



Powerhouse Native Plants For Michigan Landscaping

Over thousands of years, wild plants have grown naturally, adapting to each region's unique environmental conditions. When grown in your garden, native plants bring beauty and excitement to your yard, creating a welcoming sanctuary that can be enjoyed at home, along with many other benefits. Native plants are the foundation of life and provide quality food for wildlife like butterflies and caterpillars, as well as shelter for birds and other wildlife. They support pollinators with pollen and nectar rewards. This list of Native “**Keystone**” plants support the largest diversity of species at important stages of their life cycle.

-  **Lepidoptera (Butterflies/Moths) caterpillars are host plant specific for food**
-  **Specialist bees use pollen from only specific plants to feed their young**

A genus is a taxonomic category of plants that contain one or more species with similar characteristics. While some non-native species may be in the same genus, they have enough differences that the wildlife can not use them the same as the native species. Some example species are listed, but there may be more available for different site conditions.

Genus	Perennials/Biennials - Native	# Species Caterpillar that Use as a Host Plant	# of Pollen Specialist Bee species that Rely On Plant	Bloom Time
<i>Solidago</i>	Stiff Goldenrod (<i>Solidago rigida</i>), Showy Goldenrod (<i>Solidago speciosa</i>)	136	39	Fall
<i>Symphyotrichum</i>	Blue Wood Aster (<i>Symphyotrichum cordifolium</i>), Smooth Aster (<i>S. laeve</i>)	115	32	Fall
<i>Helianthus</i>	Woodland Sunflower (<i>Helianthus divaricatus</i>), Maximilian Sunflower (<i>H. maximiliani</i>)	80	35	Fall
<i>Fragaria</i>	Wild Strawberry (<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>)	78	1	Spring
<i>Eupatorium</i>	Joe-Pye (<i>Eutrochium maculatum/purpureum</i>), Boneset (<i>E. perfoliatum</i>)	46		Summer
<i>Lupine</i>	Wild Lupine (<i>Lupinus perennis</i>)	31		Spring
<i>Viola</i>	Common Blue Violet (<i>V. sororia</i>), Birdfoot Violet (<i>V. pedata</i>)	29		Spring
<i>Erigeron</i>	Fleabane (<i>E. annuus</i>), Robin's Plantain (<i>E. pulchellus</i>)	26	10	Summer
<i>Geranium</i>	Wild Geranium (<i>Geranium maculatum</i>)	25	2	Spring
<i>Rudbeckia</i>	Black-eyed Susan (<i>R. hirta</i>), Showy (<i>R. fulgida</i>), Green-headed Coneflower (<i>R. laciniata</i>)	20	26	Summer
<i>Verbesina</i>	Wingstem (<i>Verbesina alternifolia</i>)	20	14	Fall
<i>Monarda</i>	Wild bergamot (<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>), Spotted (<i>M. punctata</i>)	13		Summer
<i>Asclepias</i>	Milkweed (<i>A. tuberosa</i> , <i>A. incarnata</i> , <i>A. exaltata</i> , <i>A. verticillata</i>) Monarch Host	13		Summer
<i>Helenium</i>	Helen's Sunflower (<i>Helenium autumnale</i>)	7	5	Fall
<i>Coreopsis</i>	Lanceleaf coreopsis (<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>), Tall coreopsis (<i>C. tripteris</i>)	6	17	Summer
<i>Agastache</i>	Anise Hyssop (<i>Agastache foeniculum</i>), Purple Hyssop (<i>A. scrophulariifolia</i>)	3		Summer
<i>Heliopsis</i>	False Sunflower (<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>)	2	5	Summer

Genus	Ground Covers - Native			
<i>Fragaria</i>	Wild Strawberry (<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>)	78	1	Spring
<i>Carex</i>	Sedge (<i>Carex pensylvanica</i> , <i>bicknellii</i> , <i>grayii</i> , many species!)	37		Spring
<i>Bearberry</i>	Bearberry (<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>)	17		Spring
<i>Antennaria</i>	Pussytoes (<i>A. howellii/parlinii</i>)	3		Spring

