a hurry! Beside these sales conducted by non-profit organizations, there are a number of nurseries that sell native plants; find them on any search engine.

Native Plant Sales

Now through April 12
Citizens for Conservation
Pickup in Barrington Hills
<https://citizensforconservation.org/cfc-events/spring-native-plant-sale/>

Now through April 25
Schaumburg Community Garden Club—Schaumburg
<https://schaumburggardenclub.org/native-plant-sale/>

Saturday, May 3
SCARCE—Addison
<https://www.scarce.org/growin-green/>

Saturday, May 3
Citizens for Conservation—in-person sale—Barrington Hills
<https://citizensforconservation.org/cfc-events/spring-native-plant-sale/>

Saturday, May 10
The Conservation Foundation—McDonald Farm, Naperville
<https://theconservationfoundation.org/event/2025-mcdonald-farm-plant-sale/>

Now through May 11
West Cook Wild Ones—pickup in Maywood or Lemont
<https://westcook.wildones.org/plantsale-2/>

Thursday, May 15 –
Saturday, May 17
Forest Preserve District of Dupage County—Mayslake Peabody Estate, Oak Brook
<https://www.dupageforest.org/things-to-do/calendar-of-events/native-plant-sale>

Saturday, May 17
Wild Ones Greater Kane County—Gray Willows Farm, Campton Hills
<https://startinyouryard.com/>

Saturday, May 17
Crestview Garden Club—Elmhurst
<https://www.crestviewgardenclub.com/events>

Saturday, May 31
Sag Moraine—Palos Hills
<https://sagmoraine.org/2024-native-plant-sale/>

