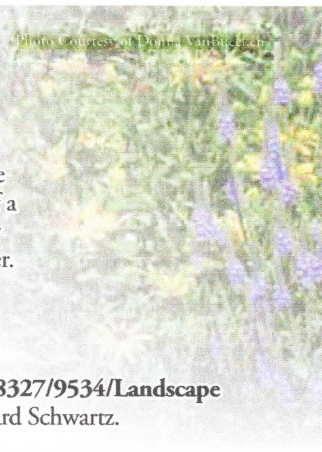
Native Plant Alternatives – Use These, Not These



by Donna VanBuecken

As you shop, you may wonder how to tell if a plant is native to our area or not. The simplest way to tell is to compare the plant stake labels which contain the botanical name and habitat conditions for each plant. The botanical name of a native plant will have the genus name capitalized and then the species. If the plant is a cultivar, the variety will follow the species name. For example, Symphyotricum Novae-angliae is the botanical name of the native New England Aster. If "Honeysong Pink" is added to the botanical name, it refers to the non-native pink cultivar Aster Honeysong Pink. There are excellent native plants that may be used in place of non-natives to obtain a similar effect. Below are some examples.

For more information about alternatives to non-native and invasive plants go to: **http://wwx.inhs.illinois.edu files/7913/8327/9534/Landscape Alternatives to Invasive Plants.pdf** or invest in a copy of *The Midwestern Native Garden*, by Charlotte Adelman and Bernard Schwartz.

USE THESE	NOT THESE
Native Early Blooming	**Non-native Early Blooming Favorites**
blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium angustifolium*), squirrel corn (*Dicentra canadensis*), wild geranium (*Geranium maculatum*), bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), heartleaf foamflower (*Tiarella cordifolia*), cutleaf toothwort (*Cardamine concatenata*), shooting star (*Dodecatheon media*), white trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*) and Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*).	tulips (*Tulipa spp*), daffodils (*Amaryllidaceae spp*), Bergenia (*Saxifragaceae bergenia*) and common bleeding heart (*Lamprocapnos spectabilis*)
Native Early Sun-loving Perennials	**Non-native Early Sun-loving Perennials**
prairie smoke (*Geum triflorum*), prairie phlox (*Phlox pilosa*) and foxglove penstemon (*Penstemon digitalis*)	bugloss (*Brunnera macrophylla*)
Native Ground Covers	**Non-native Ground Covers**
wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) and three-leaved stonecrop (*Sedum ternatum*)	periwinkle (*Vinca minor*), lily of the valley (*Convallaria majalis*), ajuga (*Ajuga reptans*) and pachysandra (*Pachysandra terminalis*)
Native Vines	**Non-native Vines**
virgin's bower (*Clematis virginiana*), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) and American bittersweet (*Celastrus scandens*)	Chinese bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) and English ivy (*Hedera helix*)
Native Summer Sun-Loving Perennials	**Non-native Summer Sun-Loving Perennials**
purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), yellow coneflower (*Echinacea paradoxa*), black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), butterflyweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), prairie phlox (*Phlox pilosa*), beebalm (*Monarda didyma*) and swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)	ditchlily (*Hemerocallis fulva*), veronica (*Veronica filiformis*), salvia (*Salvia officinialis*), Shasta Daisy (*Leucanthemum superbum*) and Dame's Rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*)
Native Summer Shade-loving Perennials	**Non-native Summer Shade-loving Perennials**
white (*Actaea pachypoda*) and red baneberry (*Actaea rubra*), Solomon's seal (*Polygonatum biflorum*), woodland phlox (*Phlox divaricate*) and early meadowrue (*Thalictrum dioicum*) and a variety of native ferns, such as Christmas fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*) or lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*)	hosta (*Hostas spp*), ligularia (*Ligularia spp*) and campanula (*Campanula spp*)
Native Late Summer Sun-Loving Perennials	**Non-native Late Summer Sun-Loving Perennials**
Joe-Pye weed (*Eupatorium purpureum*), New England aster (*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*), calico aster (*Symphyotrichum lateriflorum*), sky blue aster (*Symphyotrichum oolentangiensis*), prairie blazingstar (*Liatris pycnostachya*) and wild quinine (*Parthenium integrifolium*)	yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), dianthus (*Dianthus caryophyllus*), blanket flower (*Gaillardia pulchella*), Russian sage (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*), scabiosa (*Scabiosa spp*), chrysanthemum (*Chrysanthemum spp*) and the multitude of non-native asters (*Symphyotrichum spp*)
Native Grasses	**Non-native Grasses**
little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), side oats grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*), prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepsis*), switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*) and tussock sedge (*Carex stricta*)	maiden grass (*Miscanthus spp*) and fountain grass (*Pennisetum spp*)
Native Trees & Shrubs & Shrub-like Plants	**Non-native Trees & Shrubs & Shrub-like Plants**
red maple (*Acer rubrum*), sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*), winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), witch hazel (*Mamamelis vernalis*), pagoda dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*), elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*), golden currant (*Ribes odoratum*), white wild indigo (*Baptisia leucantha*) and sweet black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia subtomentosa*)	amur maple (*Acer ginnala*), Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*), Bradford pear (*Pyrus calleryana 'Brad'*), barberry (*Berberis spp*), burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*), butterfly bush (*Buddleia davidii*) and astilbe (*Astilbe spp*)