



**MaineDOT**

in collaboration with  
**Wild Seed Project**

**MAINE  
NATIVE  
PLANTS  
FOR  
ROADSIDE  
RESTORATION**

A Design and Propagation Manual

*Maine Native Plants for Roadside Restoration*  
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*First Edition*



**Wild Seed  
Project**  
Returning native plants  
to the Maine landscape



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1	
THE NATIVE WAY .....	1
CHAPTER 2	
NATIVE SPECIES FOR ROADSIDE RESTORATION .....	9
CHAPTER 3	
COLLECTING SEEDS .....	153
CHAPTER 4	
SOWING OR PLANTING: DETERMINING YOUR OPTIONS .....	157
CHAPTER 5	
DESIGNING WITH NATIVES: PLANT LISTS FOR DIFFERENT GROWING CONDITIONS .....	163
INDEX .....	166
RESOURCES & BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	168

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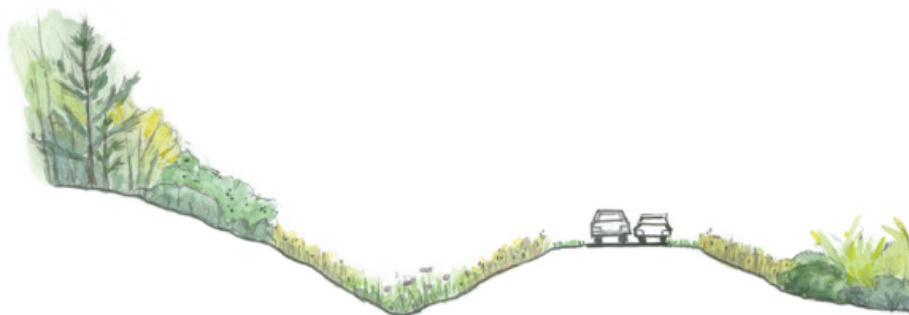
*Maine Native Plants for Roadside Restoration* honors the relationship between Maine's roadways and the abundant natural landscapes they traverse. Thank you to the following individuals and organizations whose expertise contributed greatly to this book:

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# INTRODUCTION

**A**CROSS THE COUNTRY, there is a growing movement to provide pollinator habitat and restore native plants in the open areas alongside highways and other roads. In 2016, the Federal Highway Administration recognized that our nation's highways could become critical habitat corridors with the planting and managing of native plants. Many states are already doing this and have realized the benefits in reduced mowing costs, increased pollinator habitat, and added beauty. Maine is now embracing this approach.

Today many of the wildflowers, grasses, and shrubs seen growing on our roadsides are not native to Maine. Creeping buttercup, ox-eye daisy, clover, blue lupine, Queen Anne's lace, and many other wildflowers and numerous grasses are introduced plants from other parts of the world. While these exotic species are tolerant of the mowing practices that have dominated roadside management in the last half century, most native species cannot grow or reproduce with mid-season cutting and have been retreating for decades. Some exotic plants such as those listed above are benign, provide nectar for pollinators, and are able to coexist with our native wildflowers and grasses under a management strategy that supports the life cycle of native plants. Other exotics, such as Japanese knotweed and black swallow-wort, are aggressive invasive species that displace native plants and do not provide habitat for pollinators. These plants must therefore be vigorously controlled or eliminated to prevent them from dominating our roadsides.



Imagine our highways as native habitat corridors. Wildflower meadows mowed just once a year, wetland shrubs in the low

*Drawing by Julia Frederick*



There are many native plants in Maine that could be thriving on our roadsides and supporting our struggling pollinators. This manual will help you learn more about the needs of these native plants: from the pollinators they support to the flowering, seed ripening, and collection protocols; propagation methods; sun and soil needs; and the best mowing times to protect their reproduction. We hope this guide will help roadside managers transition to creating native plant habitat along our travel corridors that is beautiful, flower-filled, and buzzing with life.

This guide will give you the information needed to plant new or manage existing populations of 70 species of wildflowers, shrubs, and grasses. With a greater understanding of the life cycle and growing needs of these plants, roadside managers could become leaders in increasing native habitat in Maine. By encouraging the specific native plants covered in this manual, you will also support many other native species and their associated fauna that grow along with these plants.

The species pages within the manual serve as quick reference for the needs and characteristics of the 70 native plants. For more detailed information on judging seed ripening, seed collection and storage, seed sowing, and planting lists for roadside designers to use in a variety of different growing situations, refer to the chapters on each subject and the bibliography and resources provided.

*Heather McCargo*  
*Wild Seed Project*



ditches, and on the slopes farthest away from the road, shrubs blending into the existing forests or screening human settlements.



The restoration of native plant species along Maine roadsides requires the cooperation, collaboration, and ingenuity of many groups including government agencies such as MaineDOT and Maine Natural Areas Program, conservation nonprofits, and regional land trusts.

*Above, MNAP Invasive Plant Biologist Nancy Olmstead leads a field trip on plant identification for road crew personnel.*

# CHAPTER 1

## THE NATIVE WAY

**T**HE THOUSANDS OF ACRES OF MOWED ROADSIDE in Maine can be cared for in a new way that will support native plants and provide extensive habitat corridors that bolster diminishing pollinator populations. For successful native plant restoration on Maine roadsides, we must remember two important ways in which native species differ from exotic ones. The first is that mowing during the growing season generally harms native plants and favors exotic ones. The second difference is how native seeds are handled and sown. A new understanding of these two factors will help roadside managers bring back the natives.

### IT IS ALL ABOUT THE MOWING

#### **Changing the mowing schedule**

For native plants to thrive on our roadsides, mowing regimes will need to change. The current practice of one or more cuttings from summer to early fall prevents many native plants from flowering and setting seed. For native plants and their pollinators, this mowing during the growing season is the equivalent of a clear-cut. After mowing, the pollinators' habitat is destroyed, and native plant reproduction is halted. To promote native plants, mowing should be reduced to once a year and occur after the growing season (between November and late April).

While areas along the immediate edge of the paving may need to be mowed regularly for visibility, most of the roadside landscape should be left unmowed during the growing season. This will allow native species to flower and set seed, supporting their growth and reproduction. Raising the height of the mower blade to eight inches in areas that need to be mowed for visibility can also allow more native plants to survive in this zone as the natives are more sensitive to basal cutting than many exotic species. Native

shrubs can also play an important role in roadside habitats. Some can be mown yearly; others need several years or more between mowing to thrive. This information is provided for each species covered in this manual.

### **Providing overwintering habitat for pollinators**

In addition, every year some patches of roadside should be left unmowed for pollinators that overwinter in the dead stems and leaves of plants. Leaving some areas unmowed will ensure year-round habitat for these species. This standing vegetation also provides food and shelter for birds and absorbs more runoff than closely cropped vegetation, preventing erosion and filtering pollutants. Other areas along the roadway, particularly the back slope (the area farthest from the road), could be managed as shrub meadows, much as the high voltage power right-of-ways have been successfully maintained for the last few decades.

### **Freeing up road crews to control and eliminate invasive plant species**

This shift away from summer mowing can free up roadside managers to spend the summer and early fall focusing on controlling invasive species, which are spreading across the state. For native plants to thrive, invasive species must be managed. All the money and human time that has been spent mowing during the growing season could now be spent on invasive species control!

### **THE TIMING OF NATIVE SEED SOWING IS DIFFERENT**

Successful seed sowing and establishment of native plants depend on appropriate timing for the species and good site preparation of the roadside planting area. In many situations, fall (even into January) is the best time to sow native seeds, as many species must experience a winter cold period to germinate. This is very different from the practices traditionally used for growing exotic grasses and other plants that land managers typically plant in summer. Many native plants tend to grow slowly in the first year or two as they are putting a lot of energy into establishing a perennial root system. Once established, these species will be resilient and can aid in controlling erosion and supporting pollinators and birds.

## Seeding a new site

Starting native wildflowers, grasses, and shrubs from seed on bare ground along roadsides is a multi-year process. This is successfully being done in many parts of the country, and when well executed results in a beautiful, evolving meadow of native plants whose species composition changes over time. It may take a full growing season to prepare the site before native species can be seeded or planted, including loosening compacted soil and removing weeds and invasive species. From seed, it takes at least 2-3 years for the natives to start blooming and set seed, so patience is required.

## Adding seed or young plants to existing vegetation

An alternative to starting a native planting on bare earth is to add natives to existing vegetation. In many situations roadside habitat can be diversified with some of the tougher native wildflowers and shrubs (called the workhorse species) by seeding into existing vegetation (called inter-seeding) or by planting young plants in the spring or fall (propagated in a nursery). Inter-seeding, along with a new mowing regime, can result in a more diverse mix of vegetation which includes benign exotics and the more vigorous native species growing together. This method yields beautiful results, as it supports pollinators, and is simpler than starting a planting from bare ground, assuming the site is not overrun by invasives.







## A blank slate

A wet swale like this could be planted with marsh-marigold, golden groundsel, golden Alexanders, blue iris, boneset, swamp milkweed, Joe-pye weed, New York aster, and Virgin's bower vine.





And on the back slope next to the pines, a shrub border of black chokeberry, sweet-fern, bush-honeysuckle, bayberry, meadowsweet, wild rose and smooth arrowwood viburnum could turn this roadside into a diverse habitat for pollinators and birds.



## Rehabilitating steep back slopes

Steep back slopes provide opportunities for shrub meadows with year round habitat for overwintering pollinators. North-facing slopes with part to full shade and moderately moist soil can support hazelnut, flowering raspberry, witch-hazel, bush-honeysuckle, red elderberry, and arrowwood viburnum,





with a ground cover of Canada windflower and large-leaved wood-aster. Sunny back slopes with moderately moist soils could be planted with shadbush, meadowsweet, red-osier dogwood, and viburnums, with meadow wildflowers such as common milkweed and asters in between the shrubs.

