

Native Plants for Your Arkansas Garden

The following plants are native to large portions of Arkansas and should do well on sites with the appropriate amount of sun and moisture. Other native plants that are difficult to grow, not showy, or may spread too aggressively have not been included in this list, but interested gardeners are encouraged to research additional options. Local and regional native plant nurseries were consulted and efforts have been made to exclude plants that are not readily available.



While many established plants will be drought tolerant, they may need periodic watering, at least during the first year, and are likely to bloom more intensely and for a longer period if they are watered during dry periods. Extra fertilizing may not be needed—many native plants are adapted to poor soil and may grow too tall (and fall over) if grown in soil that is too fertile.

Other species, particularly those adapted to full shade, will need fertile soil. These are indicated by the words “fertile soil.” Other species need moist soil, dry soil, or well-drained soil, and these are also indicated.

Some plants grow more aggressively than others and many will creep below ground over time to form colonies. These species may be fine in larger gardens but unsuitable for smaller spaces and are indicated by the words “forms a colony.”

The plants are broken into two lists: one for sites with sun or partial sun and another for sites with shade. Each list separates ferns, wildflowers (dicots and monocots), grasses and sedges, shrubs, and vines into family groups. The lists are organized following the [Atlas of the Vascular Plants of Arkansas](#).



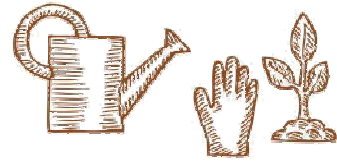
Butterfly Gardening

When designing a butterfly garden, care should be taken to provide a constant source of nectar to butterflies throughout the growing season. Species of Echinacea, Asclepias, Helianthus, Liatris, Monarda, Rudbeckia, and Verbena are all good nectar plants. For long-term populations and to enjoy the entire life cycle of the butterflies, be sure to plant the appropriate larval host plant species. For a good list of host plants for Arkansas butterflies, check out the book [Arkansas Butterflies and Moths](#) by Lori Spencer, published by the Ozark Society Foundation.



SITES WITH SUN OR PARTIAL SUN

S = full sun
PS = partial sun



Ferns

Wood fern family (Dryopteridaceae)

marginal wood fern (*Dryopteris marginalis*) – PS, dry soil

Sensitive fern family (Onocleaceae)

sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*) – S or PS, moist soil, forms a colony

Royal fern family (Osmundaceae)

cinnamon fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea*) – PS, moist soil

royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*) – PS, moist soil

Lady fern family (Woodsiaceae)

blunt-lobe cliff fern (*Woodsia obtusa*) – S or PS, dry soil

Wildflowers / Dicots

Wild petunia family (Acanthaceae)

hairy wild petunia (*Ruellia humilis*) – S

stalked wild petunia (*Ruellia pedunculata*) – PS

Parsley family (Apiaceae)

rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*) – S or PS

golden Alexanders (*Zizia aurea*) – PS

Dogbane family (Apocynaceae) [including Milkweed family (Asclepiadaceae)]

bluestar (*Amsonia tabernaemontana*) – S or PS, moist soil

curly milkweed (*Asclepias amplexicaulis*) – S or PS

tall green milkweed (*Asclepias hirtella*) – S

purple milkweed (*Asclepias purpurascens*) – PS

butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) – S

white milkweed (*Asclepias variegata*) – PS

horsetail milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*) – S, dry soil

spider milkweed (*Asclepias viridis*) – S

Sunflower family (Asteraceae)

Indian-plantain (*Arnoglossum plantagineum*, a.k.a. *Cacalia plantaginea*) – S or PS

tickseed-sunflower (*Bidens aristosa*) – S, annual

mist-flower (*Conoclinium coelestinum*, a.k.a. *Eupatorium coelestinum*) – PS, moist soil

large-flower tickseed (*Coreopsis grandiflora*) – S

lance-leaf tickseed (*Coreopsis lanceolata*) – S

stiff tickseed (*Coreopsis palmata*) – S or PS, forms a colony

Plains coreopsis (*Coreopsis tinctoria*) – S, annual

tall tickseed (*Coreopsis tripteris*) – S or PS

pale purple coneflower (*Echinacea pallida*) – S

purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*) – PS

Robin's-plantain (*Erigeron pulchellus*) – PS, forms a colony

southern prairie aster (*Eurybia hemispherica*, a.k.a. *Aster hemisphericus*) – S or PS

