

Connecticut Native Plants for Pollinators and Wildlife Working Group

An interdisciplinary working group formed in 2016 to address the interest and need to explore the definition, production, distribution and public awareness of native plants in Connecticut and the New England region. Interest in the topic is broad:

- Implement Connecticut's **Pollinator Health** Act aimed at protecting pollinator populations through restrictions on the use of neonicotinoids and the increase and preservation of pollinator habitats, including nectaring and host plants [Kim Stoner, CAES]
- Promote **native alternatives to invasive plant species** [Charlotte Pyle, CIPWG]
- Encourage the use of native plants to promote more **sustainable gardens and landscapes** that protect the water quality of Long Island Sound and its watershed [Judy Preston, LISS] while providing important **habitat resources** for birds and other wildlife [Peter Picone, CT DEEP; Katy Blake, Audubon CT.]
- Increase the **production and availability** of locally-sourced and locally grown native plants and seeds to preserve New England ecotypes and genetic diversity
- Protect the **genetic integrity of native plant populations** that are rare or endangered, and the floristic integrity of rare, uncommon, and exemplary plant communities
- Promote **regional collaboration** toward the identification, understanding, applications and availability of native plants

Workgroup partner organizations include: CT Agricultural Experiment Station, CT Invasive Plant Work Group, Long Island Sound Study, UConn Dept of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture, CT Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection, Bill Moorhead/Consulting Field Biologist, Audubon CT

Native: *a plant or animal that has evolved in a given place over a period of time sufficient to develop complex and essential relationships with the physical environment and other organisms in a given ecological community*

Richard Darke, Doug Tallamy
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Photos: Judy Preston

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