## Bringing habitat to the median

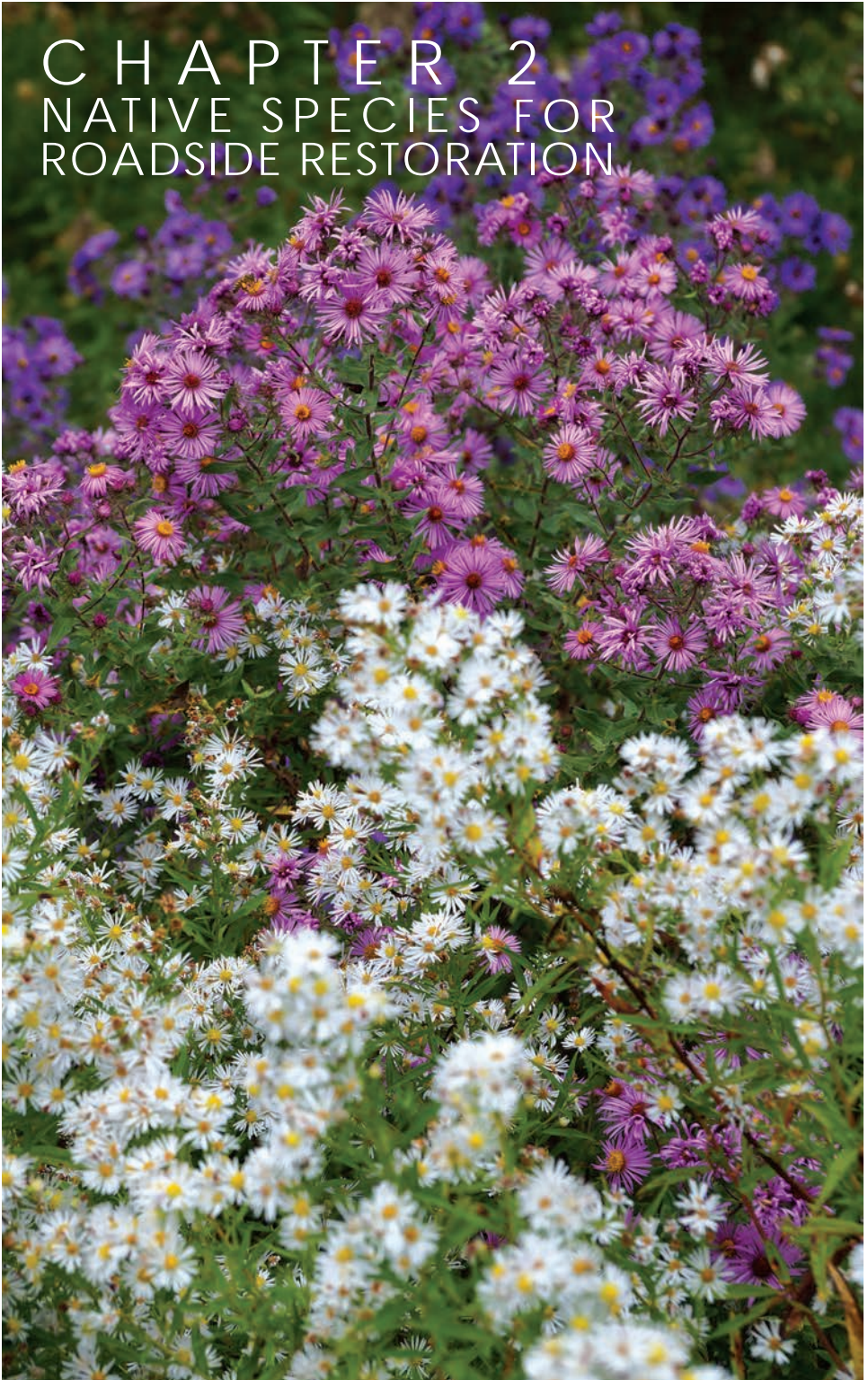


This broad, dry road median could be turned into native habitat with low dryland grasses, wildflowers and shrubs: purple lovegrass, little bluestem, wild strawberry, foxglove beardtongue, Virginia mountain-mint, bergamot, flax-leaved stiff-aster, and pearly everlasting with low stature shadbush and bush-honeysuckle in the middle.



# CHAPTER 2

## NATIVE SPECIES FOR ROADSIDE RESTORATION





Often misunderstood as an allergen, when in fact the real culprits are ragweed and other wind-pollinated plants, **goldenrod** provides habitat for butterflies, bees, and birds in late summer and early fall.





## A Guide to the Species Pages

Each of the 70 species is illustrated to highlight its attributes and easily recognized characteristics along with landscape and wildlife associations.

### Early Season

(late March to early June)

### Mid-Season

(mid June to mid August)

### Late season

(mid August to November)

### WORKHORSE

(Special Designation)

### HEIGHT

Average height of mature plant. Noted if the species spreads by the root system to form colonies

### NATURAL HABITAT and DISTURBED AREAS

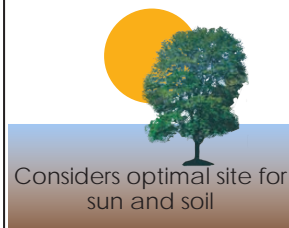
Describes where the plant is typically found

Wildflower

Shrub

Vines & Grasses

### GROWING CONDITIONS



### WILDLIFE



Identifies types of animals which depend on these plants; in some cases names specific animal species

### MOWING STRATEGIES



### BLOOM TIME



Provides a date range by month; can vary across the state by almost a month

### WORKHORSE, Described

These are the toughest natives and most projects should include a good number of these species. Other species listed are worthy but need more attention for successful establishment.

### MOWING

Mowing before the date indicated may prevent the flowering and seed ripening of this species and affect its ability to survive on the roadsides.

### SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Lists when the species seeds will ripen, which is crucial to understanding when to mow and for seed gathering times. Indicates how to handle the seeds for storage. Seed sowing strategies and germination are explained in more detail in Chapter 4, *Sowing the Seeds*.

# W I L D F L O W E R S



**South-facing slopes with dry, gravelly soils are no problem for Maine's native plants.**

South-facing back slopes with sunny dry conditions could be planted with dwarf shadbush, red bearberry, black chokeberry, bayberry, and Virginia rose with a ground cover of wild strawberry. Instead of paving small median strips, little bluestem, downy goldenrod, and flax-leaved stiff-aster would thrive in these narrow beds with dry sandy or gravelly soils. The benefits of vegetating these areas can be improved pollinator habitat and filtered runoff.

### **early season**

Golden Alexanders  
Groundsel, golden  
Marsh-marigold  
Spotted crane's-bill  
Strawberry, wild  
Windflower, Canada

### **mid-season**

Beardtongue, foxglove  
Bergamot, wild  
Boneset  
Coneflower, black-eyed  
Iris, blue  
Lily, Canada  
Lily, wood  
Loosestrife, swamp yellow  
Milkweeds  
    Common milkweed  
    Swamp milkweed  
Mountain-mint, Virginia  
Pearly everlasting

### **late season**

Asters  
    Flax-leaved stiff-aster  
    Heart-leaved American-aster  
    Large-leaved wood-aster  
    New England aster  
    New York aster  
    Tall white-aster  
Goldenrods  
    Common wrinkle-leaved goldenrod  
    Downy goldenrod  
    Seaside goldenrod  
Joe-pye weed  
Turtlehead, white  
Vervain, blue

COMMON GOLDEN ALEXANDERS  
*Zizia aurea*





# EARLY SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

3 ft.


### NATURAL HABITAT

Wet meadows and shores

### DISTURBED AREAS


Moist roadsides

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun, part shade.  
Moist to wet soils

**WILDLIFE**



Bees and butterflies, including the caterpillar of the black swallowtail

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



November to April

**BLOOM TIME**



Late May to June

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in August and September when they turn from green to dark brown and separate from the stalk. Seeds can be stored dry and sown in fall.



Flower



Seeds

# GOLDEN GROUNDSEL

*Packera aurea*





# EARLY SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE


### HEIGHT

1 ft. colony-forming plant

### NATURAL HABITAT

Moist deciduous woods, wet meadows, and stream sides.

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun to shade.  
Moist to wet soils

**WILDLIFE**



Bees

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



November to April,  
tolerant of midseason mowing

**BLOOM TIME**



May to early June

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds mature in mid-June. White fluffy seed heads quickly disperse. Store seeds dry and sow in fall. Seeds do not remain viable for long-term storage.



Flowers



Seeds

# MARSH - MARIGOLD

*Caltha palustris*



© Photograph courtesy of  
Donald Cameron

# EARLY SEASON

## Wildflower

### HEIGHT

1 ft.

### NATURAL HABITAT

Wet meadows, stream sides, seepages, pond edges.

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to part shade.  
Wet soil

### WILDLIFE



Early bees and flies

### MOWING STRATEGIES



Plants go dormant and are unaffected by mid-summer mowing

### BLOOM TIME



April and May

### SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in June when the green star-shaped seed pods split to reveal small green to dark brown seeds. Seeds must be sown immediately upon ripening and may not be stored dry. Germination occurs within a month.



Flowers



Seedpods



# SPOTTED CRANE'S-BILL

*Geranium maculatum*




# EARLY SEASON

# Wildflower

**HEIGHT**  
12 - 18 in.

**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Deciduous woodlands, thickets, and moist meadows

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun to part shade.  
Moist fertile soil

**WILDLIFE**



Bees and birds

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



November to April

**BLOOM TIME**



May to June

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen from mid-June to early July. They must be collected as the pods turn from green to black and before the seeds spring off. Sow seeds immediately for best germination. If sown in fall, some seeds will germinate the next spring, others will germinate the second spring.



Flowers



Seeds



# WILD STRAWBERRY

*Fragaria virginiana*





# EARLY SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

4 in. spreads by creeping runners to form large patches


### NATURAL HABITAT

Meadows and woodland edges

### DISTURBED AREAS

Roadsides

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun to shade.  
Moist to very dry, sandy or gravelly soils

**WILDLIFE**



Bees and birds

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



November to April

**BLOOM TIME**



May to June

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Fruits ripen in June and July. Remove small seeds from pulp and store dry. Sow in fall or early spring.



Flowers



Seeds

# CANADA WINDFLOWER

*Anemone canadensis*



# EARLY SEASON

## Wildflower

### WORKHORSE

#### HEIGHT

1 ft. Spreads rapidly by roots to make large patches

#### NATURAL HABITAT

Moist meadows, wooded swamps, and woodland edges

#### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to shade.  
Moist to dry soils

#### WILDLIFE



Bees and butterflies

#### MOWING STRATEGIES



November to April; can handle mowing during the growing season

#### BLOOM TIME



June to early July

### SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Small green seeds ripen on round clusters in late July and early August. A gentle touch separates the seeds from the stalk. Seeds must be sown immediately and cannot be stored dry. This plant does not produce a lot of seed. It is easy to propagate from root divisions.



Flower



Seeds



# FOXGLOVE BEARDTONGUE

*Penstemon digitalis*





# MID-SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

**HEIGHT**  
3 ft.

**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Dry to fertile meadows and woodland edges


**DISTRUBED AREAS**  
Roadsides and waste areas

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun to part shade.  
Moist to dry soils

**WILDLIFE**




Bees and hummingbirds

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



November to April

**BLOOM TIME**



July

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in late September and October when seedpods turn brown and dry. Dry pods need gentle crushing to extract the seeds. Seeds can be stored dry and surface sown in fall.



Flowers



Seeds

WILD BERGAMOT  
*Monarda fistulosa*



# MID - SEASON

## Wildflower

### WORKHORSE

#### HEIGHT

4 ft. spreads by roots to form a colony

#### NATURAL HABITAT

Moist to dry meadows and woodland edges

#### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to part shade.  
Moist to dry soils

#### WILDLIFE



Butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds

#### MOWING STRATEGIES



November to April

#### BLOOM TIME



July to August

### SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in September to early October. Husks turn papery and tan with brown seeds that shake out when ripe. Store seeds dry and sow in the fall or spring. Some bergamot found in natural areas could be garden escapees of cultivated bergamot rather than the native wild form. See *GoBotany*.



Flower



Seeds



# B O N E S E T

*Eupatorium perfoliatum*





# MID - SEASON


# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

**HEIGHT**  
3 - 4 ft.


**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Wetlands, edges of ponds, rivers, and marshes

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun to part shade.  
Moist to wet soils

**WILDLIFE**



Butterflies, bees, and birds

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



Late October to April

**BLOOM TIME**



July and August



Ripe seed on stalks

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in late September into October and are light gray and fluffy. Store seeds dry and sow in fall.



Seeds

# BLACK-EYED CONEFLOWER

*Rudbeckia hirta*





# MID - SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

HEIGHT  
2 ft.

NATURAL HABITAT  
Dry meadows

DISTURBED AREAS  
Roadsides

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to part shade.  
Dry soil

### WILDLIFE



Butterflies, bees, and  
birds

### MOWING STRATEGIES



Late October to April

### BLOOM TIME



July to September

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen from September through October. Small elongated black seeds dislodge with ease from central cone when ripe. Store seeds dry and sow in fall or spring. This short-lived wildflower will bloom the first summer from seed.

**NOTE:** Most of the *Rudbeckia hirta* in Maine is from the subspecies *pulcherrima* that has expanded in from the west of Maine.



Flower



Dried flower head and seeds



# BLUE IRIS

*Iris versicolor*



# MID - SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

**HEIGHT**  
2 - 3 ft.

**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Wet meadows,  
pond edges, and  
swales

**DISTURBED AREAS**  
Swales and ditches

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun, part shade.  
Moist to wet soils

**WILDLIFE**




Bees and butterflies

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



November to April

**BLOOM TIME**



June

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen from late August to early October when the 2 inch-long brown pods split to reveal large brown tightly packed seeds. Store seeds dry and sow in fall.



Left, flowers; above, seedpods



# CANADA LILY

*Lilium canadense*





# MID - SEASON

# Wildflower

## HEIGHT

4 - 6 ft.

