

MENOMONEE VALLEY NATIVE PLANTS

Native plants are those species that were growing here before humans brought in plants from distant places. Native plants provide food and shelter to support birds, insects, fish, and animals. They provided food and medicine for Native Americans and also supplied materials for shelter, ropes, clothing, and containers.

Invasive, non-native plants displace native plants and disrupt ecosystems.



Glossy Buckthorn
Rhamnus frangula



Tatarian Honeysuckle
Lonicera tatarica



Purple Loosestrife
Lythrum salicaria



Garlic Mustard
Alliaria petiolata

In Milwaukee we have many invasive, non-native plants, including buckthorn, Japanese honeysuckle, purple loosestrife, and garlic mustard. These plants are so aggressive that they crowd out native plants, reducing the habitat for insects, birds, fish, and mammals.

As many as thirty different bugs, birds, and animals disappear when a single plant species is pushed out by an invasion of purple loosestrife. Invasive plants must be controlled or removed to protect habitat.

"Try to heal the earth by using native plants -- plants that have already adjusted over hundreds, maybe even thousands of years, to the soil and climate of our region."

"Our yards should be so interesting that when children get out of bed in the morning they run to the window to look out to see what's happening, and the last thing at night they stand there for a while, to see what's happening, at dusk." - Lorrie Otto

LEARN MORE, DO MORE...

Plant native plants to provide habitat and decrease use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Volunteer for a "Weed-Out" with the Park People to help remove invasive species from our parks.



Bill Arthur for UW-Madison Arboretum

Background photograph courtesy Rowledge Nature Center



Lorrie Otto

Milwaukee has been a national leader in promoting natural landscaping. Lorrie Otto helped found Wild Ones (advocating native plants in natural landscapes) in 1977. Lorrie, a member of the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame, has inspired many lively, environmentally sound, regionally appropriate natural landscapes, in Milwaukee and across the land.

These species represent a very small sample from various native plant communities in the Menomonee Valley, ranging from oak savannas and openings on higher ground, to floodplain forests and wild rice marshes along the river.