Joe-Pye-weed (*Eutrochium fistulosum*, a.k.a. *Eupatorium fistulosum*) – S, moist soil

green stem Joe-Pye-weed (*Eutrochium purpureum*, a.k.a. *Eupatorium purpureum*) -PS,
not too dry

pink thoroughwort (*Fleischmannia incarnata*, a.k.a. *Eupatorium incarnatum*) – PS

yellow sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*) – S

narrow-leaf sunflower (*Helianthus angustifolius*) – S

woodland sunflower (*Helianthus divaricatus*) – PS, forms a colony

saw-tooth sunflower (*Helianthus grosseserratus*) – S, forms a colony

hairy woodland sunflower (*Helianthus hirsutus*) – PS, forms a colony

ashy sunflower (*Helianthus mollis*) – S or PS, forms a colony

rosinweed sunflower (*Helianthus silphoides*) – S

ox-eye sunflower (*Heliopsis helianthoides*) – PS

rough blazing star (*Liatris aspera*) – S or PS

hairy blazing star (*Liatris hirsuta*, a.k.a. *L. squarrosa* var. *hirsuta*) – S or PS

prairie gayfeather (*Liatris pycnostachya*) – S or PS

southern blazing star (*Liatris squarrolosa*) – PS

round-leaf ragwort (*Packera obovata*, a.k.a. *Senecio obovatus*) – PS

wild quinine (*Parthenium integrifolium*) – S or PS

Sunflower family (Asteraceae) -continued

American basket-flower (*Plectrocephalus americanus*, a.k.a. *Centaurea americana*) – S, annual

gray-head coneflower (*Ratibida pinnata*) – S or PS

large coneflower (*Rudbeckia grandiflora*) – S

wild goldenglow, green-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia laciniata*) – PS, forms a colony

sweet coneflower (*Rudbeckia subtomentosa*) – S or PS

starry rosinweed (*Silphium asteriscus*) – PS

rosinweed (*Silphium integrifolium*) – S or PS

compass-plant (*Silphium laciniatum*) -S

cup-plant (*Silphium perfoliatum*) – S or PS

bear's-foot, yellow leafcup (*Smallanthus uvedalius*, a.k.a. *Polymnia uvedalia*) -PS

wreath goldenrod, blue-stem goldenrod (*Solidago caesia*) – PS, not too dry

hairy goldenrod (*Solidago hispida*) – PS

fragrant goldenrod, sweet goldenrod (*Solidago odora*) – PS

goldenrod (*Solidago petiolaris*) – PS

rough goldenrod (*Solidago radula*) – S or PS, forms a colony

rough-leaf goldenrod (*Solidago rugosa*) – S or PS, forms a colony

elm-leaf goldenrod (*Solidago ulmifolia*) – PS

manyray aster (*Symphyotrichum anomalum*, a.k.a. *Aster anomalus*) – PS

blue wood aster (*Symphyotrichum drummondii*, a.k.a. *Aster drummondii*) – PS

late purple aster (*Symphyotrichum patens*, a.k.a. *Aster patens*) – PS

wingstem (*Verbesina helianthoides*) – S or PS, forms a colony

Baldwin's ironweed (*Vernonia baldwinii*) – PS

tall ironweed (*Vernonia gigantea*) – S or PS

Missouri ironweed (*Vernonia missurica*) – S or PS

Touch-me-not family (Balsaminaceae)

spotted jewelweed, spotted touch-me-not (*Impatiens capensis*) – PS, moist soil

Bellflower family (Campanulaceae)

cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*) – S or PS, moist soil

downy lobelia (*Lobelia puberula*) – PS

big blue lobelia (*Lobelia siphilitica*) – S or PS, moist soil

Pink family (Caryophyllaceae)

fire-pink (*Silene virginica*) – PS

Spurge family (Euphorbiaceae)

flowering spurge (*Euphorbia corollata*) – S or PS

SITES WITH SUN OR PARTIAL SUN—continued**Bean family (Fabaceae)**

Canada milk-vetch, rattle-weed (*Astragalus canadensis*) – PS

white false indigo (*Baptisia alba*) – S

cream false indigo (*Baptisia bracteata*) – S or PS

white prairie clover (*Dalea candida*) – S

slender bush-clover (*Lespedeza virginica*) – S or PS

Sampson's-snakeroot (*Orbexilum pedunculatum*) – S or PS

goat's-rue (*Tephrosia virginiana*) – S or PS, dry soil

Mint Family (Lamiaceae)