## NATURAL HABITAT

Wet meadows and open floodplains

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun, part shade.  
Moist to wet soils

**WILDLIFE**




Hummingbirds and bees

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



November to May

**BLOOM TIME**



July

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in October. Pods turn golden and papery and begin to split. Seeds can be stored dry for spring sowing and will germinate after the second spring. Alternatively, seeds may be warm moist stratified for 3 months, then given 5 months of cold for germination the following summer.



Flower



Seeds

WOOD LILY  
*Lilium philadelphicum*



# MID - SEASON

## Wildflower

### HEIGHT

2 ft.

### NATURAL HABITAT

Sand plains, pine barrens, and woodlands

### DISTURBED AREAS

Blueberry fields

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to part shade.  
Moist to dry acidic soils

### WILDLIFE



Hummingbirds and bees

### MOWING STRATEGIES



November to May

### BLOOM TIME



July

### SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in October. Pods turn golden and papery and begin to split. Sow immediately and germination will occur the next spring. Seeds may be stored dry and sown in the fall or spring but germination may take two years.



Left, Flower stamens

Right, flower stalk (© Photograph courtesy of Donald Cameron)



# SWAMP YELLOW-LOOSESTRIFE

*Lysimachia terrestris*



# MID - SEASON

# Wildflower

## HEIGHT

2 ft. spreads by roots to form small colonies


## NATURAL HABITAT

Wet meadows, stream sides, and woodland edges

## DISTURBED AREAS

Roadside swales and ditches

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun, part shade.  
Moist to wet soils

**WILDLIFE**




Bees

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



Late October to April

**BLOOM TIME**



June to July

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Collect small tan seed capsules in September and store dry. Sow seeds in the fall.



Flower



Seeds



# MILKWEEDS

Common milkweed

*Asclepias syriaca*





# MID - SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

2 - 4 ft. colonizing plant spreads by underground horizontal roots


### NATURAL HABITAT

Meadows

### DISTURBED AREAS


Roadsides

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun.  
Moist to dry soils

**WILDLIFE**



Butterflies and bees. The Monarch butterfly must have the foliage of milkweed during the caterpillar stage of life.

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



Late October to early May

**BLOOM TIME**



Late June to early August



## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen from late September to November. Long wide pods change from green to tan and split to reveal flat brown seeds with long silky parachute-like appendages. It is easiest to strip the rows of seed from the silk while in the field before the silk expands. Seeds can be stored dry. Sow seeds in fall or early spring.

*Seedpods in autumn*

MILKWEEDS  
Swamp milkweed  
*Asclepias incarnata*



# MID - SEASON


# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

**HEIGHT**  
4 ft.

**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Moist meadows,  
wetlands, and  
swales and ditches

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun to part shade.  
Moist to wet soils

**WILDLIFE**



Butterflies and bees.  
The Monarch butterfly  
must have the foliage  
of milkweed during the  
caterpillar stage of life.

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



November to April

**BLOOM TIME**



July and August

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen late September through October. Long narrow pods change from green to tan and split to reveal flat brown seeds with long silky parachute-like appendages. It is easiest to strip the rows of seed from the silk directly from the pods in the field before the silk expands. Seeds can be stored dry. Sow seeds in fall or early spring.



*Flower with Monarch butterfly*



*Dry seedpods*



# VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN-MINT

*Pycnanthemum virginianum*



# MID - SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

3 ft. spreads by roots to form a colony


### NATURAL HABITAT

Moist to dry meadows and woodland edges

### DISTURBED AREAS


Swales and ditches

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun.  
Dry to moist soils

**WILDLIFE**




Bees and butterflies

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



November to April

**BLOOM TIME**



July to August

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in October when small pod clusters split and tiny brown seeds disperse. Store seeds dry and sow in fall.



Flowers



Seeds



PEARLY EVERLASTING  
*Anaphalis margaritacea*





# MID - SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

1 - 2 ft. spreads by roots to make large patches

### NATURAL HABITAT

Sunny, dry, sandy or gravelly meadows and river shores

### DISTURBED AREAS

Roadsides and blueberry barrens

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun. Dry, sandy or gravelly soils

### WILDLIFE



Bees and butterflies

### MOWING STRATEGIES



November to April

### BLOOM TIME



August

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Plants are either male or female, with an entire patch often being one individual sex. Seeds are small fluffy buttons that dislodge when ripe. Individual seeds are small with a short silky appendage. Collect and store dry. Surface sow seeds in late fall or early spring.



Flower



Ripe seeds

# ASTERS

Flax-leaved stiff-aster

*Ionactis linariifolia*





# LATE SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

10 in.

### NATURAL HABITAT

Dry sandy meadows and pine barrens

### DISTURBED AREAS

Roadsides

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun.  
Dry soil

### WILDLIFE



Butterflies, bees, and birds. A top pollinator plant for both nectar and caterpillars

### MOWING STRATEGIES



November to June

### BLOOM TIME



August to September

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds begin ripening in October and are ripe when fluffy and tan and dislodge easily from the flowering stalk. Store seeds dry and sow in late fall or early spring.



Flower



Seeds



# A S T E R S

Heart-leaved American-aster  
*Symphotrichum cordifolium*



# LATE SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

**HEIGHT**  
2 - 3 ft.

**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Forest edges and thickets

**DISTURBED AREAS**  
Roadsides, urban spaces, and waste areas

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Shade to part sun.  
Moist to dry soils

### WILDLIFE



Butterflies, bees and birds. A top pollinator plant for both nectar and caterpillars, birds eat the seeds.

### MOWING STRATEGIES



Late November to June

### BLOOM TIME



October to November

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in November. Seeds are ripe when fluffy and tan and dislodge easily from the flowering stalk. Store seeds dry and sow in late fall or early spring.



Leaves



Seeds



# A S T E R S

Large-leaved wood-aster

*Eurybia macrophylla*





# LATE SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

2 ft. expanding root system make large colonies of low foliage

### NATURAL HABITAT

Evergreen and deciduous woodlands with dry to moist soils

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to shade.  
Moist to dry soils

### WILDLIFE



Butterflies, bees, and birds. A top pollinator plant for both nectar and caterpillars, birds eat the seeds.

### MOWING STRATEGIES



November to April

### BLOOM TIME



August to September

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in mid-October to November. Seeds are ripe when fluffy and tan and dislodge easily from the flowering stalk. Store seeds dry and sow in late fall.



Flowers



Low-growing foliage

# ASTERS

New England aster

*Symphotrichum novae-angliae*





# LATE SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

2 - 5 ft.

### NATURAL HABITAT

Meadows

### DISTURBED AREAS

Roadsides, swales and ditches in fertile, moist soils

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to part shade.  
Moist soils

### WILDLIFE



Butterflies, bees, and birds. A top pollinator plant for both nectar and caterpillars, birds eat the seeds.

### MOWING STRATEGIES



November to May,  
Tolerant of Spring mowing

### BLOOM TIME



October to November

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in late October to November. Seeds are ripe when fluffy and tan and dislodge easily from the flowering stalk. Store seeds dry and sow in late fall or early spring.



Flowers



Seeds



# ASTERS

New York aster

*Symphotrichum novi-belgii*



# LATE SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

**HEIGHT**  
3 ft.

**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Moist open woods, meadows, stream sides and shores

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to part shade.  
Moist to wet soil

### WILDLIFE



Butterflies, bees, and birds. A top pollinator plant for both nectar and caterpillars, birds eat the seeds.

### MOWING STRATEGIES



November to April

### BLOOM TIME



August to September

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in late October to November. Seeds are ripe when fluffy and tan and dislodge easily from the flowering stalk. Store seeds dry and sow in late fall or early spring.



Flowers © Photographs courtesy of Donald Cameron



# ASTERS

Tall white-aster

*Doellingeria umbellata*





# LATE SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

4 ft. spreads by roots to make a small colony

### NATURAL HABITAT

Moist meadows

### DISTURBED AREAS

Roadsides and waste areas

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to part shade.  
Moist soil

### WILDLIFE



Butterflies, bees, and birds. A top pollinator plant for both nectar and caterpillars.

### MOWING STRATEGIES



November to June

### BLOOM TIME



August to September

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in late September to November. Seeds are ripe when fluffy, tan, and dislodge easily from the flowering stalk. Store seeds dry and sow in late fall or early spring.



*In the field*



*Seeds*

# GOLDENRODS

Common wrinkle-leaved goldenrod

*Solidago rugosa*





# LATE SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

3 - 4 ft.

### NATURAL HABITAT

Moist to dry meadows and woodland edges

### DISTURBED AREAS

Roadsides

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun.  
Dry to moist soils

### WILDLIFE



Butterflies, bees, and birds. A top pollinator plant for both nectar and caterpillars, birds eat the seeds.

### MOWING STRATEGIES



November to April

### BLOOM TIME



August

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in October and November and are dry and fluffy. Seeds can be stored dry. Sow seeds in fall.



Left, flowers, and right, leaves

© Photographs courtesy of Donald Cameron



GOLDENRODS  
Downy goldenrod  
*Solidago puberula*



# LATE SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

2 ft.

### NATURAL HABITAT

Dry meadows

### DISTURBED AREAS

Roadsides and blueberry barrens

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to part shade.  
Dry soil

### WILDLIFE



Butterflies, bees, and birds. A top pollinator plant for both nectar and caterpillars, birds eat the seeds.

### MOWING STRATEGIES



November to April

### BLOOM TIME



August to September

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in October and November and are a tan to gray in color and fluffy. Seeds can be stored dry and sown in fall.



Flowers



Seeds



# GOLDENRODS

Seaside goldenrod

*Solidago sempervirens*



# LATE SEASON


# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

**HEIGHT**  
2 ft.


**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Dry, sandy or gravelly beaches, salt marshes, and shores; tolerant of flooding and salt; best for coastal areas

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun.  
Dry to wet soils

**WILDLIFE**



Butterflies, bees, and birds. A top pollinator plant for both nectar and caterpillars, birds eat the seeds.

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



November to April

**BLOOM TIME**



August to September

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in October and November when dry and fluffy. Seeds can be stored dry and sown in fall.



