



# American Flowers Week

**JUNE 28 - JULY 4**

*a project of* **Slowflowers.com**

**AmericanFlowersWeek.com**

**#americanflowersweek**





## NATIVE FLORA

Paying closer attention to our ecosystems, more of us are recognizing indigenous flora, and valuing its benefits to wildlife, soil health, and providing uncommon beauty in bloom, leaf, and pod. Interest in native plants aligns with an awareness that small actions can help address climate change. As flower farmers add native plant species to their crop mixes, they inspire florists seeking inspiration for naturalistic designs that highlight the native flora.



DISTRICT 2 FLORAL STUDIO  
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floral studio  
WWW.DISTRICT2FLORAL.COM













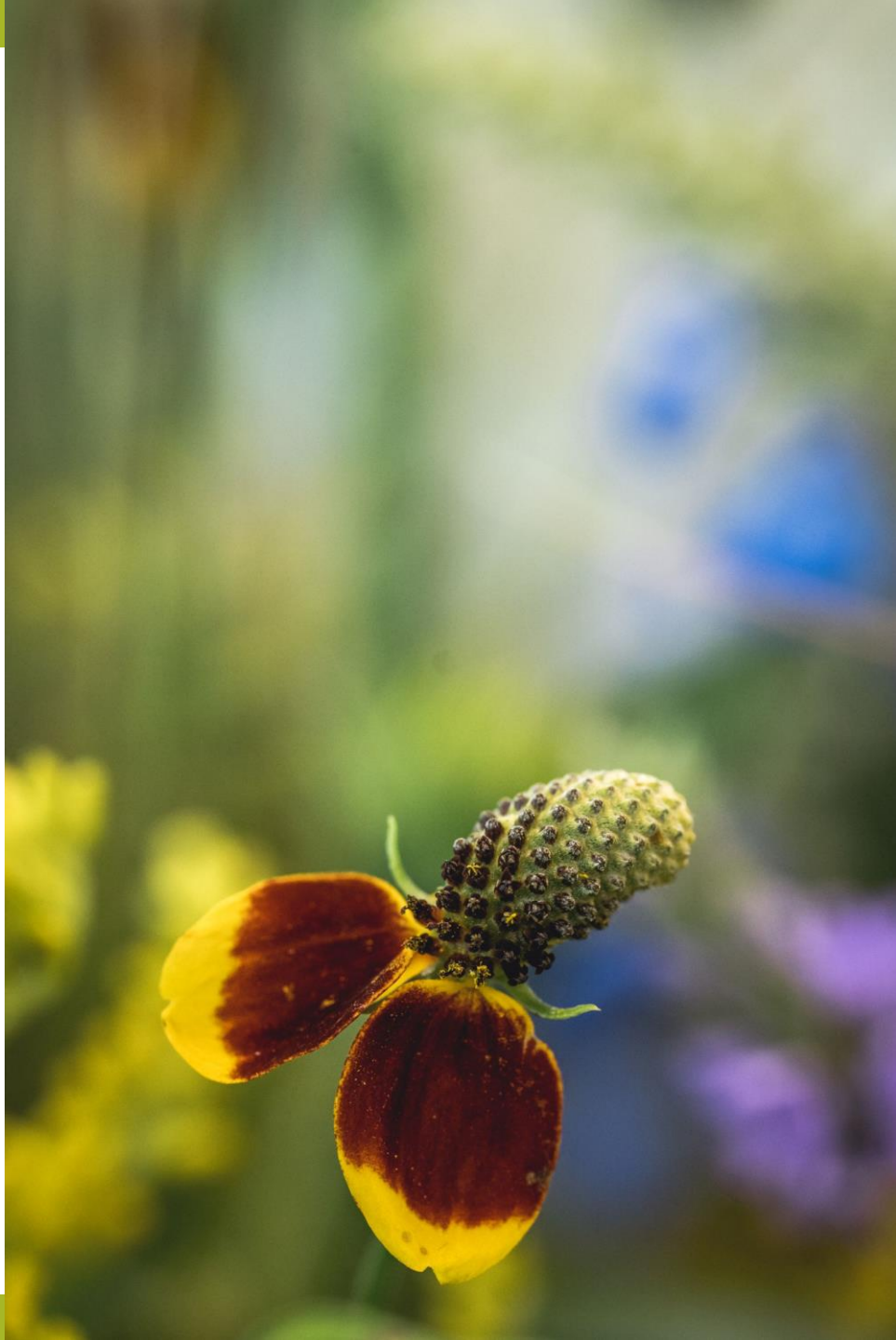














Holly sourced from five area flower growers to collect the bride's wish list.  
She created a floral headpiece and boutonniere, as well as 30 table centerpieces for the couple's event.

