

The Native Plants of Reed's Landing

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The native plants of Reed's Landing were selected for their ecological and functional attributes. Please note there are many other natives that could have been deployed for use in this project. If homeowners are interested in pursuing a similar scope of work on their property, we encourage them to have soil testing performed, as well as a site analysis of their property, as soil and site data may inform a different selection of native plants. This due diligence is important to select the appropriate native plants, ensure those native plants can establish successfully, remain resilient and be enjoyed for years to come! A variety of plants were chosen to provide pollen, nectar or berries for wildlife year round, as well as function as host plants for insect larvae.

Bloom time

-  spring
-  summer
-  fall

Berries

-  fall/winter
-  deer resistant

Native grasses / rushes

Big Bluestem

Andropogon gerardi

-  summer
-  fall



Charming native grass found in fields and along roadsides. This is a warm season grass, growing more quickly as temperatures warm into the summer. Ideal for erosion control due to its robust and expansive root system that can extend down 10+ feet into poor soils. It has been planted to stabilize the soil along the slope by the bridge. It has a high sustainability rating for its ability to thrive once established in dry conditions. Mature heights of 4 ft + offer habitat cover for wildlife into the winter and nice fall color even into winter. It provides forage for wildlife.

Little Bluestem

Schizachyrium scoparium

-  late summer



Another quintessential New England warm season native grass found plentiful along roadsides and in fields. A host plant for specific butterflies and moths with incredible late season bronze color that becomes even more elevated in the depths of winter when contrasted against snow.

Path Rush

Juncus tenuis

-  summer



Path Rush was purposefully introduced to the interior basin of the rain garden where stormwater will collect, be retained, and allowed to filter back into the groundwater. Path Rush is salt tolerant and can tolerate transitions of inundation from stormwater to dryer conditions. Reaching a mature height of under 12", this rush was sited in between larger perennials to ensure adequate air flow while also providing a lower ground layer of habitat density. Look closely for clusters of wind pollinated flowers in mid-summer.

Yellow Prairie Grass

Sorghastrum nutans

-  summer



This warm season grass (formerly known as Indian grass) can be found along the upper slope of the second phase of the Reed Landing restoration. It is used for erosion prevention and is ideally suited for the fast-draining soils and full sun conditions on site. Growing taller than Little Bluestem, the grass adds height, texture and structure to this portion of the rain garden.

Native perennial wildflowers

Blue Vervain

Verbena hastata

 summer

 fall



Home is moist fields and disturbed areas; Blue Vervain was added to the rain garden for its water retentive attributes and stunning purple flowers that attract pollinators from summer into autumn.

Blue Flag Iris

Iris Versicolor

 spring

 summer



Stunning when planted in masses as done at Reed's Landing, Blue Flag Iris is a native iris not to be confused with the non-native Iris Siberica. Hummingbirds and other pollinators are attracted to its flowers. This native can pay gardeners dividends in years to come because it can be divided and used elsewhere in the landscape as is the plan in this project – it doesn't get more sustainable than that!

Swamp milkweed

Asclepias incarnata

 summer



This butterfly host plant is perfect for the base of the Reed's Landing rain garden. If you see foliage rolled up later in the summer and caterpillars eating leaf material, don't worry – that is exactly why we planted it – hence a "host" for the next generation of butterflies. Actually recent field studies indicate that female monarchs prefer to lay their eggs on Swamp Milkweed over many other types.

Butterfly Weed

Asclepias tuberosa

 summer



A pollinator magnet. Visited by bees, butterflies, flies, and many other pollinators. Planted up slope where soil conditions are drier and in the Phase 2 Rain Garden.

New York Ironweed

Vernonia noveboracensis

 summer



Sited in the lowest part of the rain garden because of its tolerance for being submerged, New York Ironweed has showy purple flowers in late summer, attracts butterflies and is also deer resistant.

Hairy Mountain Mint

Pycnanthemum verticillatum
var. pilsoum

 summer



Hairy Mountain Mint will not spread as much as Slender Mountain Mint but retains many of the similar traits including being an incredible nectar source for wasps, bees, beetles and other pollinators. Deer tend to leave mints alone so we consider this native a high value add if your property has a lot of deer pressure.

Native perennial wildflowers (cont.)