Flowers

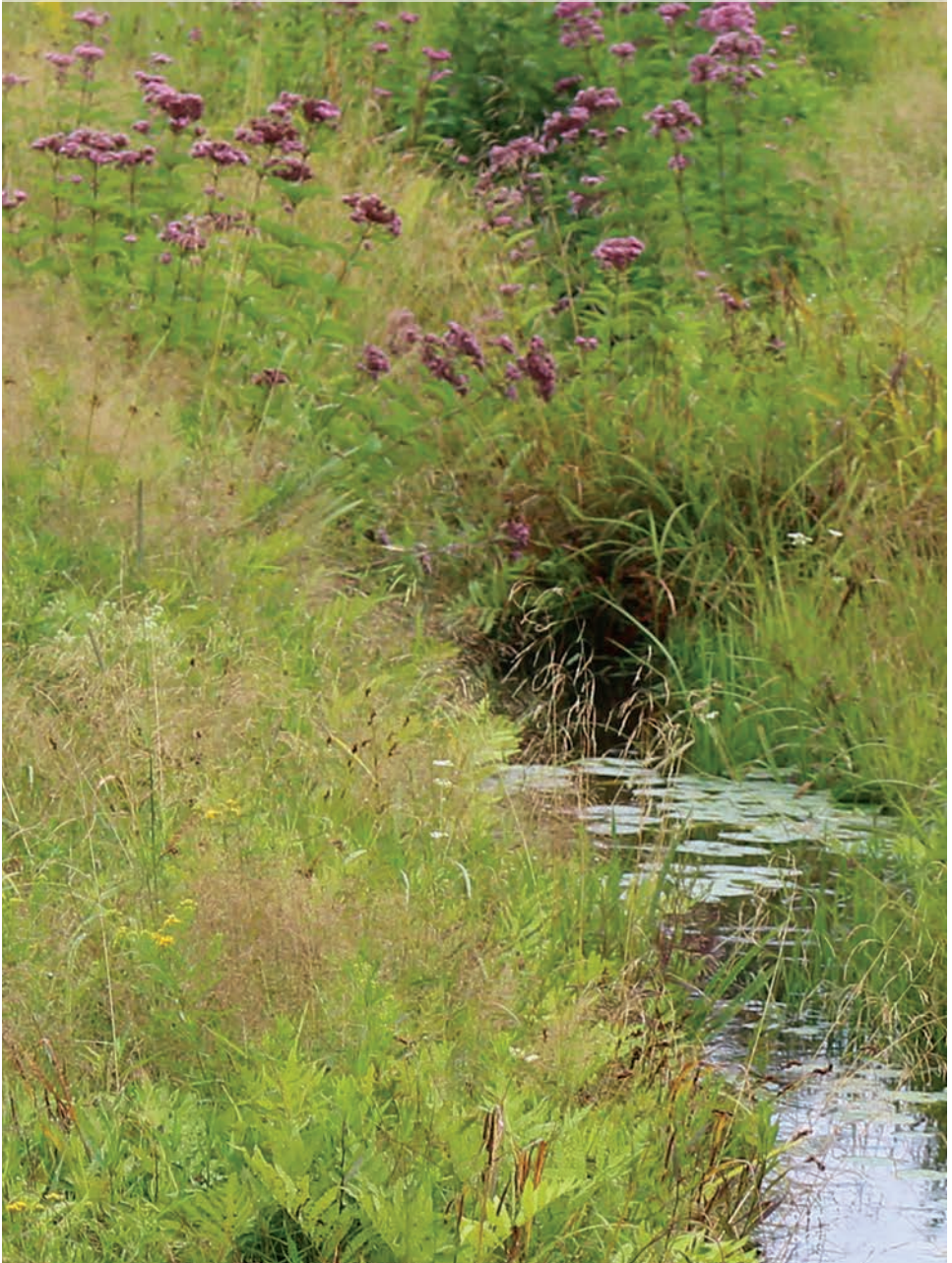


Seeds



# JOE-PYE WEED

*Eutrochium maculatum*



# LATE SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

4 - 6 ft. expands from the root to form a large clump

### NATURAL HABITAT

Stream sides, pond edges, and wet meadows

### DISTURBED AREAS

Roadside ditches

## GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun.  
Moist to wet soils

## WILDLIFE



Butterflies, bees, and birds

## MOWING STRATEGIES



November to April

## BLOOM TIME



August

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in late September into November when they are tan/gray and fluffy. Store seeds dry and sow in fall.



Above, seeds, and  
Right, flower heads



# WHITE TURTLEHEAD

*Chelone glabra*



© Photograph courtesy of Prairie Moon Nursery

# LATE SEASON

# Wildflower

## HEIGHT

3 ft. expands from the root to form clumps

## NATURAL HABITAT

Stream sides, pond edges, and wet meadows

## DISTURBED AREAS

Roadside ditches

## GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to part shade.  
Moist to wet soils

## WILDLIFE



Butterflies and bees

## MOWING STRATEGIES



November to April

## BLOOM TIME



August

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in October and November when capsules are papery and brown. Seeds shake easily out of the pods and are small brown flakes. Store seeds dry and surface sow in fall.



*Flower*



*Seedpod*



# BLUE VERVAIN

*Verbena hastata*



# LATE SEASON

# Wildflower

## WORKHORSE

**HEIGHT**  
4 - 6 ft.

**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Wet meadows,  
ponds, and stream  
edges

**DISTURBED AREAS**  
Roadside ditches

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun, part shade.  
Moist to wet soils

### WILDLIFE



Bees, butterflies,  
and birds

### MOWING STRATEGIES



November to April

### BLOOM TIME



July and August

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in October. Small brown seeds shake out easily from dried stalks and are stored dry. Surface sow seeds in fall.



Left, flowers; above, seed stalk  
with clean seeds



# SHRUBS



On a shady slope with conifers, huckleberry, low bush blueberry, and bracken fern thrive in dry acid soils.



**early season**

Alder, speckled  
Bayberry, small  
Bearberry, red  
Blueberry, highbush  
Blueberry, lowbush  
Chokeberry, black  
Dogwoods  
    Gray dogwood  
    Silky dogwood  
Elderberry, red  
Hazelnut  
Huckleberry, black  
Juniper, common  
Laurel, sheep  
Pussy willow  
Shadbush  
Sweet-fern  
Sweetgale  
Viburnum  
    Highbush cranberry  
    Nannyberry  
    Smooth arrowwood  
    Withe-rod

**mid-season**

Dogwood, red-osier  
Elderberry, black  
Honeysuckle, bush  
Meadowsweet, rosy  
Meadowsweet, white  
Raspberry, flowering  
Rose, wild  
Sumac  
Winterberry holly

**late season**

Witch-hazel



# SPECKLED ALDER

*Alnus incana*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

10 - 15 ft.

### NATURAL HABITAT

Moist soils, wetlands, edges of ponds, rivers, and marshes

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun, part shade.  
Moist to wet soils

### WILDLIFE



Bees eat pollen and  
birds eat seeds

### MOWING STRATEGIES



Tolerant of mowing  
every other year

### BLOOM TIME



April

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in fall and can be collected in October as cones darken and split. Small flat brown seeds separate easily from a cone-like structure. Store seeds dry and sow in fall.



Leaves



Cones



Flowers (catkins)



SMALL BAYBERRY  
*Morella caroliniensis*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

3 - 6 ft., may spread by underground roots

### NATURAL HABITAT

Dry, sandy, or gravelly soils; pine barrens; and coastal areas

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun. Dry, sandy or gravelly soils

### WILDLIFE



Bees and birds

### MOWING STRATEGIES



October to December

### BLOOM TIME



May

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Species has separate male and female plants. Seeds ripen in late September and October on female plants and are a gray waxy berry. Seeds can be stored dry and sown in fall. Before sowing, grind seeds on a wire screen to remove waxy coating.



Ripe fruits



Flowers



# RED BEARBERRY

*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## HEIGHT

3 - 8 in. creeping plant that roots along horizontal stems covering large areas

## NATURAL HABITAT

Rocky ledges, open gravelly and sandy soils, and pine barrens

## GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun. Dry, sandy or gravelly soils

## WILDLIFE



Bees and birds

## MOWING STRATEGIES



Not tolerant of mowing unless mower is set above height of foliage

## BLOOM TIME



May

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Red fruits ripen in late summer and persist into spring. Collect seeds starting in September and separate seeds from pulp. Seeds have a thick seed coat that can take several years of winter freezes to break down or can be loosened by scarification. Sow seeds in fall and expect sporadic germination over several years.



Leaves and stems creep along the ground.



Flowers



# HIGHBUSH BLUEBERRY

*Vaccinium corymbosum*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB


## HEIGHT

6 - 8 ft.

## NATURAL HABITAT


Wet woods, vernal pools, and shrub swamps.

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun to light shade.  
Moist acidic soils

**WILDLIFE**




Bees and birds

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



Not tolerant of mowing

**BLOOM TIME**



May

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Blueberries ripen in July and August and should be collected before birds eat them. Clean the tiny brown seeds from the fruit and store dry. Surface sow seeds in spring.



*Ripe fruits*



*Flowers*



# LOWBUSH BLUEBERRY

*Vaccinium angustifolium*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## HEIGHT

1 - 2 ft., spreads by its roots to form large colonies

## NATURAL HABITAT

Dry, gravelly, or sandy soil, pine barrens, ledges, and edges of spruce, pine, or oak woodlands

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun to shade.  
Moist to dry acidic soils

**WILDLIFE**



Bees and birds

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



Very tolerant of annual mowing

**BLOOM TIME**



May



## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Blueberries ripen in July and August and should be collected before birds eat them. Clean tiny brown seeds from fruit and store dry. Surface sow seeds in spring.

*Flower*



# BLACK CHOKEBERRY

*Aronia melanocarpa*



# EARLY SEASON


# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

**HEIGHT**  
1 - 6 ft.

**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Ledges, rocky or sandy soils from wetlands to dry barrens, bogs

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun. Wet to dry soils

**WILDLIFE**




Bees, birds eat fruits in late winter

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



Tolerant of yearly mowing

**BLOOM TIME**



May

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Black fruits ripen in late August and September and persist over the winter. Remove pulp and store seeds dry. Sow seeds in fall.



Fruits



Seeds



# COMMON JUNIPER

*Juniperus communis*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## HEIGHT

3 ft. spreading over time to make large circles

## NATURAL HABITAT

Dry meadows, rocky ledges

## NATURAL HABITAT

Roadsides

## GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun. Dry, sandy or gravelly soils

## WILDLIFE



Host plant for butterfly and moth caterpillars

## MOWING STRATEGIES



Not tolerant of mowing

## BLOOM TIME



May

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

This species has separate male and female plants. Berries ripen on female plants in October in pale whitish green to dark blue berries (actually a fleshy cone). Harvest and store dry or sow in fall. Germination occurs in the second spring. Another option: give seeds 3 months of warm, moist stratification before 3 months of cold, and seeds should germinate the first spring.



*Needle-like leaves*



*Ripe fruits*



DOGWOODS  
Gray dogwood  
*Swida racemosa*



© Arthur Haines, New England Wild Flower Society

# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

8 ft., spreads from roots to form large colonies


### NATURAL HABITAT

Moist to dry meadows, thickets

### DISTURBED AREAS

Roadsides

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun, part shade.  
Dry to moist soils

**WILDLIFE**



Bees and birds

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



October to December

**BLOOM TIME**



June



## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

White fruits ripen in late August and September. Collect and separate pulp from seeds. Seeds sown immediately usually result in germination the next spring. Otherwise, germination will occur after the second spring. Seeds may be stored dry and sown in fall.

Left, foliage  
© Photograph courtesy of Donald Cameron



# DOGWOODS

Silky dogwood

*Swida amomum*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

8 - 10 ft., spreads from roots to form large colonies

### NATURAL HABITAT

Moist meadows, wetlands, shores of rivers and lakes

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun. Moist to wet soils

### WILDLIFE



Bees and birds

### MOWING STRATEGIES



Tolerant of mowing every 2 years

### BLOOM TIME



June

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Blue fruits ripen in late summer. Collect and separate pulp from seeds. Seeds must not dry out and should be sown as soon as possible for germination the following spring.



*Green fruits*



*Ripe fruits*





RED ELDERBERRY  
*Sambucus racemosa*

# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## HEIGHT

3 - 8 ft.

## NATURAL HABITAT

Moist acidic forests and woodland edges

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Part shade.  
Moist to wet soils

**WILDLIFE**




Hollow stems provide winter habitat for bee larvae.

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



Tolerant of mowing every 5 years

**BLOOM TIME**



Early May



## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Red fruits ripen in late June and early July. Harvest immediately before birds eat them. Clean pulp from fruit and sow immediately. Germination usually occurs the following spring.

*Ripe fruits are eaten quickly by birds*



H A Z E L N U T  
*Corylus americana*  
*C. cornuta*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## HEIGHT

6 ft.

## NATURAL HABITAT

Woodlands, forest edges, and shrub lands

## GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to shade.  
Moist to dry soils

## WILDLIFE



Bees and birds

## MOWING STRATEGIES



Tolerant of mowing  
every 5 years

## BLOOM TIME



April

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Nuts ripen in fuzzy green husks in September. Collect before squirrels, remove husk, and do not let seeds dry out. Store nuts in sealed containers in the refrigerator until sowing in fall or spring. Protect sown seeds from rodents. (See page 160)



Ripe nuts in husk



Flowers (catkins)



# BLACK HUCKLEBERRY

*Gaylussacia baccata*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

**HEIGHT**  
2 - 3 ft.

**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Wet to dry acid woodlands, ledges, edges of wetlands, and bogs.

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun to shade.  
Moist to dry acidic soils

**WILDLIFE**



Bees and birds

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



Tolerant of mowing every 3 years

**BLOOM TIME**



Late May

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Black fruits ripen in August. Remove pulp and surface sow immediately. Seeds can be cleaned and stored dry but germination will happen over several years. NOTE: 1 month of warm, moist stratification before cold stratification improves germination substantially.