## Local native perennial varieties included:

Blue pitcher sage

Bull thistle

Goldenrod (2 varieties)

Hoary vervain

Little bluestem

Liatris

Oak leaves

Sunflower varieties

Upright coneflower



[Photo credit: Mike Machian]



“ Farmers love the land.  
I think farmers are going to be some of the real heroes  
of climate change as we know better and do better;  
in many ways, we are going back to the way things  
were done years ago.



## NATIVE FLORA

# GROWING NATIVE PLANTS TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

BY DEBORAH MAJERUS | IRON BUTTERFLY FARM AND LODGING

Minnesota, the land of 10,000 lakes, is getting warmer and wetter, yet we still face water supply issues. In cities and on farms, we are drawing water out of aquifers at a level that is not sustainable.

If it's raining more, doesn't that rain water just recharge the aquifers? Not if it lands on hardscaped cities, where it gets funneled away over concrete, taking contaminants with it that end up in the streams, rivers, and oceans. If rainfall lands on bare ground which has not been tilled and not cover-cropped, with no living roots in the soil, then not only does the rain wash away, but the precious top soil does, as well.

Lawns that are mono-cropped with grass have an unnatural state. The roots of turf lawns are only a few inches deep; think rolls of sod. Soil under that sod is compacted and rainwater runs off of its surface instead of soaking into its roots.

Mother Nature's elegant, original design could be found in Minnesota prairies with plants and roots that grew 5 to 15 feet into the soil, acting like a giant moisture sponge!

I love the image of rain that lands on the prairie's flowers and grasses. It doesn't roll away; rather, it soaks in, because the prairie's deep roots combat compaction, and those roots filter contaminants before the water reaches the aquifer.

Despite Minnesota receiving more overall rainfall each year, excess rain tends to occur during springtime, with more drought-like climate conditions occurring in the summer. Neither scenario is good for farmers or residential landscapes. Traditionally, farmers in Minnesota

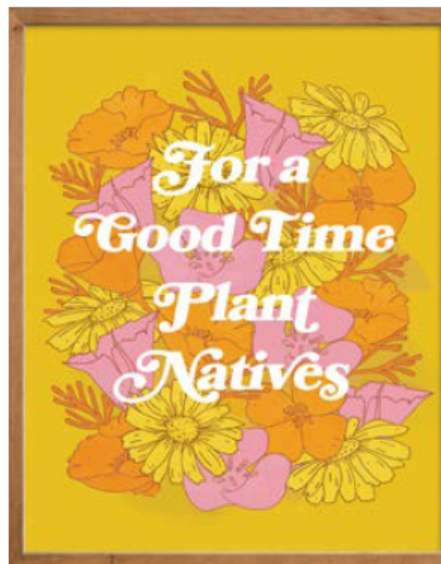
have been concerned about draining excess spring precipitation away from their fields. But now, some farmers are starting to re-contour the land to slow down runoff and help water soak in. They are capturing the runoff in man-made ponds to contain seasonal excess for irrigation during the dry spells. This is a permaculture concept, and can be applied on a large or small scale.

We have started re-contouring our land, and it is a goal of ours at Iron Butterfly Flower Farm to implement water capture systems for resiliency, and continue to plant native prairie plants. Our garden's deep prairie roots also sequester carbon from the atmosphere into the soil, combating climate change.

What can you do? Replace some grass lawn with native flowers and grasses. Lawns are deserts to pollinators. They offer nothing to eat, no habitat for wildlife, use up precious water groundwater, and oftentimes absorb chemical herbicides, which also kills all the good microbes in the soil.

Native plants are more resistant to flooding and drought. Farming with perennial grains or native flowers means you don't have to worry about your fields flooding in the spring; the plants are already established and there's no seed to wash away.

Farmers here are starting to plant strips of prairie plants and hedgerows like the old days. These plantings provide wind breaks, deep roots, and habitat for birds (which can eat pests). Native prairie plants attract beneficial insects that help to manage pests in the garden or farm. Tree and shrub roots and native prairie plants sequester



### IT'S A GOOD THING

California artist and illustrator Lesley Goren is interested in "place," be it the woods, the city, or somewhere in between. She creates work depicting the beauty of California's natural environments, as well as informational illustrations explaining plant and fire ecology. Her drawings are contemporary and lively while remaining scientifically accurate. She loves using images and text to make ideas more accessible.

