



## Butterfly Project NYC Tips for Successful Pollinator Gardens

### Why Native Plants:

- Sustains Wildlife –provides important habitat to support pollinators, other wildlife
- Botanical heritage – preserving the plants that evolved here over thousands of years
- Less Work! – mature, native plants need less help: they are suited to this climate and soil, are very often drought tolerant, they combat weeds better, and do not need fertilizers

### Design Concepts:

- What butterflies need – sunlight, windbreaks, mud puddles, leaf and twig piles, etc.
- What all pollinators need – plants which bloom in spring, summer, fall
- Give your plants a 1' square area for most small plugs
- Plant in clumps or drifts for beauty and interest, 3' clumps per species (if possible)
- Define Your Beds – use whatever you can find or afford, but strongly mark the borders of your bed (examples mowed borders, wood chips, bricks, rocks, short fencing, etc)
- Include pathways for maintenance, viewing and children
- Mark your Plants – Don't let them get pulled by that overzealous weeder!

### Maintenance:

- Water plants consistently during the first growing season
- Weed the beds consistently during the first 2 years (don't allow them to get shaded out by fast growing weeds!)
- Mulch well with a mature mulch or compost (no wood chips for new plants!), a native groundcover makes a nice living mulch
- Leave dead plant material in place for the winter to protect overwintering pollinators
- Cut back and prune off dead stems in the early spring
- Do not use pesticides or herbicides

Many thanks to our partners!

Bronx Green-Up/The New York Botanical Garden, NYC Parks Green Thumb, NYC Wildflower Week, Grow to Learn NYC, City Parks Foundation