*Ripe fruits*



*Flowers*



# SHEEP-LAUREL

*Kalmia angustifolia*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## HEIGHT

1 - 3 ft. colony forming

## NATURAL HABITAT

Moist to wet acid meadows and wetlands

## GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to part shade.  
Moist to wet acidic soils

## WILDLIFE



Bees

## MOWING STRATEGIES



Tolerant of high mowing  
(minimum of 1 Ft.)

## BLOOM TIME



Early June to July

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seed capsules ripen in October when they dry and split to reveal small dust-like seeds. Seeds germinate in the wild on moist moss or decaying logs. Seeds can be stored dry and surface sown in spring.



*Seed capsules*



*Flowers*



# P U S S Y W I L L O W

*Salix discolor*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

**HEIGHT**  
6 - 15 ft.

**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Wet meadows and stream sides

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun. Moist to wet soils

### WILDLIFE



Hollow stems provide winter habitat for bee larvae.

### MOWING STRATEGIES



Tolerant of mowing every other year

### BLOOM TIME



April

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

This species has separate male and female plants. Seeds ripen in late May on female plants when small yellow capsules split to reveal green or tan seeds with a cottony appendage. Collect and surface sow immediately and germination will occur within a few weeks. Propagation from cuttings should be taken from a minimum of 50 individuals of both sexes to maintain genetic diversity.



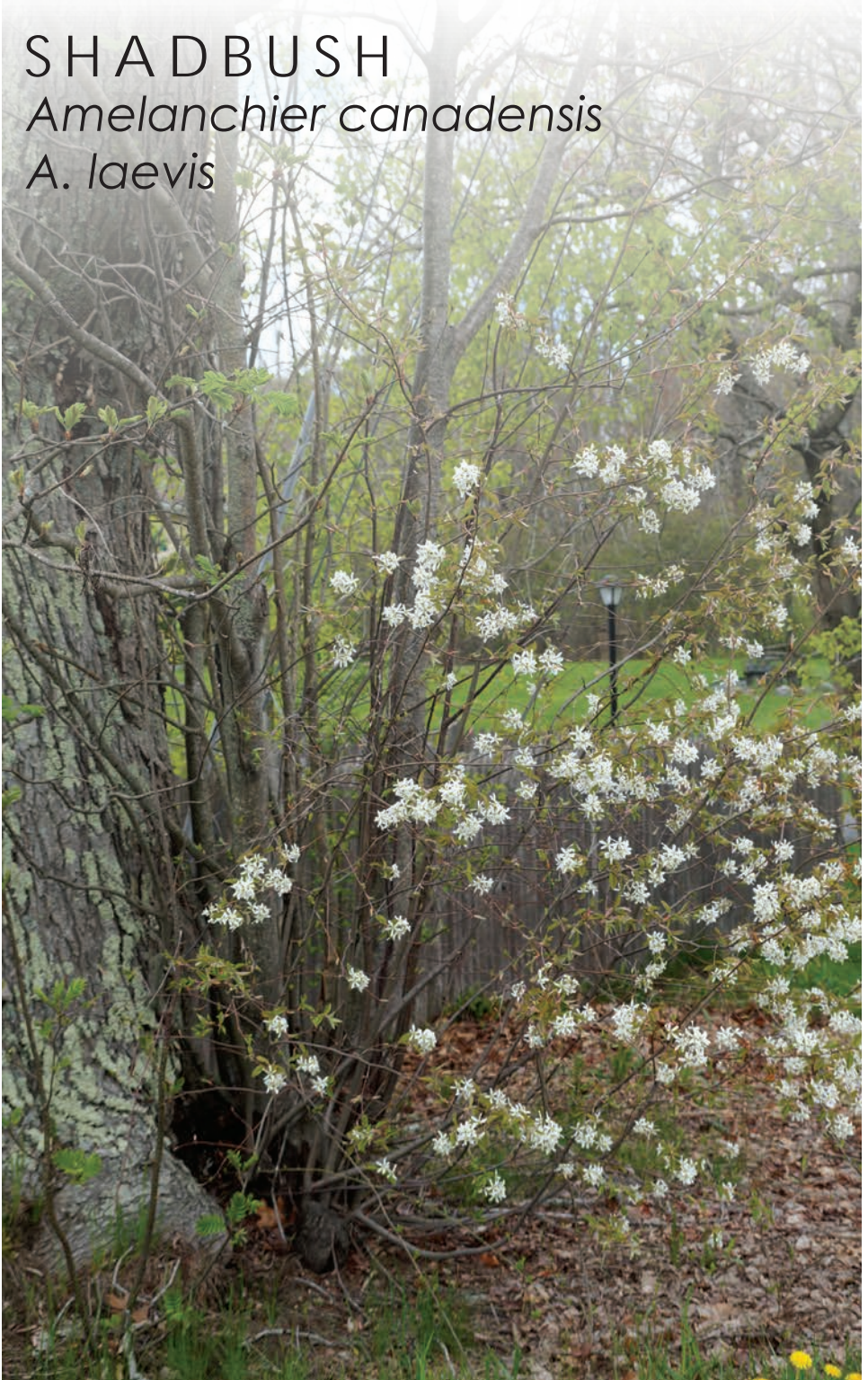
From left to right:  
Early flower emerging ; in full bloom; leaves (© photograph courtesy of Donald Cameron)



# SHADBUSH

*Amelanchier canadensis*

*A. laevis*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

**HEIGHT**  
8 - 20 ft.

**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Woodland edges, meadows, and borders of wet areas

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to part shade.  
Moist to dry soils

### WILDLIFE



Bees and birds

### MOWING STRATEGIES



Tolerant of mowing  
every five years

### BLOOM TIME



Late April to early May

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Fruits turn from red to blue when ripe in late June. Separate seeds from pulpy flesh. Seeds may be sown immediately or stored dry and sown in fall. Light scarification of seed may improve germination.



Flowers



Fruits



DWARF SHADBUSH  
*Amelanchier spicata*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

3 - 6 ft. colonizing shrub


### NATURAL HABITAT

Ledges, woodland edges, and meadows

### DISTURBED AREAS

Roadsides and dry land

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun to part shade.  
Moist to dry soils

**WILDLIFE**




Bees and birds

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



Tolerant of mowing every two years

**BLOOM TIME**



Late April to early May

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Fruits turn from red to blue when ripe in late June. Separate seeds from pulpy flesh. Seeds may be sown immediately or stored dry and sown in fall. Light scarification of seed may improve germination.



Flowers



Fruits

© Photographs courtesy of Donald Cameron



SWEET-FERN  
*Comptonia peregrina*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## HEIGHT

2 - 3 ft. spreads by roots to form a colony

## NATURAL HABITAT

Sandy dry meadows, and open woods

## DISTURBED AREAS

Roadsides with infertile or thin soils

## GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun. Dry, sandy or gravelly soils

## WILDLIFE



Bees and birds

## MOWING STRATEGIES



Very tolerant of yearly mowing

## BLOOM TIME



Late April to early May

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

The species has separate male and female plants. Seeds ripen late July to early August in prickly green capsules on female plants. Green to brown nutlets must be collected before they drop to the ground. Seeds can be stored dry and sown in fall. Germination can take several years as the hard seed coat can take multiple winters to break down or can benefit from scarification. Can also be propagated by root divisions.



Flowers (catkins)



Seeds in prickly husk



# SWEETGALE

*Myrica gale*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## HEIGHT

3 ft., spreads by roots to make a colony

## NATURAL HABITAT

Pond margins, bogs, and stream edges

## GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun, part shade.  
Moist to wet soils

## WILDLIFE



Bees and birds

## MOWING STRATEGIES



Tolerant of high mowing  
(1 ft. minimum)  
every 3 years

## BLOOM TIME



May

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

This species has separate male and female plants. Seeds ripen inside small nutlets in late October and persist through the winter. Collect and remove small seeds and store dry. Sow seeds in fall.



*Foliage*



# VIBURNUMS

Highbush-cranberry

*Viburnum opulus* var. *americanum*




# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

**HEIGHT**  
8 - 12 ft.


**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Moist to wet meadows and forest edges

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun, part shade.  
Medium to moist soil

**WILDLIFE**



Bees and birds

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



Tolerant of mowing every 5 years

**BLOOM TIME**



May to July

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Fruits turn red when ripe from late August into October. Collect and clean pulp from seeds and sow immediately (seeds must not dry out). Several months of warm temperatures before winter cold usually result in germination the next spring. Otherwise, germination will occur after the second spring. **NOTE:** The European variety of *Viburnum opulus* is naturalized in Maine. Make sure the seeds collected are from the native American species (See *GoBotany*).



Flower



Fruits



# VIBURNUMS

Nannyberry viburnum

*Viburnum lentago*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

8 - 12 ft.

### NATURAL HABITAT

Moist to dry meadows and woodland edges

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to part shade.  
Moist to dry soils

### WILDLIFE



Butterfly and moth host plant  
Seeds eaten by birds

### MOWING STRATEGIES



Tolerant of mowing every 3 years

### BLOOM TIME



June

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Fruits change from yellow to orange to navy as they ripen in late August and early September. Collect and clean pulp from seeds and sow immediately. Several months of warm temperatures before winter cold usually result in germination the next spring. Otherwise, germination will occur after the second spring.



Flowers



Fruits



VIBURNUMS  
Withe-rod viburnum  
*Viburnum nudum* var. *cassinoides*



# EARLY SEASON


# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

**HEIGHT**  
4 - 6 ft.


**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Wet to medium acid woodlands and forest edges

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun to part shade.  
Wet to dry acidic soils

**WILDLIFE**



Bees and birds

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



Tolerant of mowing every 3 years

**BLOOM TIME**



Late June

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Fruits change from yellow to pink to navy as they ripen in late August and September. Collect and clean pulp from seeds and sow immediately (seeds must not dry out). Several months of warm temperatures before winter cold usually result in germination the next spring. Otherwise, germination will occur after the second spring.



Flower



Fruits



VIBURNUMS  
Smooth Arrowwood  
*Viburnum dentatum*



# EARLY SEASON

# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

**HEIGHT**  
6 - 8 ft.

**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Deciduous  
woodland edges,  
wetlands, wet  
meadows

**DISTURBED AREAS**  
Roadside swales  
and ditches

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to shade.  
Moist to dry soils

### WILDLIFE



Bees and birds

### MOWING STRATEGIES



Tolerant of mowing  
every three years

### BLOOM TIME



June

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Dark blue fruits ripen in late August and early September. Collect and clean pulp from seeds and sow immediately (seeds must not dry out). Several months of warm temperatures before winter cold usually result in germination the next spring. Otherwise, germination will occur after the second spring.



Young plants



Fruit, © Photograph courtesy of  
Donald Cameron



# DOGWOODS

Red-osier dogwood

*Swida sericea*



# MID - SEASON

# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

2 - 8 ft. spreads  
from roots to form  
large colonies

### NATURAL HABITAT

Moist to saturated  
soils along  
wetlands and  
streams

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun, part shade.  
Moist to wet soils

### WILDLIFE



Bees and birds

### MOWING STRATEGIES



Very tolerant of yearly  
mowing

### BLOOM TIME



Late June

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

White fruits ripen in late August. Collect and clean pulp from seeds and sow immediately as seeds must not dry out. Several months of warm temperatures before winter cold usually result in germination the next spring. Otherwise, germination will occur after the second spring.



Flower



Fruits



# BLACK ELDERBERRY

*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *canadensis*



# MID - SEASON

# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

5 - 10 ft.