Bradbury's beebalm (*Monarda bradburiana*) – PS, forms a colony

beebalm (*Monarda fistulosa*) – S, forms a colony

spotted beebalm (*Monarda punctata*) – S, annual

obedient-plant, false dragonhead (*Physostegia virginiana*) – S or PS, may form a colony

white-leaf mountain-mint (*Pycnanthemum albescens*) – PS, forms a colony

slender mountain-mint (*Pycnanthemum tenuifolium*) – S or PS, forms a colony

blue sage (*Salvia azurea*) – S or PS

Mallow family (Malvaceae)

halberd-leaf rose-mallow (*Hibiscus laevis*) – S, wet or moist soil

rose-mallow (*Hibiscus lasiocarpus*) – S, wet or moist soil

Meadow-beauty family (Melastomataceae)

meadow-beauty (*Rhexia mariana*) – S, moist soil

wing-stem meadow-beauty (*Rhexia virginica*) – S, moist soil

Colicwood family (Myrsinaceae)

yellow-loosestrife (*Lysimachia lanceolata*) – S or PS, forms a colony

Evening-primrose family (Onagraceae)

biennial gaura (*Gaura longiflora*) – S, biennial

Wood-sorrel family (Oxalidaceae)

violet wood-sorrel (*Oxalis violacea*) – S or PS

Plantain family (Plantaginaceae)

monkey flower (*Mimulus alatus*) – S or PS, moist soil

foxglove beardtongue (*Penstemon digitalis*) – S or PS

white-wand beardtongue (*Penstemon tubiflorus*) – S or PS

Culver's-root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*) – S, moist soil

Phlox family (Polemoniaceae)

smooth phlox (*Phlox glaberrima*) – S or PS, moist soil

garden phlox (*Phlox paniculata*) – PS

downy phlox (*Phlox pilosa*) – PS

Primrose family (Primulaceae)

shooting-star (*Primula meadia*, a.k.a. *Dodecatheon meadia*) – S or PS

Buttercup family (Ranunculaceae)

thimbleweed (*Anemone virginiana*) – PS

Carolina larkspur (*Delphinium carolinianum*) – S or PS

wax-leaf meadow-rue (*Thalictrum revolutum*) – PS

Rose family (Rosaceae)

wild strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*) – S or PS, forms a colony, likes higher pH soil

American-ipecac, Indian-physic (*Gillenia stipulata*, a.k.a. *Porteranthus stipulatus*) – PS

Vervain family (Verbenaceae)

rose vervain (*Glandularia canadensis*, a.k.a. *Verbena canadensis*) – S or PS, dry soil

Violet family (Violaceae)

three-lobed violet (*Viola palmata*) -PS

bird's-foot violet (*Viola pedata*) – S

arrow-leaf violet (*Viola sagittata*) – S or PS



Wildflowers / Monocots

Asparagus family (Asparagaceae)

false aloe (*Manfreda virginica*) – S or PS, dry soil

wild hyacinth (*Camassia scilloides*) – S or PS

Onion family (Alliaceae)

meadow wild onion (*Allium canadense* var. *mobile*) – S or PS

Spiderwort family (Commelinaceae)

Ohio spiderwort (*Tradescantia ohiensis*) – S

Star-grass family (Hypoxidaceae)

Yellow star-grass (*Hypoxis hirsuta*) – S or PS

Iris family (Iridaceae)

southern blue flag (*Iris virginica*) – S, forms a colony

blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium angustifolium*) – S or PS

Grasses and Sedges

Sedge family (Cyperaceae)

whitening sedge (*Carex albicans*) – PS

yellowfruit sedge (*Carex annectens*) – S, moist soil

Cherokee sedge (*Carex cherokeensis*) – PS

saw-awn sedge (*Carex crinita*) – PS, moist soil

blue sedge (*Carex glaucoidea*) – PS

hop sedge (*Carex lupulina*) – S or PS, moist soil

summer sedge (*Carex lurida*) – S or PS, moist soil

Muhlenberg's sedge (*Carex muehlenbergii*) – PS

black-edge sedge (*Carex nigromarginata*) – PS

cattail sedge (*Carex typhina*) – PS, moist soil

fox sedge (*Carex vulpinoidea*) – S, moist soil

Grass family (Poaceae)

big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*) – S

arrowfeather three-awn (*Aristida purpurascens*) – S, dry soil

river-oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*) – PS

wood-oats (*Chasmanthium sessiliflorum*) – PS

southeastern wild rye (*Elymus glabrifloris*) – S or PS

Virginia wild rye (*Elymus virginicus*) – PS

Grass family (Poaceae) -continued

hair-awn muhly, purple muhly (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*) – S or PS

switch grass (*Panicum virgatum*) – S, may form a colony

little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) – S or PS

Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*) – S

eastern gama grass (*Tripsacum dactyloides*) – S, makes large clump over time

Shrubs**Arrow-wood family (Adoxaceae)**

rusty blackhaw (*Viburnum rufidulum*) – S or PS

Honeysuckle family (Caprifoliaceae)

elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*) – S or PS

Sumac family (Anacardiaceae)

fragrant sumac (*Rhus aromatica*) – var. *serotina* gets tall but var. *aromatica* is short and forms a small colony, S or PS

winged sumac (*Rhus copallinum*) – S or PS

smooth sumac (*Rhus glabra*) – S or PS

Holly family (Aquifoliaceae)

