

A CENTURY OF FASHION EVOLUTION...WGC HERBARIUM STYLE!

# FASHION-FORWARD FLORA: NATIVES ARE NOW IN VOGUE!



## INSPIRED BY THE NATIVE PLANTS OF THE MARYBETH WHEELER AND ANNA E. CARPENTER HERBARIA OF THE WGC



**IF GREAT STYLE IS BOTH BEAUTIFUL AND PRACTICAL**, it's no wonder that a renewed focus on native plants is now the ne-plus-ultra of floral fashion – be it full-bore native-only... THE hot new must-have proportions: **70% native/30% introduced**... Or just a few well-placed plugs to get ourselves rockin' this gorgeous, fresh-'n'-breezy, eco-natural style!

**VIEWPOINTS MAY VARY** re climate change, but there is little disagreement among gardeners that we're dealing with more intense/less regular rainfall and warmer temperatures/wilder temp swings. And so back onto the high-fashion catwalk steps the perfect fashion choice: **the native plant**.

**MORE THAN JUST GREAT-LOOKING**, our native flora are hard workers well suited to their jobs: once established, they are generally more temperature-hardy, water-conserving, and lower-maintenance than the imports they replace. Plus, with our growing awareness of the existential risks of collapsing pollinator populations, we are seeing that incorporating natives creates the urgently-needed havens that our pollinators – be they beloved or unsung – need for their life cycles.

**IN THIS EXHIBIT YOU'LL DISCOVER** a six-month growing season of info re the fabulous-'n'-functional-for-our-locale native plant species from "The Herbarium Collection," curated by the experienced gardeners of the WGC Conservation Committee – and get ready to fall hard for this fresh-as-springtime fashion, inspired by our ever-increasing knowledge of our ecosystem and the imminent risks that need our attention.

# NATIVE FLORA



**1921 WAS A MOMENTOUS YEAR** for things botanical in Wilton: the **Wilton Garden Club (WGC)** was founded; and one of its founding members, a local schoolmistress named Anna Carpenter, donated to the Wilton Library a collection of over 200 local plant specimens that she had been collecting and preserving since before 1900. Such a collection is known as an **herbarium**, an invaluable snapshot of the flora of a place and time.

**TODAY, THE WGC HAS TWO HERBARIA:** the Anna E. Carpenter and Marybeth Wheeler herbaria of the WGC, containing specimens collected between 1891 and 2003. Thanks to a WGC conservation committee project in coordination with Yale University in 2015, digitally-scanned images of the herbaria specimens are now online for public view at the Consortium of Northeastern Herbaria's website, **neherbaria.org**. These two herbaria contain a range of plant species, from native through introduced to invasive plants.

**THIS EXHIBIT WAS INSPIRED** by the herbaria's **394 native species** that were collected in and around the town of Wilton.



A large elm tree being cut down in front of Wilton Congregational Church circa 1890, just a few years before Anna Carpenter moved from Darien to Wilton.

**OF THE HERBARIA'S 201 NATIVE HERBACEOUS** (non-woody) species, we counted about **140 showy perennials, biennials and annuals** that, given the chance, can be so beautiful in our gardens. As for the other types of plants, we counted: **39 trees; 24 shrubs; 35 ferns and mosses; 77 grasses, sedges, and rushes; 11 (woody) vines; and 7 aquatics** — all of them native species and many of them so gorgeous that they are featured in botanical gardens and estate plantings around the world.



A view of the area today.

**AT THE DAWN OF THIS NEW MILLENNIUM WE'RE SEEING A RENAISSANCE** of appreciation for the enduring beauty, versatility, and matchless ecological function in the landscape that native plants offer.

**IN THE NEXT THREE PANELS YOU'LL SEE** a May-to-October growing season's worth of **72 showy perennials, biennials, annuals, shrubs, trees, ferns and vines** that benefit our native pollinators: bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and more. In it you'll see our chosen **61 native beauties** (of which **50** are to be found in the WGC herbaria) and **11 introduced** (non-native) classic faves with great manners, great looks and great pollinator value.

**TO BE PAPER-THRIFTY**, we are using high-tech tools to provide the information about the plants in the exhibit. To get more info for each of the plants, just scan the **QR codes** found in the exhibit with your smartphone to go to the exhibit's online webpages. There you'll find handouts that you can print at home, and links to website resources that tell you details about the plants.

**ADDING THESE NATIVES** to your home landscape can help you bring your ratio of native-to-introduced flora to **70% native / 30% introduced plants**, tested and found to be the ratio that allows chickadees (acting here as an indicator for our other native bird species) to successfully nest and raise their young.

