

# Planting Guide

# BOTANY

Beuter House  
Spring 2025



# Keys to Success

## Watering

While the plants are younger and settling in, water every 5-7 days if there is no rain in the forecast and run the sprinkler for 1-2 hours. The infrequent but deeper watering will encourage the roots to grow deeper in search of water, which will leave them more resilient to drought. Continue the infrequent watering through the summer heat. Once fall arrives, you should be able to stop watering all together. If we go 2 months between rain, I would consider watering deeply once.

Once you make it through fall, your hose can be retired! Next year, as plants begin to emerge from the winter, there will not be a need to water as these drought tolerant plants have fully rooted and are resilient.

## Wildlife

Your new planting may be enjoyed and explored by more than just humans in the first season of planting. Rabbits and squirrels have a radar for freshly planted, freshly dug earth. This nibbling by wildlife, while it may not look as nice, will not kill the plant. If anything, it will encourage the plants to put more energy into growing roots and keeping a bushier

form. That said, while some nibbling on the leaves by wildlife will not kill the plant, keep an eye out for plugs pulled out of the ground completely. A few organic options on the market: Deer Scram professional repellent: <https://www.lawnandpestcontrolsupply.com/products/deer-scam-professional-repellent>

Deer stopper II liquid repellents <https://messinas.com/products/deer-stopper-ii-liquid-animal-repellents>

## Weeding

There may be some annual weeds in the beginning of your new installation because of the disturbance to the soil. The most common weed I see on sites like yours is annual crabgrass which is a fast growing, aggressive weed. Try and keep an eye out for this weed and pull it early if you see it. If you have questions about certain weeds, there is a great app called 'picture this' which does a decent job of identifying plants and is free. You can also email a picture to Botany and a member of the team will get back to you ([info@visitbotany.co](mailto:info@visitbotany.co)).

## Spring Cutback

It is optional to cut back the landscape using loppers or hedge trimmers, varying the cutback height between 12" and 18" , leaving the debris where it falls on the ground. Giving the grass and flowers a cut back encourages fresh growth come spring, tidying the landscape and giving it a positive perspective to the general public, a cue to care so to speak. Secondly, it allows the cut material to become the year's mulch which retains moisture and suppresses weeds. It is better to vary the time of the year in which you do a cutback, from year to year, as insects and their life cycles vary. Diversifying the cutback pattern helps minimize any incidental impact to insects in a repeated way, allowing for populations to ebb and flow naturally. The timing of the cutback is also weather dependent, and the current recommendation is to wait for temperatures to be above 50 degrees for a few days in a row, which signals insects to awake from their dormant period.

<https://indiananativeplants.org/ecological-garden-maintenance/>

[https://xerces.org/sites/default/files/publications/22-005\\_01\\_web-press.pdf](https://xerces.org/sites/default/files/publications/22-005_01_web-press.pdf)

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# Short Term Management

## Green Mulch and 'Weeds'

Most plants we refer to as "weeds" are more accurately described as "early colonizers and stabilizers". Their role in nature is to heal damaged soil following a natural disaster like a flood or wildfire. They prevent the breakdown and erosion of topsoil as well as allow more long-lived and complex plant life to return. Weed growth is triggered when light reaches the soil surface. Your landscape is designed for total soil coverage to reduce weed pressures. In essence, plants will create their own "green mulch" as they knit together over time.

## Watering

When it comes to water, less is more. Our aim is to encourage plants to root deeply in search of underground water sources. If we water frequently and shallowly, their roots will stay near the surface, making it more difficult for them to weather periods of drought. Following the establishment phase, watering should only happen in the event of significant droughts lasting longer than four weeks. In those cases, water in the morning or evening - avoid the middle of the day as water droplets + sun can scorch leaves, and more water is lost to evaporation.

## Tidying & Aesthetics

It's important to remember there is no natural mechanism which "cleans out" a garden or landscape in autumn. Plants are adapted and prefer to grow through their own debris from previous years. This "duff" will decompose quickly, typically within a single season, nurturing the soil and sequestering carbon in the process. Most if not all plants in this design have some degree of four-season interest and winter architecture, and you'll be able to enjoy your landscape through winter by leaving material standing until early spring, too.