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Trees - Native		# Species Caterpillar that Use this as a Host Plant	# of Pollen Specialist Bee species that Rely on this Plant	Bloom Time
Genus				
<i>Quercus</i>	White Oak (<i>Quercus alba</i>), Black Oak (<i>Q. velutina</i>), Red Oak (<i>Q. rubra</i>)	454		
<i>Salix</i>	Black Willow (<i>Salix nigra</i>)	430		Spring
<i>Prunus</i>	American Plum (<i>Prunus americana</i>), Black Cherry (<i>P. serotina</i>)	414		Spring
<i>Betula</i>	River Birch (<i>Betula nigra</i>), Paper Birch (<i>B. papyrifera</i>)	401		
<i>Populus</i>	Cottonwood (<i>Populus deltoides</i>), Quaking Aspen (<i>P. tremuloides</i>)	372		
<i>Acer</i>	Red Maple (<i>Acer rubrum</i>), Silver (<i>A. saccharinum</i>), Sugar Maple (<i>A. saccharum</i>)	282		Spring
<i>Malus</i>	Sweet Crabapple (<i>Malus coronaria</i>), Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus sp</i>)	272		Spring
<i>Pinus</i>	Eastern White Pine (<i>Pinus strobus</i>), Red Pine (<i>P. rugosa</i>)	177		

Shrubs - Native				
Genus				
<i>Prunus</i>	Chokecherry (<i>Prunus virginiana</i>)	340		Spring
<i>Salix</i>	Prairie Willow (<i>Salix humilis</i>), Pussy Willow (<i>S. discolor</i>)	289	14	Spring
<i>Vaccinium</i>	Highbush Blueberry (<i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i>), Lowbush (<i>V. angustifolium</i>)	286	9	Spring
<i>Rubus</i>	Blackberry (<i>Rubus allegheniensis</i>), Black Raspberry (<i>R. occidentalis</i>)	158	1	Spring
<i>Corylus</i>	American Hazelnut (<i>Corylus americana</i>)	126		Spring
<i>Cornus</i>	Red Twig Dogwood (<i>Cornus sericea</i>) Alternate Leaved Dogwood (<i>C. alternifolia</i>)	124	4	Summer
<i>Amelanchier</i>	Serviceberry (<i>Amelanchier laevis</i> , <i>Amelanchier arborea</i>)	118		Spring
<i>Viburnum</i>	Arrowwood (<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>), Nannyberry (<i>V. lentago</i>), (<i>V. trilobum</i>)	108		Spring
<i>Rosacea</i>	Pasture Rose (<i>Rosa carolina</i>), Prairie Rose (<i>R. setigera</i>), <i>Aronia arbutifolia</i>	117		Summer
<i>Tsuga</i>	Eastern Hemlock (<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>)	95		
<i>Myrica</i>	Sweetfern (<i>Comptonia peregrina</i>), <i>Myrica sp</i> - Sweet Gale, Bayberry	64		Summer
<i>Thuja</i>	Eastern White Arborvitae (<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>)	49		
<i>Juniperus</i>	Eastern red cedar (<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>) Common Juniper (<i>Juniperus communis</i>)	34		

Ornamental Grass - Native (Habitat/Cover and Bird Seed)		# Species Caterpillar that Use as a Host Plant	# of Pollen Specialist Bee species that Rely On Plant	Bloom Time
Genus				
<i>Elymus</i>	Bottlebrush Grass (<i>Elymus hystrix</i>), Virginia wild-rye (<i>Elymus virginicus</i>)	25		
<i>Panicum</i>	Switch Grass (<i>Panicum virgatum</i>)	24		
<i>Schizachyrium</i>	Little Bluestem (<i>Schizachyrium scoparius</i>)	7		
<i>Sorghastrum</i>	Indian Grass (<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>)	4		
<i>Eragrostis</i>	Purple Love Grass (<i>Eragrostis spectabilis</i>)	4		
<i>Sporobolus</i>	Prairie Dropseed (<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>)	3		
<i>Koeleria</i>	June Grass (<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>)	1		

Native host plant for Lepidoptera - butterfly and moth species.

Narango, D.L., Tallamy, D.W. & Shropshire, K.J. Few keystone plant genera support the majority of Lepidoptera species. *Nat Commun* 11, 5751 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-020-19565-4>

Native host plants of pollen specialist bees were researched by Jarrod Fowler & Sam Droege
[Pollen Specialist Bees of the Eastern United States \(jarrodowler.com\)](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-020-19565-4)

Full listing of Michigan Native Plants at MichiganFlora.net

NorthOakland.WildOnes.Org

