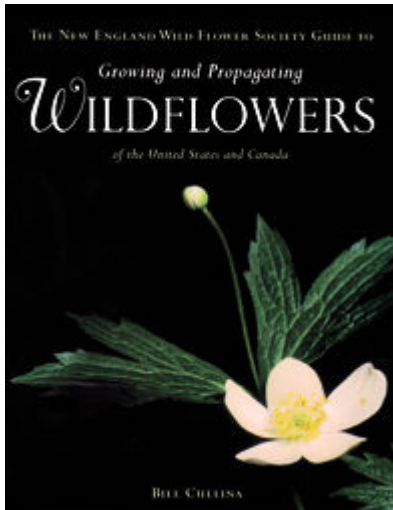




Riverwoods Preservation Committee

A group of resident volunteers dedicated to preserving the ecological heritage of the community

Book Reviews



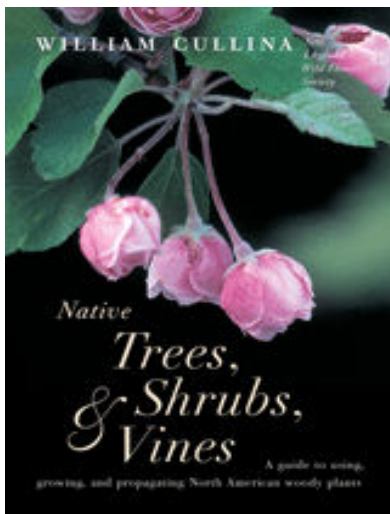
Wildflowers, A Guide to Growing and Propagating Native Flowers of North America,
by William Cullina

Who doesn't like wildflowers? They're every color of the rainbow, and they brighten any landscape. Here's a great book for your library. You have too many flower books already? Well, make room for one more. This one is great as a resource, with lots of detailed information, and also simply as a source of relaxed pleasure, with plain English descriptions and great color photos.

Wildflowers, A Guide to Growing and Propagating Native Flowers of North America, by William Cullina, is incredibly comprehensive. It's also beautiful in writing, photography and presentation. It's a complete guide to the culture, personalities (yes!) and propagation of wildflowers. It's part of author's series of three comprehensive volumes on native plants. (You'll want the other two books, too, but we don't have space here to describe them.)

Plant descriptions and photos are arranged alphabetically, with anecdotes and introductory information as well as more detailed information about each plant, including growing requirements; plant particularities; propagation methods; color; bloom time; size; light, moisture and soil requirements; and wildlife the plant attracts.

Near the back of the book are sections that go into even greater detail about propagation methods and timing for each plant, and recommendations of wildflowers for a variety of site conditions, from sunny, dry locations to woodlands to meadows and prairies. The book also lists plants that are especially good for attracting butterflies, birds and mammals, and provides sources of plants and seeds. There's a comprehensive index that cross-references Latin and common names, to greatly simplify searching.



Native Trees, Shrubs & Vines, A Guide to Using, Growing and Propagating North American Woody Plants, by William Cullina

This is the most comprehensive and most readable illustrated encyclopedia of trees around. It is especially useful to Riverwoods residents because it focuses on native species that grow in our climate.

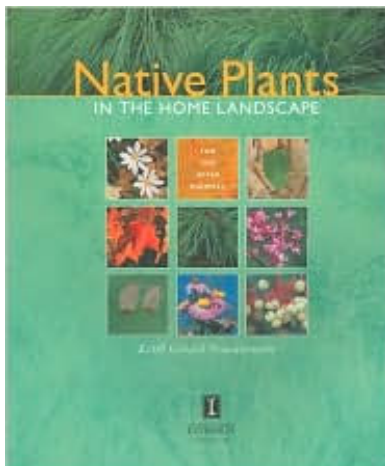
Native Trees, Shrubs & Vines is much more than an encyclopedia. The color photos are gorgeous. The organization is logical. The descriptions and recommendations are in

plain English and comprehensive. For each tree, shrub and vine the text sets out soil, sun and moisture requirements. Descriptions also include size and color, and an explanation of the typical environment in which the plant thrives, the best times and ways to plant, and diseases and pests to which the plants are susceptible.

The appendix includes recommendations of plants for various types of site conditions, e.g., sunny and dry, shady, and wet. Also included are plant recommendations for various uses, such as screening, ground covers, interesting bark, fall color, and attractiveness to birds.

Important for Riverwoods residents concerned about invasives is the section on recommended substitutes for various undesirable plants, such as Japanese barberry, burning bush, English ivy, privet and Japanese honeysuckle. Finally, the book includes a long list of reliable sources of native plants and seeds.

Native Trees, Shrubs & Vines has received raves for its common-sense approach and its valuable recommendations. Consult it for advice or read it for pleasure.