Carolina holly (*Ilex ambigua*) – PS

deciduous holly (*Ilex decidua*) – PS

Bittersweet family (Celastraceae)

strawberry bush, hearts-a-bustin' (*Euonymus americanus*) – PS

Dogwood family (Cornaceae)

rough-leaf dogwood (*Cornus drummondii*) – S or PS

flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) – PS

smooth dogwood (*Cornus foemina*) – S or PS

Heath family (Ericaceae)

highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium arboreum*) – PS, dry acid soil

deerberry (*Vaccinium stamineum*) – PS, acid soil

Bean Family (Fabaceae)

indigo bush (*Amorpha fruticosa*) – S, moist soil

redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) – S or PS

Witch-hazel family (Hamamelidaceae)

fall witch-hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) – S or PS

Sweetspire family (Iteaceae)

sweetspire, Virginia willow (*Itea virginica*) – S or PS, best in moist soil

Mint family (Lamiaceae)

beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*) – S or PS, drought tolerant

Olive family (Oleaceae)

fringe-tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*) – S or PS, drought tolerant

Rose family (Rosaceae)

parsley hawthorn (*Crataegus marshallii*) – S or PS

cockspur hawthorn (*Crataegus crus-galli*) – S or PS

ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*) – S or PS, moist soil

Mexican plum, bigtree plum (*Prunus mexicana*) – PS

Carolina rose, pasture rose (*Rosa carolina*) – S or PS, may form colony

Madder family (Rubiaceae)

buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) – S, moist soil

New Jersey tea (*Ceanothus americanus*) – S or PS, stays small

Sapodilla family (Sapindaceae)

red buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*) – PS

Vines

Dogbane family (Apocynaceae)

climbing milkweed vine (*Matelea decipiens*) – S or PS, not woody

Dutchman's-pipe family (Aristolochiaceae)

Dutchman's pipe vine (*Aristolochia tomentosa*) – PS,

Trumpet Creeper family (Bignoniaceae)

cross-vine (*Bignonia capreolata*) – S or PS

Honeysuckle family (Caprifoliaceae)

trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*) – S or PS

Morning-glory family (Convolvulaceae)

wild potato vine (*Ipomoea pandurata*) – S, not woody

Bean family (Fabaceae)

American wisteria (*Wisteria frutescens*) – S or PS, not aggressive like the non-native wisterias

Passion-flower family (Passifloraceae)

purple passion-flower (*Passiflora incarnata*) – S, not woody

Buttercup family (Ranunculaceae)

virgin's-bower (*Clematis virginiana*) – S or PS

Rose family (Rosaceae)

prairie rose (*Rosa setigera*) – S or PS

Grape family (Vitaceae)

Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) – PS

muscadine grape (*Vitis rotundifolia*) – S or PS



SITES WITH SHADE



Ferns

Chain fern family (Blechnaceae)

netted chain fern (*Woodwardia areolata*) – moist soil, forms a colony

Wood fern family (Dryopteridaceae)

marginal wood fern (*Dryopteris marginalis*)

Christmas fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*)

Royal fern family (Osmundaceae)

cinnamon fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea*) – moist soil

royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*) – moist soil

Brake fern family (Pteridaceae)

northern maidenhair fern (*Adiantum pedatum*) – fertile soil, forms a colony

Marsh fern family (Thelypteridaceae)

broad beech fern (*Phegopteris hexagonoptera*) – fertile soil, forms a colony

Lady fern family (Woodsiaceae)

southern lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*) – moist soil

Wildflowers / Dicots

Dogbane family (Apocynaceae) [including Milkweed family (Asclepiadaceae)]

white milkweed (*Asclepias variegata*)

purple milkweed (*Asclepias purpurascens*)

Dutchman's-pipe family (Aristolochiaceae)

wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*) – fertile soil, forms a colony

Sunflower family (Asteraceae)

star tickseed (*Coreopsis pubescens*)

mist-flower (*Conoclinium coelestinum*, a.k.a. *Eupatorium coelestinum*) – moist soil, forms a colony

purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*)

