

Recommended Native Wildflowers and Grasses for Naturalization Projects and Gardens



Swamp Milkweed

The following herbaceous plant species are native to southwestern Ontario and are suitable for planting in the Upper Thames River watershed (Middlesex, Oxford, and Perth Counties). These plants are adapted to the local climate and insect life, and are hardier than non-native or horticultural species. Many are becoming rare, so planting them on private land and in gardens will help them survive. (S) Spreads rapidly.

Full Sun, Moist to Dry Soil

Flowering Herbaceous Plants

Common Name	Scientific Name
Common Milkweed (S)	<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>
Butterfly Milkweed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>
Lance-leaved Tickseed	<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>
Showy Tick-trefoil	<i>Desmodium canadense</i>
Flowering Spurge	<i>Euphorbia corollata</i>
Wild Strawberry	<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>
Woodland Sunflower (S)	<i>Helianthus divaricatus</i>
Giant Sunflower (S)	<i>Helianthus giganteus</i>
Round-headed Bush-clover	<i>Lespedeza capitata</i>
Dense Blazing-star	<i>Liatris spicata</i>
Wild Bergamot	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>
Common Evening-primrose	<i>Oenothera biennis</i>
Foxglove Beardtongue	<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>
Hairy Beardtongue	<i>Penstemon hirsutus</i>
Virginia Mountain-mint	<i>Pycnanthemum virginianum</i>
Grey-headed Prairie Coneflower	<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>
Black-eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>
Gray-stemmed Goldenrod	<i>Solidago nemoralis</i>
Rough-stemmed Goldenrod	<i>Solidago rugosa</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
White Heath Aster	<i>Symphotrichum ericoides</i>
Smooth Aster	<i>Symphotrichum laeve</i>
New England Aster	<i>Symphotrichum novae-angliae</i>
Sky Blue Aster	<i>Symphotrichum oolentangiense</i>
Hoary Vervain	<i>Verbena stricta</i>
Missouri Ironweed (S)	<i>Vernonia missurica</i>
Culver's Root (S)	<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>
Violets	<i>Viola spp.</i>



Woodland Sunflower

Grasses

Common Name	Scientific Name
Big Bluestem	<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>
Bluejoint Reedgrass	<i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i>
Canada Wildrye	<i>Elymus canadensis</i>
Virginia Wildrye	<i>Elymus virginicus</i>
Old Switch Panicgrass	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>
Little Bluestem	<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>
Yellow Indiangrass	<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>

Full to Part Shade, Moist Soil (Forest Interior)

Flowering Herbaceous Plants	
Common Name	Scientific Name
White Baneberry	<i>Actaea pachypoda</i>
Red Baneberry	<i>Actaea rubra</i>
Wood Anemone	<i>Anemone quinquefolia</i>
Red Columbine	<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>
Jack-in-the-pulpit	<i>Arisaema triphyllum</i>
Canada Wild-ginger	<i>Asarum canadense</i>
Running Strawberry-bush	<i>Euonymus obovatus</i>
Spotted Geranium	<i>Geranium maculatum</i>
Sharp-lobed Hepatica	<i>Hepatica acutiloba</i>
Michigan Lily	<i>Lilium michiganense</i>
Large False Solomon's Seal	<i>Maianthemum racemosum</i>
May-apple	<i>Podophyllum peltatum</i>
Hairy Solomon's Seal	<i>Polygonatum pubescens</i>
Bloodroot	<i>Sanguinaria canadensis</i>
Zigzag Goldenrod	<i>Solidago felxicaulis</i>
Early Meadow-rue	<i>Thalictrum dioicum</i>
Heart-leaved Foamflower	<i>Tiarella stolonifera</i>
White Trillium	<i>Trillium grandiflorum</i>
Violets	<i>Viola spp.</i>

Ferns	
Common Name	Scientific Name
Common Lady Fern	<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>
Ostrich Fern	<i>Matteuccia struthiopteris</i>
Sensitive Fern	<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>
Christmas Fern	<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>



Spotted Geranium

Full Sun, Wet Soil (Wetlands)