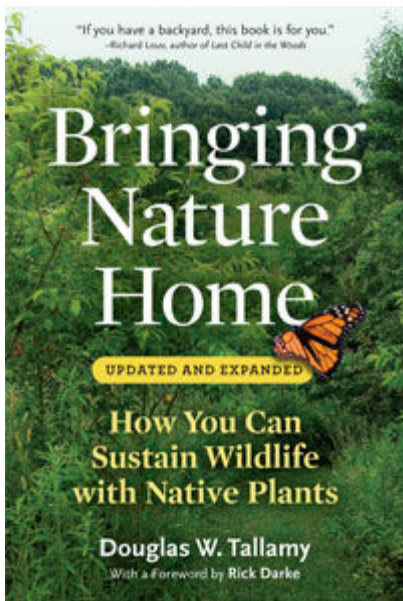
Native Plants In The Home Landscape For the Upper Midwest, by Keith Nowakowski

A beautiful garden is a work of art. And like any artwork, success depends on the skill of the artist. Here's a book that will enhance your palette and your ability to organize color, texture, size and bloom time to great advantage.

The book is written in plain English, and explains how using wildflowers and other native plants can reduce the work and increase the pleasure of gardening.

The book includes tips on evaluating your property – soil, shade and moisture – and recommendations for selection of wildflowers, grasses, sedges, ferns, shrubs and trees that are adapted to thrive on your property. There are many color photos as well as detailed descriptions of recommended plants.

The book has a very helpful section on landscape design, with drawings and suggestions for plantings in various types of environments we have in Riverwoods – shaded woodland to sunny prairie. Also included is guidance on when to plant, mulching, watering, and caring for your new plants. The appendix includes a glossary, recommended reference books, and a list of Midwest retailers of plants native to our environment.



Bringing Nature Home, by Douglas W Tallamy

Here is a beautifully-written book, complete with many color photos, that offers practical ways in which properties can be made more interesting and local wildlife can be enhanced through use of native plants.

More types of plants mean more types of animals. “Nearly every creature on this planet owes its existence to plants, the only organisms capable of capturing the sun’s energy and through photosynthesis, turning that energy into food for the rest of us. ... When there are many species of plants,

there are many species of animals.”

Why go “native”? Local insects rely on native plants for food, and birds rely on insects for food. Insects have evolved to feed on native plants and typically reject non-natives. If insects are unable to feed on plants, their numbers diminish. That sounds like a gardener’s dream, except that reducing the insect population reduces the bird population. About 95% of all birds in North America rely on insects and spiders to feed their young.

What is a “native” plant? It’s a plant that has evolved to provide food and shelter for local wildlife, which keep it in check so that

it doesn't become dominant. Plants brought here from Europe and Asia, or even from some other parts of the U.S., are "alien" because they cannot support local wildlife.

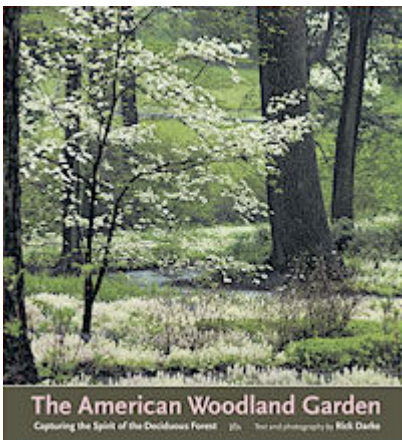
Choosing native plants. It can be complicated without help. For example, local nurseries frequently sell hybrids of native species, using the names of native species. Unfortunately, many of those hybrids cannot provide sustenance for native wildlife.

Fortunately, the book provides excellent, detailed guidance. The book includes specific recommendations for plants and for landscaping designs.

Habitat Islands. We in Riverwoods are fortunate that our larger properties can provide animal habitat not available in other suburban areas. Suburbanization has created habitat islands that isolate wildlife and prevent it from migrating to areas in which food is more plentiful. Riverwoods is an island, but a larger one that, together with Ryerson, can provide critical animal habitat.

Even your neighbors won't know. The author says there is one big advantage to having little knowledge about plants. You can plant natives and your neighbors will never know. "I reject the notion that landscaping with natives is inherently messier or less beautiful than landscaping with aliens."

The American Woodland Garden, by Rick Darke



This is a combination picture book and practice guide for creating a beautiful, ecologically responsible woodland garden, with a lot of recommendations and over 700 gorgeous photos capturing all four seasons. The author focuses on plants that can be grown with relative ease, and makes detailed recommendations based on environment and flowering time.

And ... check out The Wild Ones bookstore for some great selections:
<http://www.for-wild.org/store/bookstore/>

Riverwoods Preservation Council