## Year 1 Establishment

Potential weed pressure will be most intense during the establishment phase as new plantings won't fully shade the soil surface from light. Vigilance is key throughout this first year to ensure desirable plantings are able to establish. Plan to spend approximately 30 minutes every 3-4 weeks monitoring for and controlling weeds as necessary during the establishment phase. Botany applied an application of Preen weed suppressant at time of planting to help mitigate weed pressure in the first season, and this application should last approximately 3 months. Preen is available at most hardware, garden center, and home improvement stores and can easily be reapplied again if desired.

Water every 7-10 days without significant (greater than 1/2") natural rainfall. Your watering should mimic a natural rain event, meaning we want to water deeply (1/2"-1") and infrequently to encourage plants to put their roots deep in search of water. This will aid in long-term planting resiliency.

Do not cut back or clean out any material from the garden this fall, including fallen leaves. Leave everything in place. Overtime, this detritus becomes a vital habitat for overwintering insects and shelter for small critters. It also helps to cover the soil and prevent winter annual weeds from gaining a foothold.

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## Year 2 Maturation

Weed pressure will diminish significantly, and an early spring weeding (before June) will likely be necessary, and then after only touch-ups. Your focus will shift to deadheading flowering annual weeds (rather than dig or pull) to reduce soil disturbance. Perennial weeds, those with large and durable root systems, should still be mechanically removed. Plan to spend approximately 15 minutes every 4-6 weeks monitoring for and controlling weeds.

As plantings mature, the need to water on a complete or automated scale will diminish dramatically. Only irrigate if we have a significant drought, meaning approximately 3 weeks without precipitation. These plants are deeply rooted and durable and will survive prolonged dry spells. Any new spot plantings should receive targeted waterings with a hand nozzle until they're established.

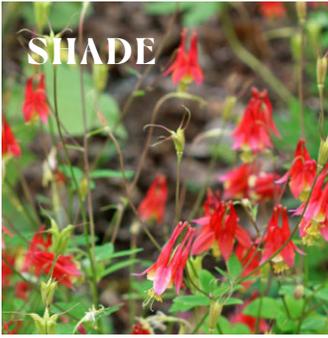
As plantings mature, each spring's cutback will create a heavier volume of "duff" material, with the grasses producing the highest volume.

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## Year 3 > Management

The primary weeding season will be late April-early June. Following this, plants will establish a full groundcover. Plan to spend approximately 15 minutes 2-3 times per season monitoring weeds.

Continue to operate on year two guidelines. It should be possible by this stage to push watering to 3-4 weeks in the event of drought as plants will have even larger root systems by this point, and mowing each spring usually around April.



**Aquilegia**

- » Common name: Columbine
- » Bloom time: April
- » Special notes: An important food source for early pollinators, such as the queen bumblebee is one of the earliest known to emerge and begin foraging.



**Iris cristata**

- » Common name: Dwarf Crested Iris
- » Bloom time: April - May
- » Special notes: Attracts hummingbirds and bees.



**Penstemon digitalis**

- » Common name: Smooth Penstemon
- » Bloom time: April - May
- » Special notes: Attracts long-tongued bees such as bumblebees and mason bees, as well as hummingbirds.



**Carex brevior**

- » Common name: Plains Oval Sedge
- » Bloom time: May - June



**Carex blanda**

- » Common name: Common Wood Sedge
- » Bloom time: May - June



**Geranium maculatum**

- » Common name: Wild Geranium
- » Bloom time: May - June
- » Special notes: Attracts pollinators and is a larval host plant for the White-Marked Tussock moth *Orgyia leucostigma*.



**Phlox divaricata**

- » Common name: Wild Blue Phlox
- » Bloom time: May - June
- » Special notes: Flowers attract butterflies, moths, and hummingbirds. Seeds attract birds.



