

### Butterfly Milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)

This bushy, 1-½ to 2 ft. perennial is prized for its large, flat-topped clusters of bright-orange flowers. The leaves are mostly alternate, 1-½ to 2-¼ inches long, pointed, and smooth on the edge. The yellow-orange to bright orange flower clusters, 2 to 5 inches across, are at the top of the flowering stem. The abundance of stiff, lance-shaped foliage provides a dark-green backdrop for the showy flower heads.

This plant is frequently grown from seed in home gardens. Its brilliant flowers attract butterflies. Because its tough root was chewed by the Indians as a cure for pleurisy and other pulmonary ailments, Butterfly Weed was given its other common name, Pleurisy Root. Although it is sometimes called Orange Milkweed, this species has no milky sap.



### Cardinal-Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)

This 1-6 ft. perennial has showy, red flowers in 8 in., terminal spikes. Each flower has three spreading lower petals and two upper petals, all united into a tube at the base. Erect leafy stems, often in clusters, with racemes of flowers resembling flaming red spires. The lower portion of the erect stem is lined with lance-shaped leaves.

Although relatively common, overpicking this handsome wildflower has resulted in its scarcity in some areas. Since most insects find it difficult to navigate the long tubular flowers, Cardinal Flower depends on hummingbirds, which feed on the nectar, for pollination. Its common name alludes to the bright red robes worn by Roman Catholic cardinals. In southern Arizona, Sierra Madre Lobelia (*L. laxiflora*) is also found; its corolla is red with yellow lobes or all yellow.



### Red Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*)

An open-branched, 2-3 ft. perennial with delicate, blue-green, lobed foliage and pendent, yellow and red, spurred flowers. Handsome red and yellow flowers hang at ends of branches above this bushy plant with several stems and many divided leaves. The flowers of this species are slightly smaller than those of *A. eximia*.

The genus name *Aquilegia* comes from the Latin *aquila* which means eagle and refers to the spurred petals that many believe resemble an eagles talons. The species name *formosa*, Latin for beautiful, aptly describes this large plant, especially when it has hundreds of lovely flowers nodding over it. There are other species with mostly red flowers, which also attract hummingbirds as pollinators. The nectar was eaten as a candy by the Gitksan and Wetsuweten peoples.



### Seaside Goldenrod (*Solidago sempervirens*)

This perennial produces a tight clump of narrow, evergreen basal leaves topped by leafy, erect or arching, 2-8 ft. stalks. The terminal or upper axillary flowering heads are dense, the lowest branches somewhat recurved. Flowers are deep-yellow and the leaves are somewhat succulent. Succulent-leaved salt-marsh Goldenrod has arching branches that bear one-sided clusters of large, bright yellow flower heads.

Plants found from Florida to Texas and Mexico are recognized by some experts as a different species (*S. mexicana*), but as another variety of this single species, *S. sempervirens* var. *mexicana*, by others. It also hybridizes regularly with Rough-stemmed Goldenrod (*S. rugosa*).



### Spotted Crane's-Bill (*Geranium maculatum*)

Showy, pink, five-petaled flowers, occur at the top of leafy, 1-3 ft. stem. Lavender flowers are in loose clusters of 2-5 at the ends of branches above a pair of deeply 5-lobed leaves. In addition to its flowers, this perennial is well known for its 5- to 6-parted, deeply cut leaves. It colonizes by thick rhizomes but is not aggressive.

Geraniums are recognized by their palmately-lobed leaves and distinctive capsules. Bicknell's Cranesbill (*G. bicknellii*) has much smaller flowers, notched petals, and more finely cut leaves. It too is found in the Northeast and Midwest. A more southerly species, the closely related Carolina Geranium (*G. carolinianum*), occurs from Florida to New England and westward to Kansas and Wyoming. It has a more compact flower cluster. The common name cranesbill, as well as the genus name, from the Greek *geranos* (a crane), relate to the bill-like capsule. A number of species are naturalized from Europe.



### Sweet-Scented Joe-Pye-Weed (*Eutrochium purpureum*)

Sweet-scented joe-pye weed grows from 2-6 ft. Narrow, lance-shaped leaves are whorled along the erect stem. The large, domed flower head is composed of several branches bearing tiny, pale pinkish-lavender florets.

This species is listed as an important host plant for larvae of butterflies and moths by the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation.



### Spotted Beebalm (*Monarda fistulosa*)

Wild bergamot, known by many other common names, is a popular and showy perennial. Clusters of lavender, pink or white flowers, looking like ragged pompoms, bloom atop 2-5 ft., open-branched stems.

This showy perennial, frequently cultivated, has aromatic leaves used to make mint tea. Oil from the leaves was formerly used to treat respiratory ailments. The leaves smell minty.