### NATURAL HABITAT

Wet meadows and hedgerows

### DISTURBED AREAS

Roadsides

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun. Moist to wet soils

### WILDLIFE



Hollow stems provide winter habitat for bee larvae.

### MOWING STRATEGIES



Tolerant of mowing every 3 years.

### BLOOM TIME



Late June to July

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Purple-black berry clusters ripen in late August and September and must be collected before birds eat them. Remove pulp and store dry. Sow seeds in fall and germination occurs after second spring. Seeds that are warm moist stratified and then fall sown germinate the first spring.



Ripe fruits



Cleaned seeds



# BUSH-HONEYSUCKLE

*Diervilla lonicera*



# MID - SEASON

# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

1 - 4 ft. colonizing shrub

### NATURAL HABITAT

Evergreen and deciduous forests and openings

### DISTURBED AREAS

Roadsides

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to light shade.  
Moist to dry acidic soils

### WILDLIFE



Bees

### MOWING STRATEGIES



Very tolerant of  
yearly mowing

### BLOOM TIME



June to August

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Small elongated capsules with fringed tips in clusters (several to a dozen) turn brown in fall and remain closed. Harvest and crush gently to extract small brown seeds. Seeds can be stored dry and surface sown in spring.



*Flowers on new growth*



*Leaves*



# ROSY MEADOWSWEET

*Spiraea tomentosa*



# MID-SEASON

# SHRUB


## WORKHORSE

**HEIGHT**  
3 ft.

**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Wet to moist meadows

**DISTURBED AREAS**  
Roadside swales and ditches

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun. Moist to wet soils

**WILDLIFE**




Birds, butterflies, and bees

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



Tolerant of mowing every year

**BLOOM TIME**



August

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Conical seedpod clusters ripen when brown and start to crack open in late September and October. Collect in bag to release tiny dust-like seeds. Store dry and surface sow in fall.



Flowers



Tan seedpod and small seeds



WHITE MEADOWSWEET  
*Spiraea alba*



# MID - SEASON

# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

3 ft.

### NATURAL HABITAT

Meadows and woodland edges

### DISTURBED AREAS

Blueberry barrens, roadsides, and swales and ditches

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to part shade.  
Moist to wet soils

### WILDLIFE



Host plant for the spring Azure butterfly

### MOWING STRATEGIES



Very tolerant  
of yearly mowing

### BLOOM TIME



July to August



*Seedpods*

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Small seedpod clusters ripen when they turn from green to golden brown and begin to crack open, often in late October. Collect and gently crush in a paper bag until the tiny dust-like seeds drop out. Surface sow immediately or store dry for fall sowing.



FLOWERING RASPBERRY  
*Rubus odoratus*



# MID - SEASON

# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

4 - 5 ft. shrub forms a large colony


### NATURAL HABITAT

Woodland edges and moist rocky slopes

### DISTURBED AREAS


Shady roadsides

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun to shade.  
Moist soil

**WILDLIFE**




Bees and birds

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



Tolerant of mowing every other year

**BLOOM TIME**



July to August

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds form in a dark pink raspberry and ripen a few at a time from August to mid-September. Harvest and remove pulp. Seeds can be stored dry and sown in fall.



Flowers



Fruits, Photograph courtesy of Russ Cohen



# WILD ROSE

*Rosa carolina*

*R. virginiana*



# MID - SEASON

# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

2 - 5 ft. colonizing shrub that spreads by underground runners

### NATURAL HABITAT

Dry to wet meadows and shores

### DISTURBED AREAS

Roadsides

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun.  
Dry to wet sandy or gravelly soils

### WILDLIFE



Bees and birds

### MOWING STRATEGIES



Very tolerant. Mow yearly to maintain low growth or leave to form a large shrub mass.

### BLOOM TIME



July to August

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Red fruits ripen in October and can be harvested anytime throughout the winter. Separate fruit from seeds and store dry. Sow seeds by late fall as they need a long period of cold stratification to germinate (a full winter).



Ripe fruits



Cleaned seeds



S U M A C

*Rhus hirta* (syn. *Rhus typhina*)



# MID - SEASON

# SHRUB

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

3 - 15 ft., forms large colonies


### NATURAL HABITAT

Dry meadows

### DISTURBED AREAS


Roadsides and embankments

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun.  
Dry to medium soils

**WILDLIFE**




Bees and birds  
Hollow stems provide winter habitat for bee larvae

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



October to December

**BLOOM TIME**



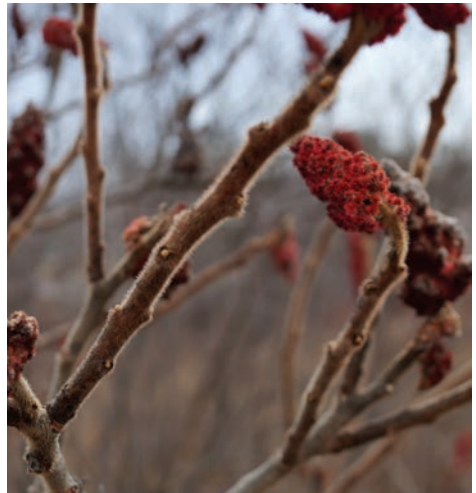
June

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Red fruits ripen September through November. Collect and separate disk-shaped seed from fruit. Seeds may be stored dry, scarified, and sown in fall.



Fruits



Winter branches



# WINTERBERRY HOLLY

*Ilex verticillata*



# MID - SEASON

# SHRUB

## HEIGHT

5 - 10 ft.

## NATURAL HABITAT

Deciduous wet woodlands and wet meadows

## DISTURBED AREAS

Swales and ditches

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun, part shade.  
Moist to wet soils

### WILDLIFE



Bees and birds

### MOWING STRATEGIES



Tolerant of mowing  
every five years

### BLOOM TIME



June to July

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

This species has separate male and female plants. Red berries ripen in October and can be harvested in the fall. Clean pulp from seed and sow immediately. Seeds take two years to germinate unless put in a warm, moist location for 2 months before 2 months of cold stratification.



Ripe fruits



Flowers



# WITCH-HAZEL

*Hamamelis virginiana*



# LATE SEASON

# SHRUB

**HEIGHT**  
8 - 15 ft.


**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Deciduous woodlands and stream sides

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Part/full shade.  
Moist to dry soils

**WILDLIFE**



Butterflies and moths

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



Tolerant of mowing every 5 years

**BLOOM TIME**



October to November

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in late September and October while shrub is in bloom. Harvest seed as soon as the first pods have opened. Put pods in paper bag and seeds will eject with a popping noise over a two week period. Seeds can be stored dry and sown in fall or spring. Germination takes two years unless two months of warm moist stratification is supplied before winter cold.



Flowers and exploded seedpod



Seeds



# VINES & GRASSES



## **Made of tough stuff**

Switch panicgrass can tolerate a variety of tough human landscapes. Here a bed of the grass absorbs runoff and pollutants and tolerates heat and drought.

Virgin's bower  
Virginia creeper

Little bluestem  
Purple lovegrass  
Switch panicgrass





# VIRGINIA CREEPER

*Parthenocissus inserta*

*P. quinquefolia*



Fruits

# EARLY SEASON

## Vine

### WORKHORSE

#### HEIGHT

12 - 20 ft.

#### NATURAL HABITAT

Woodland edges, thickets, and cliffs

#### DISTURBED AREAS

Roadsides

#### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun to shade.  
Moist to dry soils

#### WILDLIFE



Bees and birds

#### MOWING STRATEGIES



Tolerant of yearly mowing

#### BLOOM TIME



May and June

### SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in September in a navy berry. Clean pulp from seed to extract up to 4 seeds per berry. Store seeds dry and sow in fall.





# VIRGIN'S-BOWER CLEMATIS

*Clematis virginiana*



# MID - SEASON

# Vine

## WORKHORSE

**HEIGHT**  
8 - 12 ft.

**NATURAL HABITAT**  
Woodland edges  
and wetlands

**DISTURBED AREAS**  
Roadside swales  
and ditches

### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun, part shade.  
Moist soil

### WILDLIFE



Bees

### MOWING STRATEGIES



Tolerant of yearly  
mowing

### BLOOM TIME



August

## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in late October and November with long silky seed heads covering the trailing and climbing stems. Seed sown immediately in a warm environment for a month and then placed outside in late fall will germinate the following spring. Seeds may be stored dry.



Ripe seeds on vines



Seeds



# LITTLE BLUESTEM

*Schizachyrium scoparium*



# LATE SEASON

# Grass

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

18 - 24 in. warm-season bunchgrass


### NATURAL HABITAT

Sandy or rocky well-drained acidic soils of pine barrens and meadows

### DISTURBED AREAS


Roadsides

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun. Dry, sandy or gravelly soils

**WILDLIFE**



Butterfly and moth host plant

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



November to May

**BLOOM TIME**



August to September



## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds are fluffy when ripe in late September and October. Collect and store dry. Sow seeds in fall or spring. For nursery production grows best in warm conditions.

*Left, © photograph courtesy of Donald Cameron*



# PURPLE LOVEGRASS

*Eragrostis spectabilis*





# LATE SEASON

# Grass

## WORKHORSE

### HEIGHT

12 in. short-lived warm-season bunchgrass


### NATURAL HABITAT

Moist to dry meadows

### DISTURBED AREAS

Roadsides

**GROWING CONDITIONS**



Sun. Moist to very dry soils

**WILDLIFE**



Butterfly and moth host plant  
Seeds eaten by birds

**MOWING STRATEGIES**



November to April

**BLOOM TIME**



Late summer to early fall



## SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in late September and October and hang on to the plant for easy harvesting. Collect and store dry. Sow seeds in fall or spring.



Left, flower, and above, seeds



# SWITCH PANICGRASS

*Panicum virgatum*



# LATE SEASON

## Grass

### WORKHORSE

#### HEIGHT

3 - 5 ft. warm-season bunchgrass, forms large clumps

#### NATURAL HABITAT

Moist to dry meadows and salt marsh margins

#### DISTURBED AREAS

Roadsides

#### GROWING CONDITIONS



Sun, part shade.  
Moist to dry soils

#### WILDLIFE



Butterfly and moth host plant  
Seeds eaten by birds

#### MOWING STRATEGIES



November to April

#### BLOOM TIME



Late summer

### SEED COLLECTION & PROPAGATION

Seeds ripen in September and October and hang onto the plant for easy harvesting. Collect and store dry. Sow seeds in fall or early spring.



Flowers © photograph courtesy of Donald Cameron



Seeds





# CHAPTER 3

## COLLECTING SEEDS OF NATIVE PLANTS

**T**HIS MANUAL IS DESIGNED to give you the information you need to collect and sow the seeds of native plants from local populations in Maine. Plants grown from seed are genetically diverse. This diversity is important because each individual is unique in its ability to tolerate varied conditions such as heat, drought, excessive rain, disease, herbivory, or pollution. Much of the modern nursery trade is focused on uniformity and many plants for sale are clones, which means they possess the genetic information of just one individual. It is important that the natives added to Maine's roadsides are genetically diverse and grown from local seed stock whenever possible. This will create resilient plant populations with the best ability to adapt to a changing climate.

Many native species ideal for sowing on Maine roadsides are not commercially available. Therefore, roadside managers or contractors will need to collect the seed, at least for the near term. This manual provides the information needed to collect the seeds when they are ripe and to properly store and propagate them. Healthy wild plants often produce an abundance of seed and can still maintain a viable population when a small percentage of the seed is collected. With even a limited supply of seed, a lot of plants can be produced if the seeds are sown in a nursery.

Someday, when our roadsides are filled with native plants, Maine will have an abundant supply of local seed to harvest for broadcasting into new areas. In the meantime, propagating plants in a native nursery and planting them out will be a quick and reliable way to establish native plants.