## KEY TO PLANT SYMBOLS



**Native plant** found in the Anna E. Carpenter and Marybeth Wheeler Herbaria of the WGC



**Native plant** with high value for pollinators (plant-pollinating insects & hummingbirds) and other wildlife as well as desirable landscaping attributes, as per entomologist Doug Tallamy's New York Times bestselling book, Bringing Nature Home



**Introduced (non-native) plant** with high value for pollinators



**Introduced plant** having some varieties with high value for pollinators

# MAY JUNE



**AMERICAN DOGWOOD**  
*Cornus florida*



**SPICEBUSH**  
*Lindera benzoin*



**BLACK CHERRY**  
*Prunus serotina*



**MAPLELEAF VIBURNUM**  
*Viburnum acerifolium*



**TULIP TREE**  
*Liriodendron tulipifera*



**EASTERN REDBUD**  
*Cercis canadensis*



**LILAC**  
*Syringa vulgaris*



**MOUNTAIN LAUREL**  
*Kalmia latifolia*



**GOLDEN ALEXANDERS**  
*Zizia aurea*



**HIGHBUSH BLUEBERRY**  
*Vaccinium corymbosum*



**CATMINT**  
*Nepeta × faassenii*



**FOXGLOVE  
BEARDTONGUE**  
*Penstemon digitalis*



**TROUT LILY**  
*Erythronium americanum*



**MAYAPPLE**  
*Podophyllum peltatum*



**FRINGED BLEEDING  
HEART**  
*Dicentra eximia*



**HAY-SCENTED FERN**  
*Dennstaedtia punctilobula*



**MARSH BLUE VIOLET**  
*Viola cucullata*



**BLUE FLAG IRIS**  
*Iris versicolor*



**OHIO SPIDERWORT**  
*Tradescantia ohiensis*



**YELLOW FOXGLOVE**  
*Digitalis grandiflora*



**COMMON BLUE VIOLET**  
*Viola sororia*



**CANADA MAYFLOWER**  
*Maianthemum canadense*



**RED COLUMBINE**  
*Aquilegia canadensis*



**FUCHSIA VARIETIES**  
*Fuchsia 'Swingtime'*

# JULY AUGUST



**FLEABANE DAISY**  
*Erigeron annuus*



**CARDINAL FLOWER**  
*Lobelia cardinalis*



**BLACK-EYED SUSANS**  
*Rudbeckia spp.*



**CANNA LILY**  
*Canna indica*



**BLUE VERVAIN**  
*Verbena hastata*



**LEOPARD PLANT**  
*Ligularia Dentata*



**ANISE HYSOP**  
*Agastache foeniculum*



**SUNFLOWERS**  
*Helianthus spp.*



**WILD BERGAMOT**  
*Monarda fistulosa*



**SWEET-PEPPERBUSH**  
*Clethra alnifolia*



**GREAT BLUE LOBELIA**  
*Lobelia siphilitica*



**GARDEN PHLOX**  
*Phlox paniculata*



**BUTTERFLYWEED**  
*Asclepias tuberosa*



**BEE BALM**  
*Monarda didyma*



**SWAMP MILKWEED**  
*Asclepias incarnata*



**FLAT-TOP GOLDENTOP**  
*Euthamia graminifolia*



**BLACK COHOSH**  
*Actaea racemosa*



**OSTRICH FERN**  
*Matteuccia struthiopteris*



**BLUE LILYTURF**  
*Liriope muscari*



**JOE-PYE WEED**  
*Eutrochium purpureum*



**BLAZING STAR**  
*Liatris spp.*



**PURPLE CONEFLOWER**  
*Echinacea purpurea*



**EVENING PRIMROSE**  
*Oenothera spp.*



**MOUNTAIN-MINT**  
*Pycnanthemum spp.*

# SEPTEMBER OCTOBER



**NEW YORK IRONWEED**  
*Veronica noveboracensis*



**BONESET**  
*Eupatorium perfoliatum*



**FOX GRAPE**  
*Vitis labrusca*



**WITCH HAZEL**  
*Hamamelis virginiana*



**NEW ENGLAND ASTER**  
*Symphotrichum novae-angliae*



**SEDUM 'AUTUMN JOY'**  
*Hylotelephium 'Autumn Joy'*



**BEAUTYBERRY**  
*Callicarpa americana*



**SASSAFRAS**  
*Sassafras albidum*



**MONKEY FLOWER**  
*Mimulus ringens*



**WHITE WOOD ASTER**  
*Eurybia divaricata*



**DAHLIA**  
*Dahlia spp.*



**CALICO ASTER**  
*Symphotrichum lateriflorum*



**SWAMP ROSE-MALLOW**  
*Hibiscus moscheutos*



**BLUE MISTFLOWER**  
*Conoclinium coelestinum*



**POKEWEED**  
*Phytolacca americana*



**STIFF GOLDENROD**  
*Solidago rigida*



**CANADA LILY**  
*Lilium canadense*



**OBEDIENT PLANT**  
*Physostegia virginiana*



**AUTUMN SNEEZEWEED**  
*Helenium autumnale*



**GIANT GOLDENROD**  
*Solidago gigantea*



**WOODLAND SUNFLOWER**  
*Helianthus divaricatus*



**VIRGINIA CREEPER**  
*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*



**CANADA GOLDENROD**  
*Solidago canadensis*



**OAK TREES**  
*Quercus spp.*