

# Eaton Conservation District Native Plant Descriptions

☀ Full Sun  
 ⚡ Partial Sun  
 ⬛ Shade

Common Name	Scientific Name	Description	Light	Moisture	Bloom	Notes
<b>Grasses:</b>						
Big bluestem	<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	3-8 feet	☀ ⚡	Med-dry	June-Sept	Erosion control use; preferred by livestock, beneficial to birds
Bottlebrush grass	<i>Hystrix patula</i>	2-3 feet	☀ ⚡	Med-dry	June-Aug	Ornamental grass, bristly flowers head resembles a bottle brush
Canada wild rye	<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	2-5 feet	☀ ⚡	Med-dry	July-Sept	Cool season clump forming ornamental grass, wheat/rye like spikes that remain well into winter, excellent ground cover for dry sunny slopes
Indian grass	<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	3-4 feet	☀ ⚡	Med-dry	Aug-Oct	Showy; clump forming; often used in wind erosion control; tolerates moderate amount of salt; may become invasive if not maintained
June grass	<i>Koeleria cristata</i>	1-2 feet	☀ ⚡	Med-dry	May-June	Drought tolerant; medium to coarse textured soils, can be aggressive
Little bluestem	<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	2-4 feet	☀	Med-dry	June-Sept	Ornamental grass; distinctive “blue coloration” at the base of the stems; attractive reddish brown fall color
Prairie cord grass	<i>Spartina pectinata</i>	4-6 feet	☀	Med-wet	July-Aug	Aquatic grass that grows well in regular drained soils; good fall yellow color; great plumes; can be aggressive
Prairie dropseed	<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>	2-4 feet	☀	Med-dry	Aug-Sept	Makes distinctive border when planted 18-24 inches apart, beneficial to wildlife, Plains Indians made flour from the seeds.
Purple top	<i>Triodia flava</i>	3-5 feet	☀ ⚡	Med	Aug-Oct	Attractive grass with purple spikelets during late summer. Caterpillars of several butterflies and moths feed on foliage. Good wildlife cover.
Side oats grama	<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	2-3 feet	☀	Med-dry	Aug-Sept	Prefers sand or loam, beneficial to birds, purple and orange flowers
Sweet grass	<i>Hierochloa odoratum</i>	1-2 feet	☀	Med-moist	July-Aug	Sand, loam or clay; used ceremoniously by native Americans
Switch grass	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	3-6 feet	☀ ⚡	Dry-wet	Aug-Sept	Grows well in sand, clay or loams; beneficial for wildlife, creates dense cover
<b>Wildflowers:</b>						
Bergemot	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Pink/Lavender flowers 1-3feet	☀ ⚡	Med-Dry	June-Sept	Aromatic; attractive to butterflies and hummingbirds; medicinal uses; can be aggressive
Black-eyed susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Yellow flowers 1-3 feet	☀ ⚡	Med-Dry	June-Sept	Erosion control plant, wildlife benefits, biennial, does well in sandy soils
Blue vervain	<i>Verbena hastata</i>	Blue flowers 3-6 feet	☀	Med-wet	July-Sept	Attracts butterflies; wonderful for cut flower arrangements, can be aggressive
Boneset	<i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i>	White flowers 4-6 feet	☀ ⚡	Med-wet	Aug-Oct	Tolerant of sandy and clay soils; clump forming; fuzzy cluster blossoms
Butterfly weed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	Orange flowers 1-3 feet	☀ ⚡	Med-dry	June-Aug	Gorgeous bed plant; attracts butterflies; medicinal uses, poisonous if ingested; can be aggressive
Cardinal flower	<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	Red flowers 2-6 feet	☀ ⚡ ⬛	Med-wet	July-Oct	Gorgeous bright red stalk attracts hummingbirds and butterflies; prefers partial shade. Save seedlings to replant this short lived perennial
Compass plant	<i>Silphium laciniatum</i>	Yellow flowers 3-10 feet	☀	Med-dry	June-Sept	Threatened species in MI-requires MDNR permit or grandfathered stock to sell trade; tremendous tap root; grows well in clay
Culver's root	<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>	Pink flower 2-6 feet	☀ ⚡ ⬛	Med	June-Sept	Small dense flower, on tall spike; great for cut flower arrangements

