



**FOODWELL**  
ALLIANCE



**METRO ATLANTA  
NATIVE PLANT GUIDE**

## WHAT IS A NATIVE PLANT SPECIES?

The federal Plant Conservation Alliance defines a native plant as “one that occurs naturally in a particular region, ecosystem, and/or habitat without direct or indirect human intervention.”

The Georgia Native Plant Society defines native plants as “plants that evolved in this area or were growing here prior to the arrival of European settlers.”

## WHY SHOULD I PLANT NATIVE SPECIES?

- Native plants are adapted to growing in our soil and climate. This makes them resilient and easy to grow!
- Native insects and animals have adapted to these native plants. By planting these in your landscape, you are supporting natural food webs.
- You can help preserve at-risk native species that are facing habitat destruction from development or competition from non-native plants.

## GREAT NATIVE PLANTS FOR POLLINATORS

Narrowleaf Sunflower  
*Helianthus angustifolius*

Common Claspig Aster  
*Symphyotrichum patens*

Common Ironweed  
*Vernonia fasciculata*

Shaggy Blazing Star  
*Liatris pilosa*

Mountain Mint  
*Pycnanthemum spp.*

White Milkweed  
*Asclepias variegata*

Joe-Pye-Weed  
*Eutrochium fistulosum*

Eastern Silvery Aster  
*Symphyotrichum concolor*

Wreath Goldenrod  
*Solidago caesia*

Wrinkle-Leaf Goldenrod  
*Solidago rugosa*

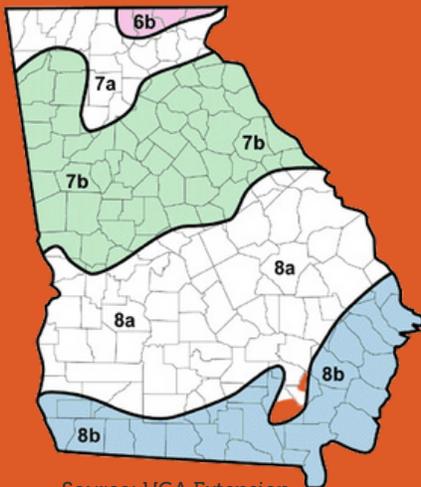


## HOW IS METRO ATLANTA DIFFERENT FROM OTHER REGIONS?

Regions throughout North America are each distinct in their annual rainfall, temperature ranges, elevation, and soil type. These unique combinations of environmental factors suit different plant types. There are many different maps developed by plant, soil, and climate scientists that divide the country (and state!) into various "zones" or "regions". These regions can help determine what plant species thrive in that area.

### 7A & 7B HARDINESS ZONES

The metro Atlanta area is split between 7a and 7b hardiness zones. These zones are determined by the annual minimum temperature, which can affect which plants are able to survive in that area. Some of the heat-loving plants that thrive in South Georgia may not be able to withstand the colder minimum temperatures of Zone 7a.



Source: UGA Extension

### PIEDMONT REGION

Metro-Atlanta is located in the Piedmont region. The word "Piedmont" translates to "foot of the mountain". This region is characterized by sandy-loam and clay soils. There are many rivers running through the Piedmont region, which can provide excellent habitats for native tree and shrub species that can help with the erosion of riverbanks.



ZONE	AVERAGE MINIMUM TEMP
7a	0-5 degrees F
7b	5-10 degrees F

# NATIVE ALTERNATIVES TO INVASIVE PLANTS IN METRO ATLANTA

Invasive species establish themselves in an area and consume all of the space and resources, leaving none for the native species. This can have a domino effect on surrounding plants and animals that are relying on the native species in their ecological cycles. Non-native does not necessarily mean a plant will be invasive, but almost all invasive species are non-native. To avoid the possibility of introducing an invasive plant into your area, it is always safest to plant native species!

INVASIVE SPECIES	NATIVE ALTERNATIVE
Mimosa Tree <i>Albizia julibrissin</i>	Eastern Redbud <i>Cercis canadensis</i>
Tree of Heaven <i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Smooth Sumac <i>Rhus glabra</i>
Autumn Olive <i>Elaeagnus umbellata</i>	American Snowbell <i>Styrax americanus</i>
English Ivy <i>Hedera helix</i>	Shrub Yellowroot <i>Xanthorhiza simplicissima</i>
Chinese Privet <i>Ligustrum sinense</i>	Black Haw <i>Viburnum prunifolium</i>
Japanese honeysuckle <i>Lonicera japonica</i>	Scarlet Honeysuckle <i>Lonicera sempervirens</i>
Japanese Climbing Fern <i>Lygodium japonicum</i>	American Climbing Fern <i>Lygodium palmatum</i>
Chinaberry <i>Melia azedarach</i>	Devil's Walking Stick <i>Aralia spinosa</i>
Princess Tree <i>Paulownia tomentosa</i>	Cucumber Tree <i>Magnolia acuminata</i>
Kudzu <i>Pueraria montana</i>	Virginia Creeper <i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>
Multiflora Rose <i>Rosa multiflora</i>	Climbing Prairie Rose <i>Rosa setigera</i>
Chinese Tallowtree <i>Triadica sebifera</i>	Sassafras <i>Sassafras albidum</i>
Chinese Privet <i>Ligustrum sinense</i>	Black Haw <i>Viburnum prunifolium</i>
Chinese Wisteria <i>Wisteria sinensis</i>	American Wisteria <i>Wisteria frutescens</i>



## RESOURCES:

Brooklyn Botanic Garden All-Region Guide "Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants"

Georgia Exotic Pest Plant Council's List of Category 1 Plants

Georgia Native Plant Society's "Native Plants for the Georgia Piedmont"

## LOOKING FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON NATIVE PLANTS? HERE ARE SOME WE RECOMMEND:

- Georgia Natural Plant Society's "Native Plants for the Georgia Piedmont"
- UGA Extension's Native Plant Lists:
  - Part I: Trees, Shrubs, and Woody Vines
  - Part II: Ferns
  - Part III: Wildflowers
  - Part IV: Grasses & Sedges
- UGA Extension's "Native Plants, Drought Tolerance, and Pest Resistance"
- Brooklyn Botanic Garden's "Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants"