



Native Plant Basics: Selected Plants

Prepared by Sharon Yiesla of Sharon Yiesla, Horticultural Services

Revised 7/22

Scientific name Common name GRASSES	Native to U.S. or Illinois	Height of foliage (in flower for grasses)	Cultural notes
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i> Big Bluestem	Illinois	4-7' (up to 10')	Full sun; tolerant of heat, drought, clay soil
<i>Chasmanthium latifolium</i> Northern Sea Oats	Illinois	2-3' (3-4')	Partial shade; consistent moisture; salt tolerant
<i>Panicum virgatum</i> Switchgrass	Illinois	5-7' (6-8')	Full sun; prefers moist, fertile soils, but is tolerant of a range of soil conditions
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i> Little Bluestem	Illinois	3' (3')	Full sun; tolerant of most soils, except wet
<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i> Indian Grass	Illinois	2-3' (3-4')	Full sun; drought tolerant
<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i> Prairie Dropseed	Illinois	2-3' (3-4')	Full sun; heat and drought tolerant
<u>WILDFLOWERS/PERENNIALS</u>			
<i>Amsonia tabernaemontana</i> Willow Bluestar	Illinois	2-3'	Full sun to partial shade; moist, well drained soil
<i>Aruncus dioicus</i> Goatsbeard	Illinois	4-7'	Partial shade; moist soil
<i>Asarum canadense</i> Wild Ginger	Illinois	6-12"	Partial shade to shade; moist soils
<i>Baptisia australis</i> False Indigo	United States	3-4'	Full sun to partial shade; drought tolerant
<i>Chelone glabra</i> Turtlehead	Illinois	1-3'	Partial shade to full sun; consistent moisture

Scientific name Common name	Native to U.S. or Illinois	Height of foliage	Cultural notes
<i>Echinacea purpurea</i> Purple Coneflower	Illinois	2-4'	Full sun; well drained soil; drought tolerant
<i>Eutrochium (Eupatorium) maculatum</i> Joe-Pye Weed	Illinois	4-6'	Full sun to partial shade; moist soils; avoid dry
<i>Eryngium yuccifolium</i> Rattlesnake Master	Illinois	2-4'	Full sun; tolerates drought and flooding
<i>Geum triflorum</i> Prairie Smoke	Illinois	6-12"	Full sun; well drained soil
<i>Iris versicolor</i> Larger Blue Flag	United States	2-3'	Full sun; moist soils; can tolerate wet soils
<i>Liatris spicata</i> Blazing Star, Gayfeather	Illinois	2-3'	Full sun to partial shade; well drained soil
<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i> Cardinal Flower	Illinois	2-4'	Partial shade; consistently moist soil
<i>Oenothera macrocarpa</i> Missouri Evening Primrose	United States	4-6"	Full sun; requires good drainage
<i>Symphyotrichum (Aster) novae-angliae</i> New England Aster	Illinois	2-4'	Full sun; moist soil
<i>Solidago species</i> Goldenrod	United States	2-4' +	Full sun; well drained soil; tolerates drought does NOT cause hay fever
TREES			
<i>Acer rubrum</i> Red Maple	Illinois	40-60'	Full sun to partial shade; slightly acid soil; tolerates wet sites
<i>Acer saccharum</i> Sugar Maple	Illinois	50-75'	Full sun to partial shade; well drained soil

©Sharon Yiesla

Scientific name	Native to U.S. or Illinois	Height of foliage	Cultural notes
Common name			
<i>Celtis occidentalis</i> Common Hackberry	Illinois	50-90'	Full sun to light shade; tolerates wet to dry soils and wide range of pH
<i>Gymnocladus dioica</i> Kentucky Coffeetree	Illinois	60-75'	Full sun; tolerates some dryness and wet sites; pH adaptable
<i>Ostrya virginiana</i> American Hophornbeam	Illinois	25-40'	Full sun to moderate shade; tolerates dryness, pH adaptable
<i>Quercus imbricaria</i> Shingle Oak	Illinois	50-60'	Full sun to partial shade; tolerates alkaline soil
<i>Quercus rubra</i> Red Oak	Illinois	60-75'	Full sun to partial shade; moist sites; acid soil
<u>SHRUBS</u>			
<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i> Common Buttonbush	Illinois	6-12'	Full sun; wet to moist sites; pH adaptable
<i>Clethra alnifolia</i> Summersweet Clethra	United States	6-9'	Full sun to moderate shade; moist to wet sites
<i>Fothergilla gardenii</i> Dwarf Fothergilla	United States	3'	Full sun to partial shade; moist well drained soil; slightly acid soil is best
<i>Hypericum kalmianum</i> Kalm St. Johnswort	Illinois	3'	Full sun; moist to wet sites; tolerates dryness
<i>Physocarpus opulifolius</i> Common Ninebark	Illinois	6-9'	Full sun; moist to wet sites; tolerates dryness;
<i>Potentilla fruticosa</i> Potentilla or cinquefoil	Illinois	3'	Full sun to partial shade; prefers moist soil; tolerates poor, dry soil; pH adaptable
<i>Sambucus canadensis</i> American Elderberry	Illinois	6-9'	Full sun, partial shade; tolerates wet and dry
<i>Viburnum lentago</i> Nannyberry Viburnum	Illinois	15-18'	Full sun or shade; tolerates wet and dry