Flowering Herbaceous Plants	
Common Name	Scientific Name
Canada Anemone (S)	<i>Anemonastrum canadensis</i>
Swamp Milkweed	<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>
Yellow Marsh Marigold	<i>Caltha palustris</i>
White Turtlehead	<i>Chelone glabra</i>
Spotted Joe Pye Weed	<i>Eutrochium maculatum</i>
Common Boneset	<i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i>
Spotted Jewelweed	<i>Impatiens capensis</i>
Harlequin Blue Flag	<i>Iris versicolor</i>
Cardinal Flower	<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>
Great Blue Lobelia	<i>Lobelia siphilitica</i>
Fringed Yellow Loosestrife	<i>Lysimachia ciliate</i>
Scarlet Beebalm	<i>Monarda didyma</i>
Cut-leaved Coneflower	<i>Rudbeckia laciniata</i>
Strict Blue-eyed-grass	<i>Sisyrinchium montanum</i>
Tall Meadow-rue	<i>Thalictrum pubescens</i>
Blue Vervain	<i>Verbena hastata</i>
Giant Ironweed	<i>Vernonia gigantea</i>

Full Sun, Wet Soil (Wetlands) Continued

Grasses

Common Name	Scientific Name
Bluejoint Reedgrass	<i>Calamagrostis Canadensis</i>
Eastern Riverbank Wildrye	<i>Elymus riparius</i>
Fowl Mannagrass	<i>Glyceria striata</i>
Rice Cutgrass	<i>Leersia oryzoides</i>
Old Switch Panicgrass	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>
Fowl Bluegrass	<i>Poa palustris</i>
Prairie Cordgrass	<i>Sporobolus michauxianus</i>

Sedges and Rushes

Common Name	Scientific Name
Bebb's Sedge	<i>Carex bebbii</i>
Bearded Sedge	<i>Carex comosa</i>
Awl-fruited Sedge	<i>Carex stipata</i>
Fox Sedge	<i>Carex vulpinoidea</i>
Blunt Spikerush	<i>Eleocharis obtusa</i>
Baltic Rush	<i>Juncus balticus</i>
Torrey's Rush	<i>Juncus torreyi</i>
Common Three-Square Bulrush	<i>Schoenoplectus pungens</i>



Cardinal Flower

UPPER THAMES RIVER

CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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Aquatics, Pond Plants

Common Name	Scientific Name
Southern Water-plantain	<i>Alisma subcordatum</i>
Wild Calla	<i>Calla palustris</i>
Large Yellow Pond-lily	<i>Nuphar advena</i>
Fragrant Water-lily	<i>Nymphaea odorata</i>
Water Smartweed	<i>Persicaria amphibia</i>
Greater Water Dock	<i>Rumex britannica</i>
Broad-leaved Arrowhead	<i>Sagittaria latifolia</i>
Broad-fruited Burreed	<i>Sparganium eurycarpum</i>
Broad-leaved Cattail (S)	<i>Typha latifolia</i>

Notes

- Many additional native species are not listed here because they are hard to source from nurseries.
- Cultivated varieties of native plants from commercial nurseries are often acceptable as single plantings in urban gardens, but not for naturalization projects.

Additional information is available at www.thamesriver.on.ca, including:

- [Gardening with Native Plants](#)
- [Recommended Native Trees, Shrubs, and Vines](#)
- [Tallgrass Prairie Plant Species Native to Middlesex, Oxford, and Perth Counties](#)
- [Nurseries that Sell Native Plants and Seeds in Southwestern Ontario](#)
- [Butterfly Larvae Host Food Plants](#)
- [Invasive Non-native Plants](#)

Helpful Resources

- Grow Wild: Native Plant Gardens in Canada. Lorraine Johnson. Random House.
- Newcomb's Wildflower Guide. Lawrence Newcomb. Little, Brown and Company.
- A Peterson Field Guide to Wildflowers: Northeastern and North-central North America. Margaret McKenny and Roger Tory Peterson.
- North American Native Plant Society, www.nanps.org
- Tallgrass Ontario, www.tallgrassontario.org
- Carolinian Canada, In the Zone www.inthezonegardens.ca