



REWILDING IN VIRGINIA.



PLANT VIRGINIA NATIVES page

<https://www.plantvirginiannatives.org/virginia-regional-native-plant-campaigns-guides>

VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY: <https://vnps.org/#>

CREATING INVITING HABITATS IN VIRGINIA

https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/HORT/HORT-59/HORT-59-PDF.pdf

LOCAL source of plants - Wood Thrush Natives Nursery <https://woodthrushnatives.com/contact>

EDIBLE LANDSCAPING in Virginia - <https://ediblelandscaping.com/>

Info from Jane & Ken Cundiff:

For rewilding LAWNS— make veg & fruit gardens that are fenced and small deer-resistant herb & flower gardens and mow paths between them. You can just mow some areas once a year in late fall and wildflowers will slowly return if birds are coming to your other gardens. Remove sod from some areas and plant native seedlings for a quicker response.

Nature does it best - with a little help. Re-wilding large areas quickly, might mean getting rid of all the old pasture sod of over-grazed land. Either chemically or physically.

My experience - it is VERY difficult to re-wild a large area. Especially old pasture that may have been over-used and abused, hard packed and poor soil. Test your soil through your local extension agent. Contact Virginia Tech Conservation Management for help with large areas. See more info below.

What we have done to our lawn and small field:

1. Stop mowing - except for paths.
2. Remove some sod here and there in large enough spots to give wildflowers or trees a chance. Grasses have dense roots and other plants don't compete well. Collect wildflower seeds all year from your area and buy perennial clovers from a local farm store by the pound. Mix the seed in a bucket with LOTS of soil with some compost so that you can disperse and stamp the seed in its own dirt into preferred areas. Really bald areas on your land may have something wrong – like an old dumping area, and must have more attention. Early spring is the best time for spring plants and late spring for others. Even better to start most wildflower seed in pots and transplant when weather is good for them. Make sure young seedlings get water until they are established. You can also buy some in pots from local sources.
3. Mow (bush-hog) once a year in late fall after wildflowers have gone to seed. Or every 3-4 years for areas you want to keep with lots wildflowers and blackberries.
4. Plant small fenced in gardens of fruit and nut trees with herbs and wildflowers and native fruit shrubs - that will feed you and birds but keep out deer and most other large critters. Attracting Birds & squirrels will help to spread seeds. Hazelnuts, Asian chestnuts. Best fruits are mulberries, persimmon, elderberry. (and contrary to many peoples advice - I keep some autumn olives - as I believe this invasive species can be helpful - With our changing climate, I don't kill things just because they are immigrants. More diversity grows below my autumn olives than in the open pasture.)
5. Vegetable gardens also feed pollinators and birds and feed you too! So plant lots and fence them well. Pollinators, birds and you will all appreciate your veggie flowers!

Other Wild Gardener info: [Barbara Pleasant](#) says: You might not want to till that space. I would layer broad strips with cardboard covered with hay or straw, and make openings for planting forbs from Wood Thrush or Riverbend or New Moon nursery in New Jersey. After a year under cardboard, pull some of it off, scrape the soil surface with a rake, and start seeding between the forbs. Then do another strip.

Chris Youngblood says: I use cardboard for new plantings. Six months is usually long enough to kill enough of the existing vegetation. I would try at least one strip now. Collect seeds over the summer then rake up the cardboard and sow the seeds in the fall.

See included pdf docs from **Conservation Management Institute, Virginia Tech**

Ask Andrew Rosenberg about wild plants and seeds.

https://cmi.vt.edu/Our_people_2/PLB_main/Field_staff/bio_AndrewRosenberger.html

Andrew Rosenberger is the Private Lands Biologist for southwest Virginia working with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service. He works with landowners to help them better manage their property for wildlife with an emphasis on restoring habitats that are under-represented on the landscape.

His advice is free, and he can help get grants to help pay for the re-wilding of large areas. Andy helped Wild Gardeners, Paul & Ada Kitchen to re-forest their land in 2019. He was going to talk to our Garden Club in spring 2020 just as Covid took over.

Don't forget to check our local excellent source of wild plants with Ian Caton at **Wood Thrush Natives** Nursery <https://woodthrushnatives.com/contact> other local nurseries are now carrying some wildflowers

Floyd Flower Power with Partnership for Floyd is working full speed ahead to establish flowers all around our town and county. Contact them for advice.

<https://www.facebook.com/FloydFlowerPower>

CULTIVATED VARIETIES? Remember, there are good reasons that humans have been cultivating plants for thousands of years. Wildflowers and fruits are small potent food for our wild critters, but if you want to get tasty large food or large, long lasting flowers, consider cultivated varieties. As most gardeners know – animals often prefer eating our food than the natives. It is bigger and tastier. We have planted over 100 different fruit and nut trees on our land, most of them cultivated varieties. We now have a wide variety of critters that help pollinate our trees and gardens. And strong fences around what we want to keep for ourselves. If you want a list of fruit and nut trees, vines and shrubs that worked and failed at our place – email me at JaneWildGarden@gmail.com And ask to join the Wild Garden Club (free) to learn more about nature and gardens all year long!

