
SUNNYSIDE THYMES

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“Helping Others Grow”

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SMG's Grow Native!

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Last year we heard and read a lot of information about invasive plants, their negative impact in our natural spaces, the financial burden they pose to our



collective pocketbook and the exhaustive efforts required to identify and control them in our yards, woods, and public areas. In our Sunnyside Thymes education articles for 2020, we'll focus on information about great native plants for our landscaping, flower beds,

fields, and woods.

I recently attended the annual Native Plant Conference in Cincinnati and heard presentations about the importance of native plants for pollinators and avian life. I was shocked to learn that (according to recent research reported by Doug Tallamy, Desiree Narango, and Peter Marra) a landscape must have more than 70% native plants/trees in biomass in order for chickadees to have a chance to reproduce and sustain their local populations.

(<https://www.udel.edu/udaily/2018/october/non-native-plants-birds-insects-washington-chickadee-desiree-narango-doug-tallamy/>)

With our bird populations decreasing at an alarming estimated rate of 29% since 1970's population levels, increasing usable habitat and resources is critically important to the survival of many species.

(Decline of the North American avifauna, Kenneth V. Rosenberg, et al, *Science* 04 Oct 2019: Vol. 366, Issue 6461, pp. 120-124. Both a synopsis of the paper or a link to the full paper can be found at Cornell's Lab of Ornithology website: <https://www.birds.cornell.edu/home/>)

I'm challenging all Sunnyside Master Gardeners to assess their home landscape and ensure that they are doing their part to sustain our beautiful native flora and fauna. Upcoming articles will be a great resource for researching and selecting terrific native plants that will not only add beauty and color to your landscape, but also life-giving shelter and nutrition for the insects, birds and mammals that visit your gardens.

