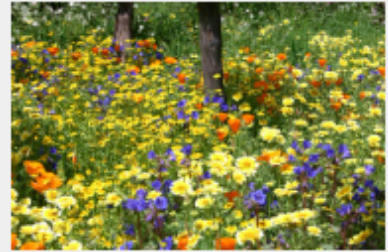


Lawn/Garden

Find ideas and resources below for planning, planting, and maintaining an earth-friendly lawn or garden.



Check out these great earth-friendly garden tips below:

[Lawn Mowing/Watering](#)

[Spring/Fall Clean Up](#)

[Chemicals](#)

[Diversifying Your Landscaping](#)

[Where to Buy Native Plants](#)

Lawn Mowing/Watering

- ✓ Set lawn mower at 4"
Shades grass roots, resists weed seeds, requires less irrigation

- ✓ Mow the lawn less often if you can!
You may be able to go 2 weeks or more rather than weekly (cuts lawn mower emissions by half)

- ✓ Replace gas lawn mower with an electric lawn mower

- ✓ Learn how to pause your irrigation system when it is raining or when there has been sufficient rain (*saves electricity and water*)



Spring/Fall Clean-up

- ✓ Leave leaves in the landscape in the fall *Eliminate leaf blower noise and pollution, beneficial to the soil and insects who overwinter in leaf litter*



- ✓ Leave the leaves in spring until temperatures are consistently in the 50's



Chemicals

- ☑ Stop using synthetic fertilizers (*Pollutes groundwater, harmful to pets and children, damages critters in soil*)
- ☑ Use organic fertilizers/soil amendments in the lawn and garden instead.



Get a soil test first to find out what you really need!

- ☑ Stop using herbicides and pesticides in your lawn and garden (*encourage a natural balance*)



Diversify Your Landscape

- ☑ Expand landscaped beds, removing lawn, adding beneficial native plants (*Michigan native trees, shrubs, perennials, grasses—they sequester more carbon in the soil!!*)
- ☑ Plant a native tree (*cool the ground, shade your home, sequester carbon*)



☑ Plant low, shade-tolerant plants under trees to create “soft landings” for the insects that live in trees (*reduce lawn under trees*)

☑ Add fescues and clover to your lawn (*reduces mowing and maintenance needs*)

☑ Create a rain garden to capture roof and hard surface runoff (*protect ground and surface water*)



Articles

Lawn Care

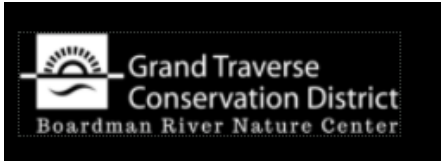
By Cheryl A. Gross, for *Plant It Wild*



The problem with turf grass is that it is non-native to our region, has shallow roots, requires frequent watering during dry spells, has difficulty competing with broad-leaf weeds, and is often treated with chemicals harmful to our environment. The benefit of a lawn is that it can be walked on. If that space is not needed for your dog, paths, or play, consider alternative landscaping. Reduce the size of your lawn and grow more beneficial plants. However, if you have a lawn, please care for it in an environmentally-friendly way.

[Read more...](#)

Where to buy Native Plants



Annual Native Seedling Sale now in progress!

From **February 1st - March 31, 2026**, the Grand Traverse Conservation District is taking orders for native seedlings.

[Click here](#) for details and place your order. The GTCD also offers annual sales of native plants as well as a number of workshops. [Check their website for the latest.](#)



The Leelanau Conservation District also offers spring sales of native trees and shrubs. Find a selection of classic trees like the white pine and red maple, native shrubs such as nannyberry and white flowering dogwood, and even some uniquely stunning trees like the tulip poplar and sycamore (listed for the Assisted Tree Range Expansion Project), all in varying sizes and quantities to suit your garden needs.

Find information on their website at leelanaucd.org

Native Plant Finder <https://nativeplantfinder.nwf.org/>

Home Grown National Park <https://homegrownnationalpark.org/>