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Cup plant	<i>Silphium perfoliatum</i>	Yellow flower 4-8 feet	 	Med-wet	July-Sept	Threatened species in MI- requires MDNR permit or grandfathered stock to sell/trade; attracts hummingbirds and butterflies; beneficial to birds
False boneset	<i>Khunia eupatorioides</i>	Cream flowers 3 feet	 	Dry-med	Aug- Sep	Well drained soils;
False dragonhead (Obedient plant)	<i>Phytostegia virginiana</i>	purple or white flower 2-3 feet	 	Med	June-Sept	May be aggressive; attracts butterflies and hummingbirds
Foxglove beard tongue (Smooth penstemon)	<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>	White flower 3-4 feet	  	Med-dry	May-June	Ornamental ; beautiful flower and foliage; attractive to butterflies and humming birds
Gray headed coneflower	<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	Yellow flower 3-5 feet		Med-dry	Jul-Sept	Long, drooping petals; wildlife benefits; strong competitor; long lived; attracts butterflies; prefers sandy or clay soils; tall stem may need support
Golden alexanders	<i>Zizia aurea</i>	Yellow flower 1-3 feet	 	Wet	Apr-July	Can be aggressive, interesting addition to gardens
Great blue lobelia	<i>Lobelia siphilitica</i>	Blue flower 1-3 feet	 	Med-wet	July-Sept	Easily grown, attracts humming birds; grows well in variety of soils
Hairy beard tongue	<i>Penstemon hirsutus</i>	Purple flower 1-3 feet	 	Med-dry	May-July	Versatile plant; low grower; early summer bloomer; likes sandy soil
Hoary vervain	<i>Verbena stricta</i>	Blue flower 2-4 feet		Med-dry	July-Sept	Attracts butterflies; great for cut flower arrangements; drought resistant
Horsemint	<i>Monarda punctata</i>	Yellow flower 1-3 feet		Med-dry	July-Sept	Attractive to hummingbirds; likes sandy soils
Ironweed	<i>Vernonia missurica</i>	Purple flower 3-10 feet	 	Med	Aug-Oct	Easily grown; attracts butterflies; aggressive; late summer blooms
Jacob's ladder	<i>Polemonium reptans</i>	Blue flower 15 inches	 	Med	April-June	Bell shaped flower, leaves arranges like rungs of a ladder. Plant 12-18 inches apart
Joe pye weed	<i>Eupatorium maculatum</i>	Pale pink flower 4-6 feet		Wet-dry	July-Sept	Flower clusters up to 6" across; attracts butterflies
Lead plant	<i>Amorpha canescens</i>	Purple flower 2-3 feet	 	Med-dry	May-Aug	Attracts butterflies; spike flowers; drought tolerant; long lived
New Jersey tea	<i>Ceanothus americanus</i>	White flower 2-3 feet	 	Med-dry	July-Aug	Attracts hummingbirds and butterflies; colonists used to make tea following the Boston Tea party
Nodding wild onion	<i>Allium cernuum</i>	Pink flower 1-2 feet	 	Med-dry	May-Aug	Best in Sandy soils; clump forming; attractive garden plant
New England aster	<i>Aster novae-angliae</i>	Purple flower 3-6 feet	 	Med	Aug-Sept	Attracts butterflies and birds, wonderful garden plant
Marsh blazing star	<i>Liatris spicata</i>	Purple flower 1-3 feet	 	Med	July-Sept	Drought tolerant; used in cut flower arrangements; feather plume attracts butterflies
Prairie coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis palmata</i>	Yellow flower 2-3 feet		Med-dry	June-Aug	Attracts butterflies, spreads quickly through underground rhizomes; good for stabilizing dry sunny slopes and sand dunes
Prairie dock	<i>Silphium terebinthinacoum</i>	Yellow flower 3-4 feet	 	Med-dry	Aug-Sept	Attracts birds and wildlife; great for cut flower arrangements; prefers caly but does well on rich loam and damp sand
Prairie smoke	<i>Geum triflorum</i>	Pink flower 6 inches		Med-dry	May-June	Feathery pink flower; sand and loam;
Pale purple coneflower	<i>Echinacea pallida</i>	Purple flower 3-5 feet		Med-dry	June-July	Beneficial to wildlife; excellent for cut flower arrangements; strong tap root, sandy loam to heavy clay; used by Plains Indians to treat more ailments than any other plant: burns snake bites, stings, pains

