

Gardening with Native Plants: Why & How

A talk for the Reading Garden Club and Reading Public Library

April 26, 2018

Claudia Thompson

Founder, Grow Native Massachusetts

Come learn why native plants are so valuable in your gardens! Claudia will give us an overview of the essential importance of native plants to ecosystem health on all lands, large and small. We explore the co-evolution of plants and animals; the differences among native, naturalized, and invasive plants; and the food web that links plants to insects, birds, wildlife, and humans. Using her 7,000 square foot garden in Cambridge, MA as a case study, she will explain the principles for designing gardens that are places of both beauty and biodiversity, how to work within an ecological framework, and especially how to create habitat for birds. She ends by giving an overview of many resources available to learn more about native plants and ecological gardening, as well as tips for sourcing native plants from the nursery trade. This program will share the joy that comes with using native plants, and equip you with knowledge and resources to use many more of them throughout your landscape projects.

Claudia's Biography:

Ms. Thompson founded Grow Native Massachusetts in 2010 and has been recognized nationally as a leader in the native plant movement. She has had an extensive career in the environmental sector, including past roles as Director of Education for the Appalachian Mountain Club, Director of Drumlin Farm for Mass Audubon, and serving for nine years on the board of the New England Wild Flower Society. She is a strong advocate for the importance of land stewardship on all lands— large and small— and believes that conservation begins at home. We must change the paradigm that views humans as separate from nature, and adopt a 21st century attitude toward conservation that views human activity as integral to the natural world. Claudia's happiest moments are spent in her own gardens, watching a diverse array of hawks, migrating songbirds, and even rare species such as woodcocks— all taking sustenance and utilizing the habitat she and her husband have created on a relatively small parcel in urban Cambridge.

Grow Native 🌿 Massachusetts

Every garden matters ~ Every landscape counts!