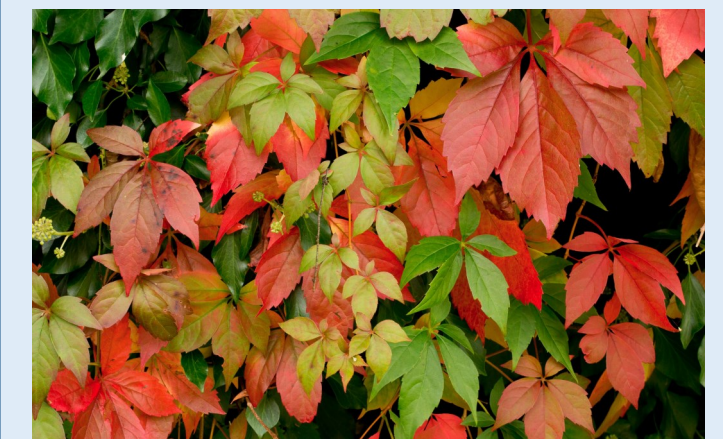
Linnaeus named the genus *Monarda* in honor of a 16th century Spanish physician and botanist, Nicolas Bautista Monardes (1493-1588). Monardes never went to the Americas but was able to study medicinal plants in Spain because Spain controlled navigation and commerce from the New World. *Fistulosa* means tubular.



### Virginia-Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)

This woody, deciduous vine climbs with adhesive-tipped tendrils that don't damage buildings the way some vines do. Leaves provide early fall color, turning brilliant mauve, red and purple. Each leaf is composed of five leaflets which turn bright red in the fall. The flowers are small, greenish, and occur in clusters, ripening into small bluish fruits.

Small birds and mammals use Virginia creeper for cover. Many songbirds feed on the fruits of this plant. Other animals, including deer, have been known to forage on the fruits as well. The plant can also serve as groundcover preventing soil erosion.



Descriptions on native species courtesy of Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center. [www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org). Descriptions of noxious weeds courtesy of Swearingen, J., K. Reshetloff, B. Slattery, and S. Zwicker. 2002. *Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas*. National Park Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 82 pp. and Plant Conservation Alliance. [www.nps.gov/plants/allen](http://www.nps.gov/plants/allen)

Credits

A very tall coreopsis, this perennial grows 3-9 ft. in height. The stalked leaves divide into three lanceolate segments. Yellow petals are rounded at the tip.

On the Cover: Tickseed (*Coreopsis tripteris*)

A weed is a word used to describe any plant growing wherever someone wishes it did not. Weeds can include native and non-native plants. A noxious weed is a legal designation used specifically for species that have been determined to be major pests of agricultural systems and are subject, by law, to certain restrictions.

What is a weed?

natural range.

A non-native plant is a species that, due to direct or indirect human activity, occurs in locations beyond its known historical or potential

What is a non-native plant?

An invasive plant is one that grows and spreads rapidly, establishes over large areas, and displaces native plants.

What is an invasive plant?

that rely on these plants.

A native plant is a species that naturally occurs in a particular region, ecosystem and habitat. Species native to North America are generally recognized as those occurring on the continent prior to European settlement. Because native plants are adapted to the environmental conditions of the particular region, they can thrive without a great deal of care and are good for native insects and birds

What is a native plant?

Native Plants, Invasive Plants, Non-Native Plants and Weeds

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT Native Plants



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New York City Soil & Water Conservation District

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Noxious Weeds

You can learn more about these species and other noxious weeds and invasive plants at New York Invasive Species Information website at <http://www.nyis.info/index.php>

Multiflora Rose (*Rosa multiflora*)

Multiflora rose is a thorny, perennial shrub with arching stems (canes), and leaves divided into five to eleven sharply toothed leaflets. Multiflora rose is extremely prolific and can form impenetrable thickets that exclude native plant species. This exotic rose readily invades open woodlands, forest edges, successional fields, savannas and prairies that have been subjected to land disturbance.



English Ivy (*Hedera helix* L.)

English ivy is an evergreen, perennial, climbing vine that attaches to bark of trees, brickwork and other surfaces by root-like structures that exude a glue-like substance to aid in adherence. It is an aggressive invader that threatens all vegetation levels of forested and open areas, growing along the ground as well as into the forest canopy. Vines climbing up tree trunks spread out and envelop branches and twigs, blocking sunlight from reaching the host tree's foliage, thereby impeding photosynthesis.

Photo: James H. Miller, USDA Forest Service



Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)

Garlic mustard is a cool season biennial herb with stalked, triangular to heart-shaped, coarsely toothed leaves that give off an odor of garlic when crushed.

Once introduced to an area, garlic mustard outcompetes native plants by aggressively monopolizing light, moisture, nutrients, soil and space. Wildlife species that depend on these early plants for their foliage, pollen, nectar, fruits, seeds and roots, are deprived of these essential food sources when garlic mustard replaces them.

Garlic mustard is one of few non-native species that can invade forest understories and have been found to spread even in pristine areas.



Mile-A-Minute Weed (*Persicaria perfoliata*)

Mile-a-minute weed, or Asiatic tearthumb, is an herbaceous, annual, trailing vine. Stems are armed with recurved barbs which are also present on the underside of the leaf blades. Mile-a-minute weed grows rapidly, scrambling over shrubs and other vegetation, blocking the foliage of covered plants from available light, and reducing their ability to photosynthesize, which stresses and weakens them. In addition, the weight and pressure of the vine causes distortion of stems and branches of covered plants. If left unchecked, reduced photosynthesis can kill a plant.