This art print is a super fun way to show your love of natives. The original design features California Poppies, Mariposa Lilies, and Coast Sunflowers. The friendly text reads "For a Good Time Plant Natives." Color and typography inspire the retro 1970s vibe.

\$25 plus shipping. Details: 8 x 10 inches, signed on back, unframed, packaged in a plant-based clear sleeve.

[WEBSITE](#) | [INSTAGRAM](#)

carbon from our atmosphere into the soil, and the flowers provide for our pollinators, add beauty, and can also be used as good cut flowers for a country bouquet.

Farmers love the land. I think farmers are going to be some of the real heroes of climate change as we know better and do better; in many ways, we are going back to the way things were done years ago.

My gardens and fields are my happy places. That's where you'll find me most of the growing season.

I'm planting more hedgerows, native prairie plants, and perennial flowers. I keep telling my family, "Once we get these in, then we just become caretakers. We don't have to keep replanting." They shake their heads at me and smile.

At the Iron Butterfly rental property, located just down the street, we installed trenches to capture the many inches of rainfall flowing off the roof, redirecting it to soak into the soil. Then we planted native prairie flowers and grasses.

Now this former lawn no longer needs watering from the aquifers; it captures the rainwater, filters it, creates habitat for pollinators, sequesters carbon into the ground, filters ground water, and doesn't need mowing!

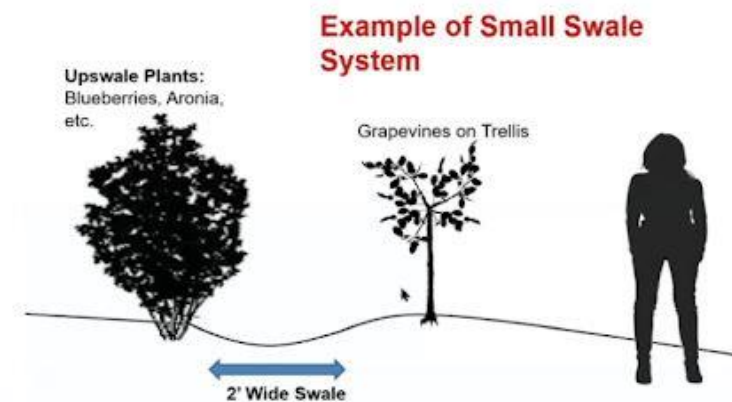
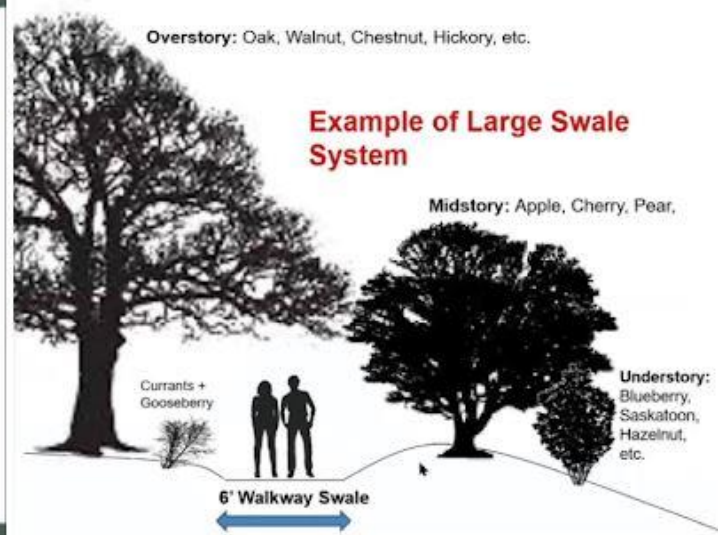
In summary, native prairie plants help combat climate change and decrease our carbon footprint in the following ways:

- The deep roots sequester carbon into the ground
- They also combat compaction of the ground and act like a sponge to soak up rainfall and prevent runoff
- The roots filter contaminants before water reaches streams, oceans, or aquifers