Slender Mountain Mint

Pycnanthemum tenuifolium

 summer



We used Slender Mountain Mint as a pollinator groundcover as it spreads by rhizomes and can tolerate a range of soil conditions. This native is a high value nectar and pollen source for a multitude of pollinators. It can also be used to out-compete invasive plants due to its spreading nature. Positioned in the new rain garden by a sitting rock we hope visitors will enjoy the aromatic foliage.

Black Eyed Susan

Rudbeckia fulgida

 late summer

 fall



Black Eyed Susan is a keystone native species that supports nearly 20 caterpillar species that use this as a host plant. There are over 25 pollen specialist bees that rely on this plant AND it also provides seeds for birds overwinter!

Foxglove Beardtongue

Penstemon digitalis

 summer



Distinctive with its deep red to purple-red foliage, it emerges from the ground in the spring garden with stiffly upright stems that contrast markedly with the developing greenery around it. Snowy white, tubular flowers with just a hint of pink emerge in early June and continue into July delighting hummingbirds and butterflies. Seed heads provide food for birds in fall and winter. This drought tolerant plant can thrive in poor, sandy soils in any sunny to partial shade garden.

Cutleaf Coneflower

Rudbeckia lacinata

 summer



This large perennial is not your typical black-eyed susan - 5' tall mass of lobed green leaves create a substantial presence in the garden or meadow. Large, lemon-yellow flowers with a dark brown cone are held above the foliage on single stems. Blooming for more than 8 weeks, this native attracts butterflies all summer long. Tolerates hot humid summers but is not drought tolerant. This native is planted on the slope near the Pollinator Pathway sign.

Cardinal Flower

Lobelia cardinalis

 late summer



Cardinal flower's scarlet flowers bloom late July through September and attract hummingbirds! Thriving in moist soil, this rather short-lived perennial re-seeds itself and requires disturbance to propagate so you may find it growing around different areas of the rain garden in the years to come!

Great Blue Lobelia

Lobelia siphilitica

 late summer



Used in the lower portion of the rain garden along with Cardinal Flower, Blue Cardinal Flower, as it is otherwise known, is a short lived but self-seeding native that supports a multitude of bees. The bees are particularly attracted to its accessibility. Can withstand temporary submergence.

Native perennial wildflowers (cont.)

Smooth Blue Aster

Symphyotrichum laeve

 summer



An important keystone native for our ecoregion – supporting nearly 100 caterpillars as a host plant. Dense and rounded, this easy to grow fall bloomer is already a favorite of your local butterflies and it will become one of your favorites with its amazing color and bloom consistency well into October.

Native shrubs

Red Osier Dogwood

Cornus sericea

 spring

 fall/winter



The only cultivar selected for this project, “Bailey Red Osier Dogwood” will retain its initial siting in the landscape and not spread as does the straight species. Both produce vibrant red stems on new growth. Those red stems are enjoyed for their aesthetic beauty well into the winter months.

Witch Hazel

Hamamelis virginiana

 fall



Selected for its ability to provide a late season nectar source reaching well into November and even early December in some years, common Witch Hazel thrives in our area.

Foliage density for bird habitat and beautiful fall color.

Northern Bayberry

Myrica pensylvanica

 fall

 fall/winter



Northern Bayberry provides a plentiful offering of berries for birds and other wildlife well into winter. At Reed’s Landing we planted three just outside of the rain garden where the soil is drier. This planting will create a waystation of berries and provide a density of habitat for birds as the plantings mature. Perfect for our coastal area and requiring otherwise low maintenance, Northern Bayberry will be pruned to ensure they do not obstruct the water view that passersby enjoy so much!

Winterberry

Ilex verticillata

 winter



There is no better fall and early winter show than the one that this great native plant provides with its stunning array of bright red berries. Even better, Winterberry is easy to grow and tolerates most sunny or partially sunny spots, even those with moist or wet soils. Winterberry grows at a steady, moderate rate and matures into a dense round plant that provides an excellent backdrop to any native landscape with its deep green, lustrous foliage. Bluebirds, robins, and cedar waxwings eat the berries after the frost.

Sweet Pepper Bush

Clethra alnifolia

 late summer



Found prevalent along the banks of our rivers and ponds, Sweet Pepper Bush is a great choice for a rain garden.

White flowers bloom in mid to late summer and are beloved by many different pollinators.
