

# Landscaping with Native Flowers Reduce Water Waste and Nutrient Run-Off

Allen County Partnership for Water Quality wants to help water slow down by informing residents of water-friendly landscaping. This concept sounds like it could be challenging, but it can be as simple as picking native plants for your gardens. Many people are aware of the biodiversity benefits that native plants offer, but did you know that native plants can do more than habitat and food for pollinators and local birds? They also allow incredible benefits to our local waterways and can help improve water quality!

How can native plants improve water quality? One could answer this question in several ways, but let's focus on how native plants use less water and fewer pesticides and fertilizers to thrive in our yards.

The average lawn requires thousands of gallons of water throughout the growing season to maintain a uniformed green most residents strive to have due to the shallow root system of these grasses. However, native plants are equipped with a deep root system, giving them access to hard-to-reach water sources. Meaning that native plants need less attention than their non-native counterparts, and they will increase your soil's capacity to hold water. Ultimately, native plants benefit our landscapes by requiring less maintenance once established, and they help the ground absorb more water to decrease flooding during rain events.



Photo provided by [Riverview Native Nursery](#). Native flower show is Coreopsis.

Other gardening practices include applying pesticides and fertilizers; however, with native plants, this routine might not be necessary. Native plants have adapted to this area, allowing them to develop defenses against pests and creative ways to get their nutrients. Allowing for a decrease in pesticides and fertilizers, less unwanted chemicals find their way into local rivers, streams, and lakes.

Being a water quality steward can be as simple as placing native plants into one's landscape over showy non-native plants. There are numerous benefits to choosing natives for one's landscape ranging from food for local wildlife to improving the water quality of local waterways. Get outside and plan out where your native plants are going to go!

For more information on native species, please visit the [City of Fort Wayne's Plant List](#).