Robin's-plantain (*Erigeron pulchellus*) – forms a colony

Sunflower family (Asteraceae) -continued

green stem Joe-Pye-weed (*Eutrochium purpureum*, a.k.a. *Eupatorium purpureum*) – fertile soil

pink thoroughwort (*Fleischmannia incarnata*, a.k.a. *Eupatorium incarnatum*)

woodland sunflower (*Helianthus divaricatus*) – forms a colony
hairy woodland sunflower (*Helianthus hirsutus*) – forms a colony

bluestem goldenrod (*Solidago caesia*)

Barberry family (Berberidaceae)

mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*) – forms a colony

Pink family (Caryophyllaceae)

starry campion (*Silene stellata*)

Geranium family (Geraniaceae)

wild geranium (*Geranium maculatum*) – fertile soil

Logania family (Loganiaceae)

Indian-pink (*Spigelia marilandica*)

Broomrape family (Orobanchaceae)

wood betony, lousewort (*Pedicularis canadensis*) – forms a colony

Phlox family (Polemoniaceae)

wild blue phlox (*Phlox divaricata* ssp. *laphamii*) – fertile soil

Jacob's-ladder (*Polemonium reptans*) – fertile soil

Buttercup family (Ranunculaceae)

doll's eyes (*Actaea pachypoda*) – fertile soil

thimbleweed (*Anemone virginiana*)

columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*) – well drained soil

dwarf larkspur (*Delphinium tricorne*) – fertile soil

rue-anemone (*Thalictrum thalictroides*)

wax-leaf meadow-rue (*Thalictrum revolutum*)

Rose family (Rosaceae)

wild strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*) – forms a colony, likes higher pH

Saxifrage family (Saxifragaceae)

alumroot (*Heuchera americana*) – well drained soil

Violet family (Violaceae)

woolly blue violet (*Viola sororia*)

Wildflowers / Monocots

Arum family (Araceae)

green dragon (*Arisaema dracontium*)
Jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*) – fertile soil

Bellwort family (Colchicaceae)

large bellwort (*Uvularia grandiflora*) – fertile soil
sessile bellwort (*Uvularia sessilifolia*) – forms a colony

Spiderwort family (Commelinaceae)

Ernest's spiderwort (*Tradescantia ernestiana*)

Iris family (Iridaceae)

dwarf crested iris (*Iris cristata*) – forms a colony

Solomon's-seal family (Ruscaceae)

false Solomon's seal (*Maianthemum racemosum*, a.k.a. *Smilacina racemosa*)

Solomon's seal (*Polygonatum biflorum*) – fertile soil, forms a colony

Trillium family (Trilliaceae)

purple trillium (*Trillium recurvatum*) – fertile soil

Grasses and Sedges

Sedge family (Cyperaceae)

whitening sedge (*Carex albicans*)
Cherokee sedge (*Carex cherokeensis*)
saw-awn sedge (*Carex crinita*) – moist soil
blue sedge (*Carex glaucoidea*)
Muhlenberg's sedge (*Carex muehlenbergii*)
black-edge sedge (*Carex nigromarginata*)
cattail sedge (*Carex typhina*) – moist soil

Grass family (Poaceae)

bearded shorthusk (*Brachyelytrum erectum*) – fertile soil

river-oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*)
wood-oats (*Chasmanthium sessiliflorum*)

Grass family (Poaceae) -continued

beak-grain (*Diarrhena obovata*) – fertile soil, forms a colony

Virginia wild rye (*Elymus virginicus*)

Shrubs**Custard-apple family (Annonaceae)**

pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) – moist, fertile soil

Holly family (Aquifoliaceae)

Carolina holly (*Ilex ambigua*)

deciduous holly (*Ilex decidua*)

American holly (*Ilex opaca*)

Bittersweet family (Celastraceae)

strawberry bush, hearts-a-bustin' (*Euonymus americanus*)

Dogwood family (Cornaceae)

stiff dogwood (*Cornus foemina*) – moist soil

flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*)

Witch-hazel family (Hamamelidaceae)

fall witch-hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*)

Hydrangea family (Hydrangeaceae)

wild hydrangea (*Hydrangea arborescens*) – fertile soil

Sweetspire family (Iteaceae)

sweetspire, Virginia willow (*Itea virginica*) – best in moist soil

Laurel family (Lauraceae)

northern spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) – fertile soil

Bladdernut family (Staphyleaceae)

bladdernut (*Staphylea trifolia*) – fertile soil

Vines**Dutchman's-pipe family (Aristolochiaceae)**

Dutchman's-pipe vine (*Aristolochia tomentosa*) – fertile soil