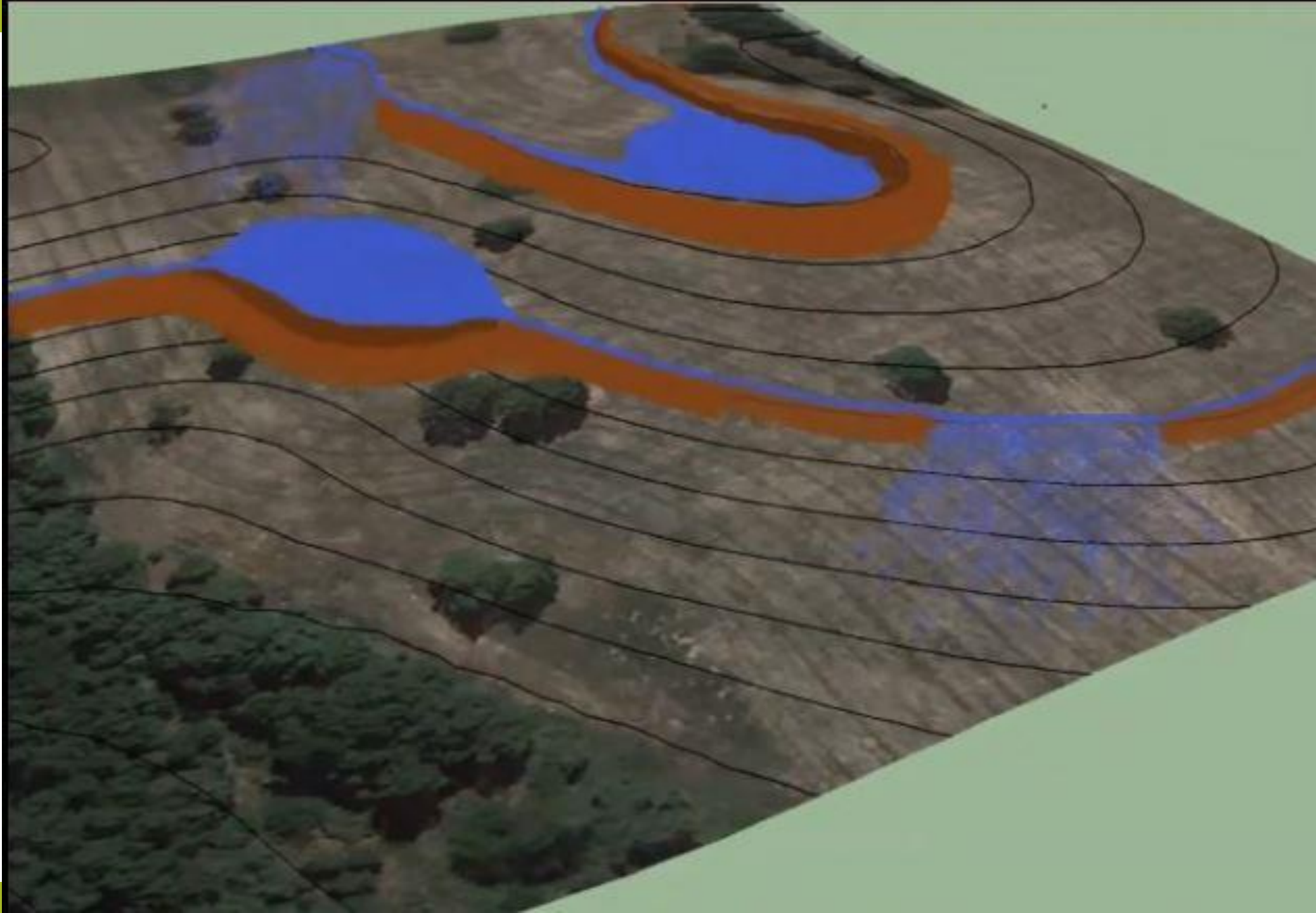
*Deborah Majerus is the owner of Iron Butterfly Farm and Lodging in Rochester, Minnesota, an urban flower farm that uses sustainable and regenerative practices, grows a permaculture mini food forest, peonies, woody ornamental shrubs, early spring bulbs, and annuals.*