# PROTOCOL FOR COLLECTING NATIVE WILD SEED

## Four things to remember

### 1) Correctly identify the species.

Before collecting seed, make sure the species has been correctly identified. Visit the GoBotany website (<https://gobotany.newenglandwild.org>) or request assistance from an experienced botanist to help you identify the plant. Make sure to check its protected status and ensure that it is not a rare species in Maine (in which case you should NOT collect the seeds).

### 2) Ask permission.

If it is not your land, be respectful and ask permission from the landowner before collecting the seed. Also, be aware that it is NOT PERMITTED to collect seeds in national or state parks and often on conservation land.

### 3) Research handling and germination requirements

Use this guide to review the seed handling and germination requirements of each species before collecting so that the seed is correctly handled and not destroyed. (Refer to other references as needed, see books listed in the *Bibliography*.)

### 4) Collect with diversity in mind.

If the seed is ripe and it is a healthy population (at least 50 individuals), select several stands to assure sufficient genetic diversity and cross-pollination. Collect a modest amount of seed, between 5-25% depending on how common the plant species.

## Determining ripeness

For seeds to germinate and grow, they must be collected when mature. Outlined below are guidelines for determining seed ripeness. The species pages give details on judging ripeness and general seed collection times for each species.

- Generally, when seedpods or capsules change from green to tan, beige/brown, or black and become papery or dry, the seeds are mature.
- Fleshy fruits often change from green to red, blue, or black and become soft when ripe and seeds are mature.

- Some species have fruits which stay green (e.g. marsh-marigold, Canada anemone). If you watch them carefully you will notice that when they are ripe, they become plump and fall off the plant when touched.
- Staggered ripening: Many species have flowers which continue to grow and bloom along the stem while the earlier flowers go by and produce seed. Harvest only the ripe seeds and do not cut the whole stems.
- With most fruits, whether dry or fleshy, ripeness can usually be determined by the ease with which the fruit or seed falls off the plant. A gentle touch or pull is all that it should take to get the fruit off the plant. You should never have to tear it off the stem.
- Some species have dried pods that form a hole in the top when the seeds are ripe. These seeds disperse on windy days over an extended period of time. These pods do not separate from their stalks.

When you determine that the seeds are mature, write the name of the species, date, and collection location on a bag or envelope. Seeds that can be stored dry should be collected and stored in paper bags. Seeds that need to retain moisture should be stored in plastic bags for several days until cleaning.

### **Cleaning and storing seeds**

Seeds should be cleaned to protect them from mold, rot, or insects, and for successful storage.

- Dry fruits can have chaff removed by putting them through a sieve. After removal, air dry the seeds at room temperature in paper bags for a few weeks. A cool, dark location, such as a basement with a dehumidifier, is ideal. Dry, cleaned seeds should be stored in airtight bags or jars in a refrigerator until they are ready to be sown. The seeds of many species stay viable for several years or more with proper storage.
- Fleshy fruits should be separated from seeds as the skin or pulp sometimes inhibits germination. Flesh can be removed by squeezing the seeds from



the fruit by hand, or by macerating the seeds in plastic bags for several days or a week to soften the flesh. Next the seeds can be cleaned by rinsing off the pulp and pushing them through a sieve. (See reference books for additional details on cleaning and separating the seeds from fleshy fruits.)

NOTE: Many species with fleshy fruits have seeds that will not germinate if allowed to dry out. These seeds should be sown soon after cleaning or stored by mixing the seeds with moist sand or vermiculite and sealing this mixture in zip-lock bags or plastic containers in the refrigerator (e.g. marsh-marigold, anemone, viburnums, dogwoods, hazelnut, pussy willow).

# CHAPTER 4

## SOWING OR PLANTING: DETERMINING YOUR OPTIONS, TIMING SEED SOWING, AND PREPARING THE SITE

**T**HIS CHAPTER PROVIDES A BROAD OVERVIEW of what is involved in propagating native seeds. Seeds can be sown outdoors in a nursery for later planting as young plants, or seeds can be sown in prepared sites along the road corridors, which requires large quantities of seed.

### **Determining site conditions**

Before choosing the species to plant, assess the site conditions. Many plants in this guide need a full to half a day of sun, while others tolerate partial or even full shade. The nature of the soil must also be determined: is it sandy, gravel, clay, loam? What is the level of moisture: wet, moist, or dry? Finally, identify some of the existing plants growing on the site because they are key indicators of soil types and moisture levels and will inform you of soil characteristics. (For help in identifying plants Maine DOT may consider partnering with state botanists or experienced naturalists. See the Resources page for ideas.)

### **Invasive species**

If there are any invasive plants, it is highly recommended that these are removed before planting. There are many online resources to help you determine the best methods for removal (see the *Resources* page).

### **Preparing unplanted ground**

Bare, disturbed earth will need to be prepared before planting. Construction zones often result in soil that is very compacted. Loosening compacted



soil is crucial before planting, as this is a man-made condition that few plants can tolerate. Planting a cover crop to break up the heavy soil is very effective in improving this situation.

Tilling the surface loosens the soil but brings up thousands of new weed seeds. Cover crops (e.g., buckwheat, clover, oats) quickly carpet the soil with green foliage that outcompetes weeds while their roots pierce deep into the soil and improve its structure. Cover crops can be planted anytime during the growing season. They look attractive, prevent erosion, and stimulate microbial life in the soil. With a very weedy site consider a whole year of cover cropping before sowing native seeds. A spring/summer season of cover cropping works well with native seed sowing and planting because fall is the preferred time to sow the seeds and is also a good time for planting young plants in the field.

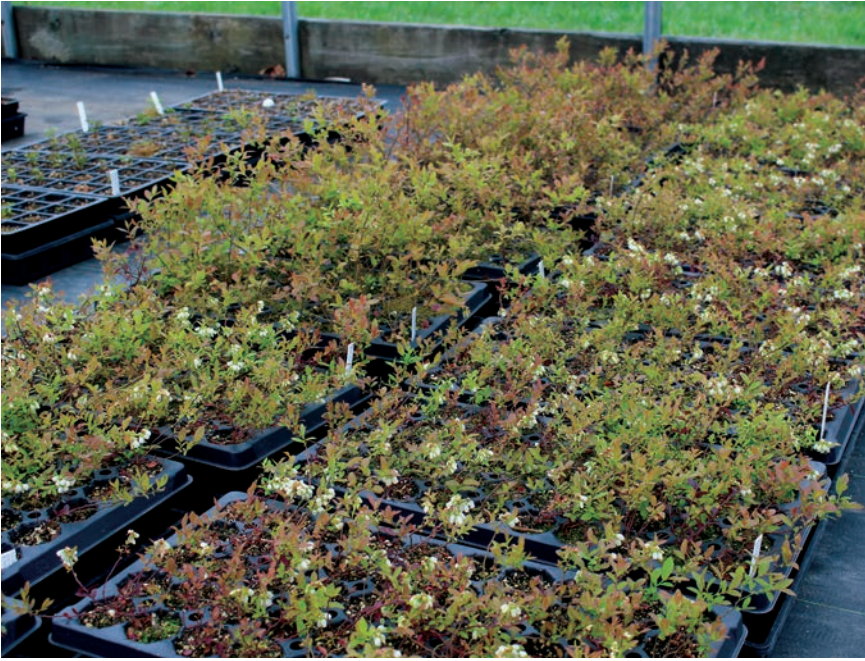
### **Timing is important for native seed sowing**

Fall and winter are the ideal time to sow the seeds of native plants as many species need the cold, moist conditions of our Maine winter to overcome seed dormancy for germination. With outdoor seed sowing, germination occurs when the conditions are optimum for each species. For some seeds this happens in the fluctuating and even freezing temperatures of early spring, and for others not until the heat of summer.

Some species do not require a winter cold period to germinate and can also be sown in early spring when soil moisture levels are high (late spring sowing is possible but will require supplemental watering). This is easy to accomplish in a nursery, less practical on the side of a road.

## **SOWING SEEDS IN A NURSERY**

For nursery production of native plants, outdoor seed sowing is inexpensive and very effective. Seeds can be sown outdoors in the fall in nursery seedbeds, flats, or deep plug trays. Six months to a year later, depending on the growth rate of the wildflower, shrub, or grass, juvenile plants can be planted in their permanent location. Spring (April-May) or fall (September-October) are the optimal timing for successful establishment



Young blueberry seedlings ready for planting. Photo taken at Nasami Farm (New England Wild Flower Society ~ NEWFS).

(not summer). Outdoor propagation methods produce healthy, strong seedlings that are already acclimated to Maine’s climate.

The seeds can be sown very thickly, about 1/8 to 1/4 inch apart. Native seedlings grow well close together and can be separated further when they are bigger. After sowing, many seeds should be covered with coarse sand. A good rule of thumb is to cover the seeds to the depth of the thickness of the seed (for example: an acorn would be 1 inch deep, a sesame seed would be covered with 1/8th of an inch of sand). Label with the name and sowing date. Water thoroughly with a gentle rain nozzle. Consistent watering is important. If the soil dries out, germinating seedlings can be lost.

Some species, especially those with small dust-like seeds, should NOT be covered as they need light to germinate. These are labeled in this manual as “surface sown”.



## Protecting from rodents

Mice and squirrels can seek out and destroy a native seed sowing. Rodent-proof caging for seed flats or beds is one of the best options to prevent this damage.

## Waiting for Germination

Each native seed has its own timetable for germination, from early spring to summer, depending on the species. This is very different from cultivated plants that have been selected for rapid germination in warm, even temperatures. In the wild, seed germination is often variable with some seeds germinating immediately while others germinate irregularly over a period of weeks, months, or even years. Staggered germination is advantageous for a wild plant because offspring are dispersed over time — a better strategy for dealing with environmental fluctuations.

NOTE: There are some native species whose seeds have a double dormancy and take two years to germinate. These species have an immature embryo when the fruits ripen, and for the embryo to mature it needs a few months of warm weather before a winter cold period will break dormancy. In Maine, many of these species ripen in the fall when our weather has already cooled. Therefore the seeds are not able to finish this maturation until the following summer — hence the two-year germination period. (Some of these same species grow farther south where the warm fall completes this maturation and the seeds germinate after the first winter.)

## Scarifying seeds

Outdoor propagation is very effective in breaking down thick seed coats. Propagators sometimes recommend scarification, a technique for manually breaking through a tough seed coat by rubbing with sand paper or nicking the seed coat with a knife. This is especially important for greenhouse production where seeds that need a cold period to germinate are typically moist stratified in a refrigerator. The steady cool temperature is not enough to crack a tough seed coat as with outdoor stratification. For most species in this manual, outside propagation will take care of scarifying the seeds; species that may benefit from additional help are noted.

## Ongoing nursery care during the first season

Regular watering, fertilizing seedlings with an organic seaweed-based liquid fertilizer, checking for weeds, and moving seedlings on to deep plug containers if they outgrow their seed flats are the ongoing care for a native nursery.



Wire mesh is useful for protecting seedlings from rodents.



## ROADSIDE SEED SOWING

If enough seed is available, seeds can be broadcast on a prepared roadside site. Fall is an ideal time for this sowing, as most mixes will contain many species that must receive a winter cold period to germinate. Grasses may be effectively sown in mid-spring as many of these species germinate in warmer temperature. The risk with spring seed sowing is that the rains will have subsided and water is crucial for high rates of germination. In-the-field restoration projects consider a 5% success rate of germination excellent because of the lack of control over watering and seed predators.

In preparation for in-the-field seed sowing, seed can be mixed with sand, moist vermiculite, saw dust, or peat moss to help disperse the seeds, many of which are tiny. Protocols for seeding amounts for the various species can be calculated from the references provided at the end of this chapter. Seeds sown in the fall will be well hydrated and have good contact with the soil after a winter outdoors. Germination will begin in early spring with some preferring cool temperatures and others waiting for warmer temperatures. Erosion prone sites should have a light covering of weed free straw or a nurse crop of oats to help hold the soil.