**Tiarella cordifolia**

- » Common name: Foamflower
- » Bloom time: May - June



**Heuchera richardsonii**

- » Common name: Prairie Alumroot
- » Bloom time: May - July
- » Special notes: Attracts a variety of pollinators, including the specialist bee species *Colletes aestivalis*.



**Solidago caesia**

- » Common name: Blue Stemmed Goldenrod
- » Bloom time: August - September
- » Special notes: Attracts birds and pollinators.



**Eurybia macrophylla**

- » Common name: Big Leaved Aster
- » Bloom time: August - October
- » Special notes: Attracts pollinators.



**Polystichum acrostichoides**

- » Common name: Christmas Fern
- » Bloom time: June - August



**Carex brevior**

- » Common name: Plains Oval Sedge
- » Bloom time: May - June



**Sisyrinchium angustifolium 'Lucerne'**

- » Common name: Lucerne Blue-eyed Grass
- » Bloom time: May - June



**Amorpha canescens**

- » Common name: Leadplant
- » Bloom time: June - July
- » Special notes: A host plant for many species of butterflies and moths.



**Penstemon digitalis**

- » Common name: Smooth Penstemon
- » Bloom time: April - May
- » Special notes: Attracts long-tongued bees such as bumblebees and mason bees, as well as hummingbirds.



**Asclepias tuberosa**

- » Common name: Butterfly Weed
- » Bloom time: June - August
- » Special notes: A host plant for Monarch and Queen butterflies.



**Agastache foeniculum**

- » Common name: Lavender Hyssop
- » Bloom time: July - September
- » Special notes: The long-blooming flower spikes provide a good source of nectar all summer; attracting bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds.



**Aster laevis**

- » Common name: Smooth Aster
- » Bloom time: August - October
- » Special notes: A beneficial source of nectar in the fall. It is also a host plant for the Pearl Crescent butterfly and the Wavy-Lined Emerald moth.

# Long Term Management

## Editing & Plant Changes

As plants grow and fill space, it's natural that some may begin to overpower others. In this instance, a gentle editing and thinning of these robust plants could help the entire plant community remain stable and balanced in the long-run. In a few instances, some plants may benefit from division to maintain vigor. You can usually plan to thin every 5 years. It's also possible a particular plant just might not work as expected, either aesthetically or functionally, and needs to be removed and replaced. Barring any major surprises, the earliest we'll know if this needs to happen would be year 3.

## Observing & Supporting Wildlife

You can expect to see new and diverse forms of life visiting your landscape, from insects to small mammals, birds, and amphibians. You'll notice different plants attract different species such as butterflies, hummingbirds, and bees. To support these creatures in a deeper way, you can consider adding water stations in the form of shallow (1-2" deep) pools of water in rocks or dishes. You can register your yard as a wildlife habitat at the following website: <https://indianawildlife.org/take-action/backyard-habitat/>

## Continued Support

We hope you'll be joyful and engaged participants in your new landscape, and we're here to help you realize that vision. Your new landscape includes one garden coaching session which you can endorse anytime, and we generally recommend around the 3 month planting mark. In these sessions we can troubleshoot any challenges, answer questions, and provide management guidance as plantings evolve. We're happy to schedule a session sooner if desired. To schedule, please email [info@visitbotany.co](mailto:info@visitbotany.co) with the subject line "landscape follow up meeting".

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## Resources

### Further learning/ Groups to join:

Bringing Nature Home by Doug Tallamy  
The pollinator Victory Garden by Kim Eierman  
Pollinator Pathway  
Homegrown National Park

### Future planting support

The following local businesses can help with any future installations or garden maintenance:

#### Indigo Gardens and Design

This company offers garden maintenance services and is a close collaborator to Botany, they can be reached at [indigognd@gmail.com](mailto:indigognd@gmail.com).

#### Spaulding Restoration

This company is a spin-off company from our lead landscaper, who will continue to offer native garden installations in the area for interested customers. They can be reached at [lindsey@spauldingrestoration.com](mailto:lindsey@spauldingrestoration.com).