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Purple coneflower <i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Purple flower 1-3 feet	☀️ ☀️	Med-dry	June-Aug	Extirpated in Michigan-only grandfathered stock or non native specimens are available; medicinal uses; popular flower garden plant; easy to grow.
Rattlesnake master <i>Eryngium yuccifolium</i>	White flower 2-6 feet	☀️	Wet-dry	June-Sept	Threatened species in Michigan-requires MDNR permit or grandfathered stock to sell trade; used in prairie restoration; wildlife
Rosin weed <i>Silphium integrifolium</i>	Yellow flower 3-6 feet	☀️	Med	July-Sept	Threatened species in Michigan-requires MDNR permit or grandfathered stock to sell trade; wildlife food source; attracts butterflies
Rough blazing star <i>Liatris aspera</i>	Purple flower 2-5 feet	☀️	Med-dry	Aug-sept	Drought tolerant; attracts butterflies; blooms late in season
Round leaf ragwort <i>Senecio obovatus</i>	Yellow flower .5-1.5 feet	☀️ ☀️	Med	May-June	
Sand tickseed (Lanceleaf coreopsis) <i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	Yellow flower 1-2 feet	☀️ ☀️	Med-dry	May-June	Beneficial to wildlife, favorite food of gold finches; excellent for cut flower arrangements. Tolerates wide range of soil types
Showy coneflower <i>Rudbeckia fulgida</i>	Yellow or orange flower 2-3 feet	☀️	Med-dry	June-Oct	2-2.5 foot spread; prune dead stems back to ground in winter for new growth
Showy goldenrod <i>Solidago speciosa</i>	Yellow flower 2-3 feet	☀️ ☀️	Med-dry	Aug-Oct	Drought tolerant, suitable for xeriscaping; attracts butterflies and birds; good for cut flowers
Sky blue aster <i>Aster azureus</i>	Blue flower 2-3 feet	☀️ ☀️	Med-Dry	Aug-Oct	Grows well in most soil types
Spiderwort <i>Tradescantia ohiensis</i>	Blue flower 2-4 feet	☀️	Med-dry	June-July	Aggressive; each tri-petalled blossom lasts one day
Stiff goldenrod <i>Solidago rigida</i>	Yellow flowers 3-5 feet	☀️	Med	Sept	Beneficial to wildlife, attracts butterflies and humming birds
Swamp milkweed (Red Milkweed) <i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	Pink flower 1-2 feet	☀️	Med-wet	June-Sept	Deep root; clump forming; attract butterflies; attractive garden plant
Sweet black-eyed susan <i>Rudbeckia submentosa</i>	Yellow flower 4-5 feet	☀️ ☀️	Med	Fall	2-3 foot spread
Tall coreopsis <i>Coreopsis tripteris</i>	Yellow flower 3-6 feet	☀️	Med-dry	July-Sept	Tolerant to heat; humidity and drought a colorful addition to a bed
Thimbleweed <i>Anemone cylindrical</i>	White flower 1-3 feet	☀️ ☀️	Med-dry	June-Jul	Medicinal uses, great woodland plant
Western sunflower <i>Helianthus occidentalis</i>	Yellow flower 2-3 feet	☀️	Med-dry	July-Aug	Attracts birds and butterflies; does best on poor dry sandy soils but will grow in loams.
White turtlehead <i>Chelone glabra</i>	White flower 1-3 feet	☀️ ☀️	Med-wet	July-Oct	Unique flowers; prefers a compost mulch
Wild blue iris <i>Iris versicolor</i>	Blue flower 2-3 feet	☀️ ☀️	Med-wet	May-July	Gorgeous perennial; attracts butterflies; does well in shallow water
Wild columbine <i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	Red flower 2-3 feet	☀️ ☀️ ☀️	Med	May-July	Deer deterrent; attracts hummingbirds, best in partial shade gardens
Wild lupine <i>Lupinus perennis</i>	Purple flower	☀️ ☀️ ☀️	Med-dry	May-June	Attracts rare Karner Blue butterfly; attractive flower and foliage
Wild petunia <i>Ruellia humills</i>	Purple flower .5-1foot	☀️ ☀️	Med- dry	June-Aug	Space plants 18-24 inches. Drought tolerant, suitable for xeriscaping; attracts hummingbirds
Wild senna <i>Cassia herbacarpa</i>	Yellow flower 4-6 feet	☀️	Med-wet	July-Aug	Attracts birds; clay loving; brilliant color addition to any native garden
Woodland sunflower <i>Helianthus divaricatus</i>	Yellow flower 3-5 feet	☀️ ☀️	Med-dry	Aug-Oct	Does best when receiving few hours of direct sunlight; attracts wildlife; great for cut flower arrangements

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<b>Woodlands (Rescued):</b>					
Cinnamon fern <i>Osmunda cinnamomea</i>	2-3 feet	☼ ☼	Med-wet	No flower	Excellent for wet areas; yellow in autumn
Interrupted fern <i>Osmunda claytoniana</i>	3-4feet	☼ ☼	Med-wet	No flower	Easily grown; use in borders and along streams
Jack in the pulpit <i>Arisaema triphyllum</i>	Purple flower 1-3 feet	☼ ☼	Med-wet	April-June	Interesting shade plant; bright red fall fruit; easily grown from seed
Lady fern <i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>	1-3 feet	☼ ☼	Med	No flower	Attractive in shade beds
Maidenhair fern <i>Adiantum pedatum</i>	1-2 feet	☼ ☼	Med-wet	No flower	Clump forming, ornamental fern, good for borders
Ostrich Plume fern <i>Osmunda regalis</i>	2-4 feet	☼ ☼	Med-wet	No flower	Clump forming; yellow in autumn; needs wet areas
Wild geranium <i>Geranium maculatum</i>	Pink flower 1-2 feet	☼ ☼ ☼	Med	April-May	Clump forming; great addition to shade beds
Wild ginger <i>Asarum canadensis</i>	Red flower 0.5-1 foot	☼ ☼	Med-wet	April-May	Medicinal uses, satiny, deep green, heartshaped leaves; groundcover.
White trillium <i>Trillium grandiflorum</i>	White flowers 1-2 feet	☼ ☼	Med-dry	May-June	Long lived; medicinal uses; white flower turns pink with age