### **Ongoing care during the first season**

During the first growing season after germination, native seedlings will appear to grow slowly as they will be sending down deep roots rather than producing a lot of above ground shoot growth. Any annual weeds on the site will grow much more quickly. The planted area should be mowed when the weeds are 1 foot in height. Preventing annual weeds from producing seed through periodic mowing for the first two seasons will greatly benefit native seedling establishment.

# CHAPTER 5

## DESIGNING WITH NATIVES: PLANT LISTS FOR DIFFERENT GROWING CONDITIONS

This chapter has organized the wildflowers, shrubs, vines, and grasses covered in this manual according to their growing requirements. These lists can be used to choose the species combination that will work best at the site being planted. They are designed to be used in conjunction with *Chapter 2: Native Species for Roadside Restoration*.

Once you have determined the conditions at a proposed planting site (sun exposure, soil type, and moisture level), choose plant species from the list that match these conditions. To support pollinators from spring to fall, choose species that will bloom from early in the season to late in the season. If you are inter-seeding or adding young plants to existing vegetation, the plants identified as workhorse species in Chapter 2 will be the easiest to establish.

### Plants for sunny and dry, sandy or gravelly soils

#### WILDFLOWERS

Aster, flax-leaved stiff  
Beardtongue, foxglove,  
Bergamot  
Coneflower, black-eyed  
Goldenrod  
downy  
seaside  
Lily, wood  
Mountain-mint, Virginia  
Pearly everlasting  
Strawberry, wild

#### SHRUBS

Bayberry  
Bearberry  
Blueberry, lowbush  
Chokeberry, black  
Honeysuckle, bush  
Huckleberry, black  
Juniper, common  
Rose, wild  
Shadbush, dwarf  
Sumac  
Sweet-fern  
Viburnum,  
smooth arrowwood

#### VINES

Virginia creeper

#### GRASSES

Bluestem, little  
Lovegrass, purple  
Panicgrass, switch



**Plants for sunny moist soils  
that may become dry in summer**

WILDFLOWERS

Asters  
 New England  
 New York  
 Tall White  
 Beardtongue, foxglove  
 Bergamot  
 Crane's-bill, spotted  
 Golden Alexanders  
 Goldenrod,  
 wrinkle-leaved  
 Groundsel, golden  
 Lily, Canada,  
 Milkweed, common  
 Mountain-mint  
 Strawberry, wild  
 Windflower, Canada

SHRUBS

Chokeberry, black  
 Dogwood, gray  
 Elderberry, black  
 Hazelnut  
 Honeysuckle, bush  
 Meadowsweet  
 rosy  
 white  
 Raspberry, flowering  
 Rose, wild  
 Shadbush  
*A. canadensis*  
*A. laevis*  
 Viburnum, all species

VINES

Virginia creeper

GRASSES

Switch panicgrass

**Plants for sunny wet sites**

WILDFLOWERS

Asters  
 New England  
 New York  
 Boneset  
 Golden Alexanders  
 Groundsel, golden  
 Iris, blue  
 Joe-pye weed  
 Lily, Canada  
 Loosestrife, swamp yellow  
 Marsh-marigold  
 Milkweed, swamp  
 Turtlehead, white  
 Vervain, blue

SHRUBS

Alder, speckled  
 Blueberry, highbush  
 Dogwood,  
 gray  
 silky  
 Elderberry, black  
 Laurel, sheep  
 Meadowsweet  
 Pussy willow  
 Rose, wild  
 Shadbush  
*A. canadensis*  
*A. laevis*  
 Sweetgale

Viburnum  
 smooth arrowwood  
 highbush-cranberry  
 Winterberry holly

VINES

Virgin's bower

**Plants for part or full shade and moist soils  
that may become dry in summer**

WILDFLOWERS

Aster  
 large-leaved wood  
 heart-leaved American  
 Beardtongue, foxglove  
 Crane's-bill, spotted  
 Groundsel, golden  
 Lily, wood  
 Loosestrife, swamp yellow  
 Strawberry, wild  
 Windflower, Canada

SHRUBS

Blueberry, highbush  
 Elderberry, red  
 Hazelnut  
 Honeysuckle, bush  
 Huckleberry, black  
 Meadowsweet  
 Raspberry, flowering  
 Shadbush  
 Viburnum  
 nannyberry  
 smooth arrowwood  
 witherod

Winterberry holly  
 Witch-hazel

VINES

Virginia creeper

## Plants for part or full shade and dry soils

### WILDFLOWERS

Aster  
  large-leaved wood  
  heart-leaved American  
Beardtongue, foxglove  
Lily, wood  
Strawberry, wild

### SHRUBS

Bayberry, small  
Blueberry, lowbush  
Dogwood, gray  
Elderberry, red  
Honeysuckle, bush  
Huckleberry, black  
Meadowsweet  
Shadbush  
Viburnum  
  smooth arrowwood  
  with-rod

### VINES

Virginia creeper

## Plants for highly acidic soils near conifers, ranging from wet to dry

### WILDFLOWERS

Aster  
  large-leaved wood  
  flax-leaved stiff  
Coneflower, black-eyed  
Goldenrod, downy  
Lily, wood  
Loosestrife, swamp yellow  
Pearly everlasting  
Strawberry, wild

### SHRUBS

Bayberry  
Bearberry, red  
Blueberry, highbush  
Blueberry, lowbush  
Chokeberry, black  
Elderberry, red  
Hazelnut  
Honeysuckle, bush  
Huckleberry, black  
Juniper, common  
Laurel, sheep  
Meadowsweet  
Rose, wild  
Sumac  
Sweet-fern  
Sweetgale  
Viburnum, with-rod

### VINES

Virginia creeper

### GRASSES

Bluestem, little  
Lovegrass, purple



# INDEX

## A

- Alder, speckled 76
- Alnus incana* 76
- Amelanchier canadensis* 104
- Amelanchier laevis* 104
- Amelanchier spicata* 106
- Anaphalis margaritacea* 48
- Anemone canadensis* 24
- Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* 80
- Aronia melanocarpa* 86
- Asclepias incarnata* 44
- Asclepias syriaca* 42
- Aster
  - Flax-leaved stiff-aster 50
  - Heart-leaved American-aster 52
  - Large-leaved wood-aster 54
  - New England aster 56
  - New York aster 58
  - Tall white aster 60

## B

- Bayberry, small 78
- Bearberry, red 80
- Beardtongue, foxglove 26
- Bergamot, wild 28
- Blueberry, highbush 82
- Blueberry, lowbush 84
- Bluestem, little 146
- Boneset 30

## C

- Caltha palustris* 18
- Chelone glabra* 70
- Chokeberry, black 86
- Clematis virginiana* 144
- Comptonia peregrina* 108
- Coneflower, black-eyed 32
- Corylus americana* 96
- Corylus cornuta* 96

## D

- Diervilla lonicera* 124
- Doellingeria umbellata* 60
- Dogwood
  - Gray dogwood 90
  - Red-osier dogwood 120
  - Silky dogwood 92

## E

- Elderberry, black 122
- Elderberry, red 94
- Eragrostis spectabilis* 148
- Eupatorium perfoliatum* 30
- Eurybia macrophylla* 54
- Eutrochium maculatum* 68

## F

- Fragaria virginiana* 22

## G

- Gaylussacia baccata* 98
- Geranium maculatum* 20
- Golden Alexanders, common 14
- Goldenrod
  - Wrinkle-leaved goldenrod 62
  - Downy goldenrod 64
  - Seaside goldenrod 66
- Groundsel, golden 16

## H

- Hamamelis virginiana* 138
- Hazelnut
  - American hazelnut 96
  - Beaked hazelnut 96
- Honeysuckle, bush 124
- Huckleberry, black 98

## I

- Ilex verticillata* 136
- Ionactis linariifolia* 50
- Iris, blue 34
- Iris versicolor* 34

## J

- Joe-Pye weed 68
- Juniper, common 88
- Juniperus communis* 88

## K

- Kalmia angustifolia* 100

**L**

Laurel, sheep 100  
*Lilium canadense* 36  
*Lilium philadelphicum* 38  
 Lily, Canada 36  
 Lily, wood 38  
 Loosestrife, swamp yellow 40  
 Lovegrass, purple 148  
*Lysimachia terrestris* 40

**M**

Marsh-marigold 18  
 Meadowsweet, rosy 126  
 Meadowsweet, white 128  
 Milkweed  
   Common milkweed 42  
   Swamp milkweed 44  
*Monarda fistulosa* 28  
*Morella caroliniensis* 78  
 Mountain-mint, Virginia 46  
*Myrica gale* 110

**P**

*Packera aurea* 16  
 Panicgrass, switch 150  
*Panicum virgatum* 150  
*Parthenocissus inserta* 142  
*Parthenocissus quinquefolia* 142  
 Pearly everlasting 48  
*Penstemon digitalis* 26  
 Pussy willow 102  
*Pycnanthemum virginianum* 46

**R**

Raspberry, flowering 130  
*Rhus hirta* (syn. *Rhus typhina*) 134  
*Rosa carolina* 132  
*Rosa virginiana* 132  
 Rose, wild 132  
*Rubus odoratus* 130  
*Rudbeckia hirta* 32

**S**

*Salix discolor* 102  
*Sambucus nigra*  
   ssp. *canadensis* 122  
*Sambucus racemosa* 94  
*Schizachyrium scoparium* 146  
 Shadbush 104, 106  
*Solidago puberula* 64

*Solidago rugosa* 62  
*Solidago sempervirens* 66  
*Spiraea alba* 128  
*Spiraea tomentosa* 126  
 Spotted crane's-bill 20  
 Strawberry, wild 22  
 Sumac 134  
 Sweet-fern 108  
 Sweetgale 110  
*Swida amomum* 92  
*Swida racemosa* 90  
*Swida sericea* 120  
*Symphotrichum cordifolium* 52  
*Symphotrichum novae-angliae* 56  
*Symphotrichum novi-belgii* 58

**T**

Turtlehead, white 70

**V**

*Vaccinium angustifolium* 84  
*Vaccinium corymbosum* 82  
*Verbena hastata* 72  
 Vervain, blue 72  
 Viburnum  
   Highbush-cranberry 112  
   Nannyberry viburnum 114  
   Smooth Arrowwood 118  
   Withe-rod viburnum 116  
*Viburnum dentatum* 118  
*Viburnum lentago* 114  
*Viburnum nudum*  
   var. *cassinoides* 116  
*Viburnum opulus*  
   var. *americanum* 112  
 Virginia creeper 142  
 Virginia's-bower clematis 144

**W**

Windflower, Canada 24  
 Winterberry holly 136  
 Witch-hazel 138

**Z**

*Zizia aurea* 14



# RESOURCES

## **Plant identification**

- GoBotany <https://gobotany.newenglandwild.org>
- Local land trusts may have knowledge of naturalists and botanists who could help identify plants in the field.
- Plant identification courses for many species and some habitat types are offered most summers at:

The Humboldt Institute in Steuben, [www.eaglehill.us](http://www.eaglehill.us)

Coastal Maine Botanical Garden in Boothbay, [www.maine gardens.org](http://www.maine gardens.org)

## **Invasive plants**

- Maine Natural Areas Program  
[http://www.maine.gov/dacf/mnap/features/invasive\\_plants/inv sheets.htm](http://www.maine.gov/dacf/mnap/features/invasive_plants/inv sheets.htm)
- Ecological Landscaping Alliance for non-herbicide based solutions at  
<http://www.ecolandscaping.org>

## **Outdoor seed sowing**

For further information on outdoor production of native plants, the following books are highly recommended and have detailed instructions and images:

- *Growing Trees from Seed A practical guide to growing native trees, vines and shrubs* by Henry Kock
- New England Wild Flower Society's Nasami Farm  
<http://www.newenglandwild.org/visit/nasami-farm>

## **Sowing and establishing native seeds in the field**

- Prairie Moon Nursery's fact sheet, [www.prairiemoon.com](http://www.prairiemoon.com)
- New England Wetland Plants fact sheet, [www.newp.com](http://www.newp.com)

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