



**BENEFITS OF NATIVE LANDSCAPING  
AT  
WETLAND STUDIES AND SOLUTIONS, INC.**

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Some of the most often mentioned benefits of native landscaping are the reduced need for irrigation, the resulting water-saving benefits, and the reduced need for fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides. Those benefits aren't so easily seen, unless you're the one applying the chemicals or paying the water bills. A much more easily observed benefit is the wildlife habitat value provided by the native plants.

During the first summer after planting (especially early in the year), a number of people commented on the messy or weedy appearance of some of the areas around the building. Later in the summer (after we finally received some rain), the black-eyed susans, asters, native grasses, *Bidens*, and smartweeds really took off. During the winter months, a flock of at least 50 birds of four different species (cardinals, dark-eyed juncos, and song and white-throated sparrows) visited the area daily, eating the seeds from these plants. Mike asked if I had noticed all the birds, and a number of other folks commented on the cardinals and goldfinches eating the seeds outside their windows. Earlier in the year, several hummingbirds fed at the cardinal flowers on the green roof, and bluebirds and other species took advantage of the fruits on the serviceberries, blueberries, and chokeberries planted around the building. Just by walking to and from my car and taking occasional walks on the trails through the RPA, I've seen close to 50 bird species and a handful of small mammal species here at WSSI. You just don't see that type of wildlife diversity in the pansies, begonias, and ornamental kale planted around typical suburban office buildings or in areas that are cut and mowed before the plants are allowed to set seed.

As the trees and shrubs mature and as the diversity of grasses and flowering plants increases, there should be even more songbirds, reptiles, amphibians, and small mammals, as well as the predators that eat them (like the gray fox, red-shouldered hawks, and Cooper's hawks that we sometimes see around the office). If you take the time to look around on your way to or from your car and if you look beyond the non-traditional (some would say unkempt or weedy) appearance, the property here is a good lesson in suburban ecology and the benefits of native landscaping in rapidly developing areas.

A list of the species included in the native seed mix is provided below. If you have questions about the landscaping, ask Jean Tufts (telephone: 703 679 5642; e-mail: [jtufts@wetlandstudies.com](mailto:jtufts@wetlandstudies.com)). She did much of the landscape planning.





## *Native Landscape Seed Mix\**

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>
Grain Rye	<i>Secale cereale</i>
Annual Ryegrass	<i>Lolium multiflorum</i>
Silky Wild Rye	<i>Elymus villosus</i>
Camper Little Bluestem	<i>Andropogon scoparius</i> 'Camper'
Indian Grass	<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>
Deer Tongue	<i>Panicum clandestinum</i>
Purple Top	<i>Tridens flavus</i>
Bottlebrush Grass	<i>Hystrix patula</i>
Common Broom Sedge	<i>Andropogon virginicus</i>
Black-eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>
Partridge Pea	<i>Chamaecrista fasciculata</i>
Lance-leaved Coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>
Wild Senna	<i>Senna hebecarpa</i>
Marsh Blazing Star	<i>Liatris spicata</i>
Tall White Beardstongue	<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>
Blue False Indigo	<i>Baptisia australis</i>
Virginia Spiderwort	<i>Tradescantia virginiana</i>
Canada Anemone	<i>Anemone canadensis</i>
Butterfly Milkweed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>
Appalachian Beard Tongue	<i>Penstemon laevigatus</i>
New England Aster	<i>Aster novae-angliae</i>
Wild Quinine	<i>Parthenium integrifolium</i>
Whorled Rosinweed	<i>Silphium trifoliatum</i>
Joe Pye Weed	<i>Eupatoriadelphus fistulosum</i>
Spotted Beebalm	<i>Monarda punctata</i>
Eastern Columbine	<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>
Zigzag Aster	<i>Aster prenanthoides</i>
Licorice-scented Goldenrod	<i>Solidago odora</i>
Grass-leaved Goldenrod	<i>Euthamia graminifolia</i>

\* Used for all non-sodded areas of the WSSI landscape. Plants listed in order of highest percentage to lowest percentage of seed in the mix.

