

The 9 Natives program was created to promote native plants that bring year-round color and beauty to gardens while providing food and homes for birds, bees, and butterflies.

The Coastal Prairie Conservancy is pleased to have collaborated on this project with Clark Condon, Houston-Native Prairies Association of Texas, and The Nature Conservancy in Texas.

The Coastal Prairie Conservancy is helping to sustain a resilient Texas by preserving coastal prairies, wetlands, farms, and ranches to benefit people and wildlife forever.

#### OPEN SPACES FOREVER

We're proud of what we've accomplished so far, and are working to preserve an additional 10,000 to 20,000 acres of coastal prairie across a nine-county region west and south of Houston.

#### HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Restored and enhanced protected lands serve as vibrant wildlife habitat, and offer increased carbon capture, greater flood prevention, and improved air and water quality for people.

#### NATURE FOR ALL

Public programming on the prairie includes family activities and educational adventures. These events encourage individuals and families to get outside and enjoy nearby wide-open spaces.

TO LEARN MORE AND TO JOIN US IN  
PRESERVING THE PRAIRIE, VISIT  
[coastalprairieconservancy.org](http://coastalprairieconservancy.org)



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**9 NATIVES  
FOR YOUR  
SUN  
GARDEN**

*Plant for Pollinators*



TO ADD NATIVE PLANTS TO  
AN EXISTING BED OR  
TO BUILD A NEW NATIVE GARDEN,  
FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE STEPS:

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1.

#### SELECT THE PLANTS

Depending on the amount of light at your location, select the plants from either the 9 Natives for Sun or 9 Natives for Shade list. Most native plants bloom for a short span and then set seeds. For an attractive native plant garden, install plants with appealing features (bloom, berries, seedhead, etc.) that appear at different times of the year to offer a succession of attractions. The 9 natives in this guide have been selected for these traits; you may wish to also include others.



2.

#### SELECT A LOCATION

The sunny parts of your garden should be open sites with native soil where the pollinator plants will not compete with tree roots. The shady parts of your garden should be areas underneath a tree or shaded from direct sun by physical structures. Select a location that offers some protection from the wind and that will not be overwatered.

3.

#### REMOVE EXISTING VEGETATION

Various mechanical and chemical techniques exist to remove existing vegetation to create a flower bed. The soil can be covered with clear plastic (solarization) or black plastic until the vegetation dies; treatment may need to be repeated. For a small bed, the existing vegetation can be physically dug out. For larger areas, mow and then treat with chemical herbicide; treatment may need to be repeated to remove all weeds. Tilling is generally not recommended as to avoid bringing weed seeds to the surface.

Alternatively, you may make a raised bed: surround the area with a raised border, cover the area with cardboard or 8 pages of newspaper, and add soil/compost inside the border and on top of the cardboard/newspaper, which will decompose (sheet mulching).





## 4.

### PLANT OR SEED

Purchase small plants or seeds sourced locally, if possible. Local resident and migrant pollinators have adapted over thousands of years to local plants.

Using small plants will produce faster results. Transplants must be watered until the roots are established. For larger areas, seeding is less expensive. Seeds are best planted in fall or early spring. Use a mechanical broadcaster or hand spread seeds like chicken feed, then use a roller or step and dance on the seeds

to ensure good seed to soil contact. Water the area and keep watering until seeds germinate and seedlings become established.

If using seeds, add a few transplants for instant visual effects until the seeds germinate and grow.



## 5.

### MAINTENANCE TIPS

Weed, trim, and water until the plants become established. Cut the vegetation back to about 8 inches in January or February so that plant seeds provide food for winter birds and remove dead plant material in time for the sun to reach new spring growth. Learn to recognize desired seedlings and spring shoots of perennials, so they are not removed as weeds. Most plants will tolerate pruning, if they get leggy. If reseeding is desired, allow seed heads and seed stalks to mature (to turn brown or tan). Leave mature seeds on the plant as food for wildlife. No need for pesticides or fertilizers.

## 6.

### BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR

If the native pollinator bed is to be in the front yard, learn about your local "weed" ordinance and HOA rules. For example, in the city of Houston plants between the sidewalk and curb must be fewer than 9 inches tall, or you will need to obtain a Natural Area Permit. Add borders and signage, if allowed, to make the garden appear intentional.

## Native Selections for Sun



### 1. TEXAS BLUEBONNET, *Lupinus texensis*

Reseeding annual that blooms with a cluster of blue pea-like flowers with white tips in March to May. Grows 1-2 ft. tall in sun and sandy or clay soil. Our state flower is larva host for butterflies and may be toxic to humans or animals, if ingested. Reseed or plant transplants in fall.



### 2. SCARLET SAGE, *Salvia coccinea*

Reseeding annual or perennial with red tubular flowers that bloom from spring to the first frost. Grows 1-3 ft. tall x 1-2 ft. wide in sun, part shade, and shade. Tolerates moist to dry soils. Very tolerant of frequent trimming to keep plant bushy. Provides nectar for hummingbirds, bees, and other insects.



### 3. INDIAN BLANKET, *Gaillardia pulchella*

Reseeding annual or short-lived perennial with red, yellow, brownish-centered, daisy-like flowers that bloom from spring to the first frost. Grows 1-2 ft. tall x 1 ft. wide in sun or part shade; prefers well-drained, sandy soils. Cut back when leggy, leaving some stems until seedhead matures. Water in summer to prolong bloom. Pollen source.



### 4. PRAIRIE SPIDERWORT, *Tradescantia occidentalis*

Perennial with clusters of blue or pink, 3-petaled blooms that open spring to summer. Grows 2-3 ft. tall x 1 ft. wide in sun to part shade in moist to dry, sandy or clay soils. Water before soil becomes too dry to prevent summer dormancy.



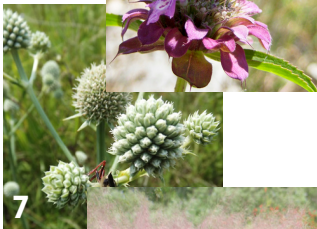
### 5. BLACK-EYED SUSAN, *Rudbeckia hirta*

Reseeding annual or short-lived perennial with yellow, dark-centered flowers that bloom from late spring to fall. Grows 2-3 ft. tall x 1-2 ft. wide in full sun and in dry to moist, well-drained soil. Larva host for butterflies; provides nectar for pollinators and seeds for birds.



### 6. LEMON BEEBALM, *Monarda citriodora*

Reseeding annual with whorled lavender-pink to white flowers; blooms May - July or into fall, if watered. Grows 12-30 in. tall x 12 in. wide in sun or part shade, tolerates dry soil of any type. Nectar source. Plant has lemony aroma.



### 7. RATTLESNAKE MASTER, *Eryngium yuccifolium*

Perennial with yucca-like foliage and clusters of greenish-white, 1-inch thistle-like globular flowerheads cresting above the foliage during May - August. Grows in full sun and in moist well-drained soils. One of the best pollinator attracting wildflowers. Self-seeder.



### 8. GULF MUHLY, *Muhlenbergia capillaris*

Perennial bunchgrass with stunning pink/purple feathery blooms in October that turn tan in winter. Grows 2-3 ft. tall x 2-3 ft. wide in sun and is adaptable in moist to dry, sandy or clay soils. Only maintenance required is cutting to about 8" tall in January or February.



### 9. LITTLE BLUESTEM, *Schizachyrium scoparium*

Perennial bunchgrass grown for its structure – a dense clump of colorful stems that ranges from blue-green in late summer to golden rust in late fall. Grows 1.5-3 ft. or taller in sun or part shade and in dry, sandy or clay soil. One of the dominant climax grasses of the prairie, it's a larva host for skipper butterflies and its silver-white seeds provide food for small birds.

BROCHURE PHOTOGRAPHY BY: Chuck Duplant, Coastal Prairie Conservancy | Carolyn Fannon, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center | Jaime Gonzalez, Coastal Prairie Conservancy | Randy Heisch, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center | James Garland Holmes, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center | Greg Lavaty, Coastal Prairie Conservancy | Claudia Leon, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center | Ray Matthews, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center | Michael Morton, Coastal Prairie Conservancy | Sam C. Strickland, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center | Kelly Walker, Houston Chapter Native Prairies Association of Texas | Sally and Andy Wasowski, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center