

GROW WILD!

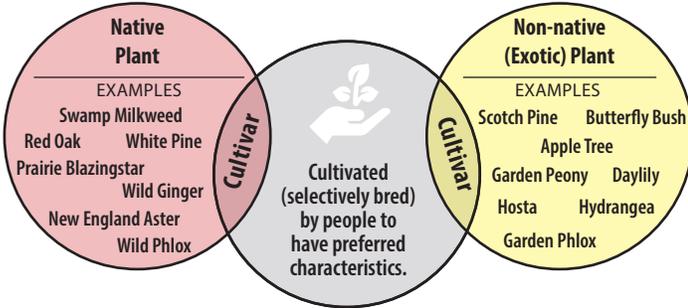


Native Plants: Naturally the Best Choice.

Is it native, non-native, or a cultivar?

Native plants are those plants that naturally grew in the wild in this region before European settlement. Non-native plants don't fit this definition.

A cultivar (short for cultivated variety) is a plant selectively bred by people for desired characteristics. Both native and non-native plants can have cultivars.



Why avoid cultivars of native plants?

Cultivars are bred to enhance human-desired traits such as shape and color. A native cultivar (sometimes called a "nativar") may be modified enough so that it no longer provides the same ecological benefits as the wild form of the native plant. Even minor changes in a native cultivar may cause pollinators such as butterflies and bees to no longer recognize it or to be unable to access its nectar or pollen.



Is this native plant a wild-type or a cultivar?

Plants are typically sold with an identification tag that includes the common and scientific name. Take a look — if the tag also has a variety name, then it's a cultivar. See the 'Hello Yellow' variety example below.

Keep your ecosystem healthy

Your yard is an ecosystem. From the highest treetop to deep in the soil, a largely hidden world is at work around you providing ecosystem services such as clean water and air. Follow these five tips to help keep the system (and you) healthy.

- Don't use fungicides or insecticides. These kill "good" and "bad" fungi and insects.
- Limit herbicide to careful, selective weed control. Closely follow label directions.
- Native plants usually don't need fertilizer. If used, limit to natural fertilizers such as compost or compost tea.
- Provide soft landings (native plants, leaf litter, and plant debris) under trees to support overwintering and pupating insects.
- Practice "messy" gardening: Leave some dead plant material in place to protect soil and provide homes and materials for wildlife.

Learn more at rpbcwd.org

Read the Label

Both plants are Butterfly Milkweed, but only one is the wild-type.

NATIVE PLANT	CULTIVAR
The wild (straight) form of a native plant will not have a variety name on the tag.	Avoid cultivars of native plants. Cultivars will have a variety name on the label.
<p>Butterfly Milkweed Asclepias tuberosa</p> <p>Common Name Scientific Name</p> <p>Buy me!</p> <p>PERENNIAL</p>	<p>Butterfly Milkweed Asclepias tuberosa Hello Yellow</p> <p>Variety Name A cultivated variety (cultivar) has a variety name, which may or may not be in quotes.</p> <p>PERENNIAL</p>

Keep it Simple!
Purchase native plants from a grower or supplier that specializes in native plants, then you won't have to worry about ending up with a cultivar.