GROW EASY
Native plants are better suited to our climate and soil conditions. They are also low maintenance and long-lasting, which means they use less water and fertilizers.

The hardiness of native plants is due to their massive root systems, which reach deep into the soil (in some cases, as far down as fifteen feet) accreting water even during dry times. This makes them drought tolerant, so you will water less. Native plants are also disease resistant and rarely require added fertilizers, which saves you money. In short, they are a perfect garden guest!

ENDLESS COLOR
Use native plants to create a stunning garden that blooms all season long. Native plants offer a unique pallet of color, texture, and shape, plus a wide variety of heights and sizes. They provide a unique aesthetic and visual appeal that will enhance your garden and property. Here is a small sampling of some easy to care for native plants:

- **Trees**
  - Red Maple
  - Arrowwood
  - White Oak
  - Queen Anne's Lace
  - Redbud
  - Green mohawk
  - Black Gum
  - Pines and spruce

- **Ferns**
  - Bracken Fern
  - Maidenhair Fern
  - Cinnamon Fern
  - Royal Fern

- **Grasses & Sedges**
  - Big Bluestem Grass
  - Bottlebrush Grass
  - Tussock Sedge
  - Pennsylvania Sedge
  - Cattail sedge
  - Tussock Sedge

- **Shrubs**
  - Black Gum
  - Black spruce
  - White Oak
  - Red Maple
  - Juneberry

- **Perennials**
  - Black-eyed susan
  - Butterfly weed
  - Milkweed
  - Virginia bluebells
  - Wild Columbine
  - PRAK flower

Before planting, learn what native plants are best suited for your garden. In Northwest Ohio we have the diversity of rare, sandy Oak Openings soils in western Lucas County, and the challenge of heavier, clay soils in eastern Lucas and Wood Counties. For information on what plants are best for your garden, contact the Toledo Botanical Garden.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON NATIVE PLANTS:

- **Lucas Soil and Water Conservation District**
  - 419-893-1986

- **Wood Soil and Water Conservation District**
  - 419-394-5617

- **OSU Extension – Lucas County Office**
  - 419-878-7893

- **OSU Extension – Wood County Office**
  - 419-394-0060

- **Toledo Botanical Garden**
  - 419-936-2888

- **Naturally Native Nursery**
  - 419-978-7273

Add up all the land that drains into the same waterway, and you have a watershed. Understanding how we impact our watershed is the first step toward protecting water quality.

**HOW DO POLLUTANTS GET INTO THE RIVER SYSTEM?**

- **Unfortunately, it is too easy!**

  Water from rainfall, snowmelt, and sprinklers moves over land to the nearest storm drain, ditch or creek. Pollutants “hitch a ride” on this water that is running off. From there, the polluted water enters area waterways like Swan Creek, Ottawa River, and the Maumee River, unfiltered and untreated. This runoff can cause a decline in water quality, harming the creatures living in and around the waterway. Contamination of surface and ground water also places our drinking water supplies at risk.

**YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

Find out how native plants can enhance your garden space, save you money, and protect our waterways!
A FEW SIMPLE CHANGES IN HOW YOU SELECT YOUR PLANTS AND WHERE YOU PLACE THEM WILL SAVE YOU TIME AND MONEY, AND HELP PROTECT OUR WATERWAYS. . .

Native plants are easier to grow because they are suited to our climate and soil conditions; which means they use less water and other resources. With proper plant selection and placement, you can have a beautiful low maintenance garden, while protecting our waterways.

A garden of native plants is not only beautiful, but it can also help protect water quality. Using native plants to create attractive, low-maintenance garden borders around lawns. They have deep thirsty roots that help retain water in your yard and absorb fertilizer before it can run off. Deep-rooted native plants also help stabilize soils and prevent erosion, making them a great choice for steep slopes, berms or streambanks.

Reduce the amount of water leaving your yard and garden. The water that runs off may contain fertilizers, soil, and debris. When polluted runoff enters storm drains and ditches, it is discharged into local rivers, creeks, and ditches unfiltered and untreated, encouraging an over-abundant growth of algae and aquatic plants.

If your home is on a lake, river or stream, it is especially important to prevent excessive and unnatural water runoff and soil erosion. Maintain a native plant buffer along the water’s edge. Keep the buffer at least 15 feet wide, with narrow access paths winding down to the water. Never apply fertilizers, pesticides or fungicides to this area; they may harm the waterway.

If you have shoreline property, try incorporating existing rocks, trees, and wetlands areas into your landscape design. These natural elements can enhance your design and reduce erosion of the shoreline.

If the banks of your pond or stream are eroded, vegetated with only a few types of plants or artificially straightened, they can be enhanced. Planting a variety of native plants can reduce erosion and enhance the visual appeal of your pond or stream. Contact the Toledo Botanical Garden, your local OSU Extension Office or your local Soil and Water Conservation District for help.

Beauty of biodiversity

Protect the splendid biodiversity of our area by placing native plants in your garden. Biodiversity (a variety of different species) is important to the health of the ecosystem. Diverse plant populations are less susceptible to devastation by disease and can support a wider range of wildlife.

Native plants are best adapted to our local climate and soil types. Are the plants in your yard Native, Naturalized or Invasive?

Native: Plants that were here before Europeans settled in the 1700s are considered “native.”
Naturalized: Plants that arrived after that time period are considered “naturalized.”
Invasive: If a naturalized, or non-native, plant grows aggressively, it is considered “invasive” and can have devastating effects on other plant populations. (Familiar examples of invasive species in this area include purple loosestrife, buckthorn, and honeysuckle.)

Some facts and information from The Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council and the Huron River Watershed Council.