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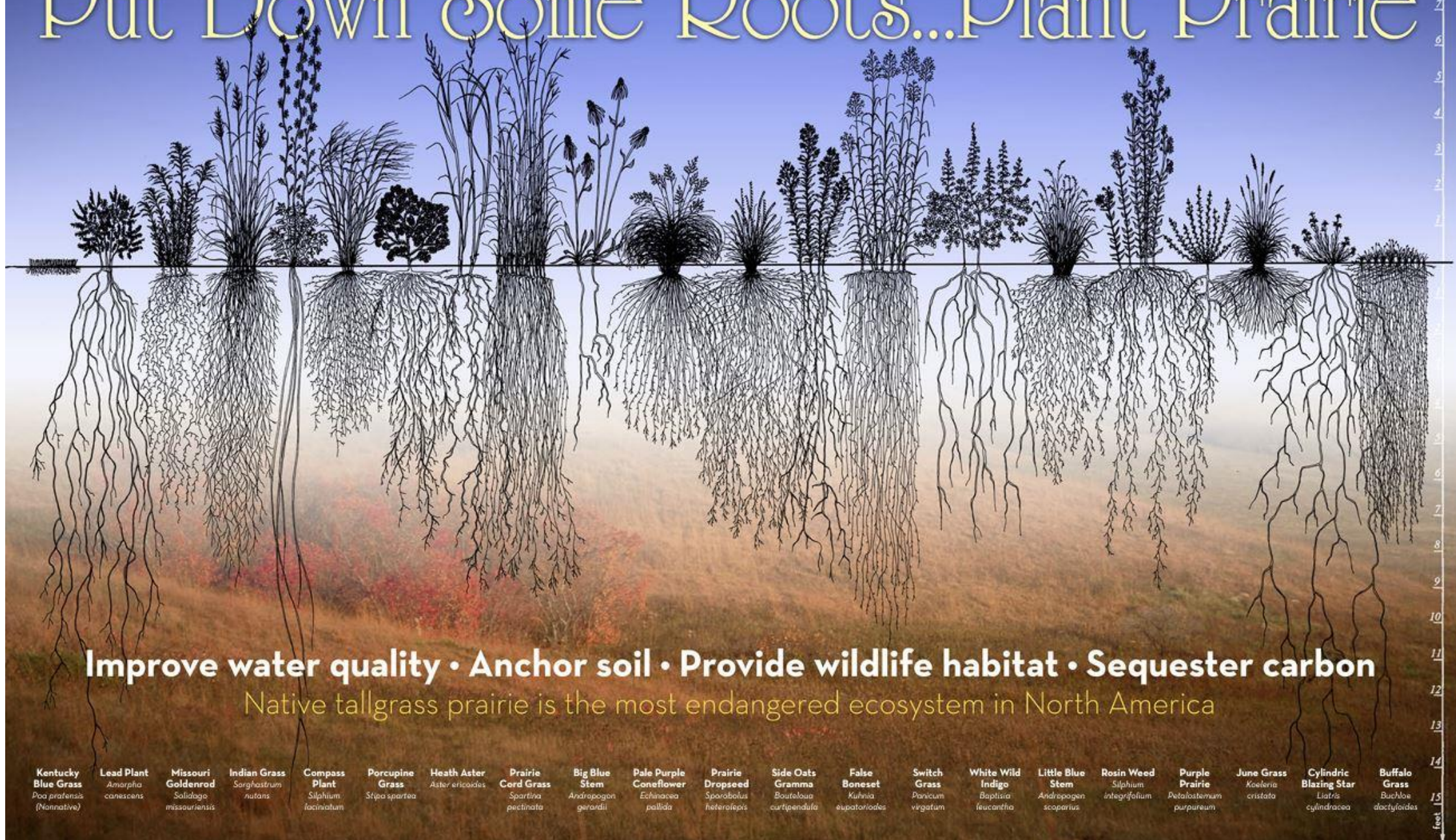








# Put Down Some Roots...Plant Prairie



**Improve water quality • Anchor soil • Provide wildlife habitat • Sequester carbon**

Native tallgrass prairie is the most endangered ecosystem in North America

**Kentucky Blue Grass**  
*Poa pratensis*  
(Nonnative)

**Lead Plant**  
*Amorpha canescens*

**Missouri Goldenrod**  
*Solidago missouriensis*

**Indian Grass**  
*Sorghastrum nutans*

**Compass Plant**  
*Silphium laciniatum*

**Porcupine Grass**  
*Stipa spartea*

**Heath Aster**  
*Aster ericoides*

**Prairie Cord Grass**  
*Spartina pectinata*

**Big Blue Stem**  
*Andropogon gerardii*

**Pale Purple Coneflower**  
*Echinacea pallida*

**Prairie Dropseed**  
*Sporobolus heterolepis*

**Side Oats Gramma**  
*Bouteloua curtipendula*

**False Boneset**  
*Kuhnia eupatorioides*

**Switch Grass**  
*Panicum virgatum*

**White Wild Indigo**  
*Baptisia leucantha*

**Little Blue Stem**  
*Andropogon scoparius*

**Rosin Weed**  
*Silphium integrifolium*

**Purple Prairie**  
*Petalostemum purpureum*

**June Grass**  
*Koeleria cristata*

**Cylindric Blazing Star**  
*Liatris cylindracea*

**Buffalo Grass**  
*Buchloe dactyloides*

















WILD HEART FARM

# THE WILD EDGE

Growing & Designing with  
Native Flora





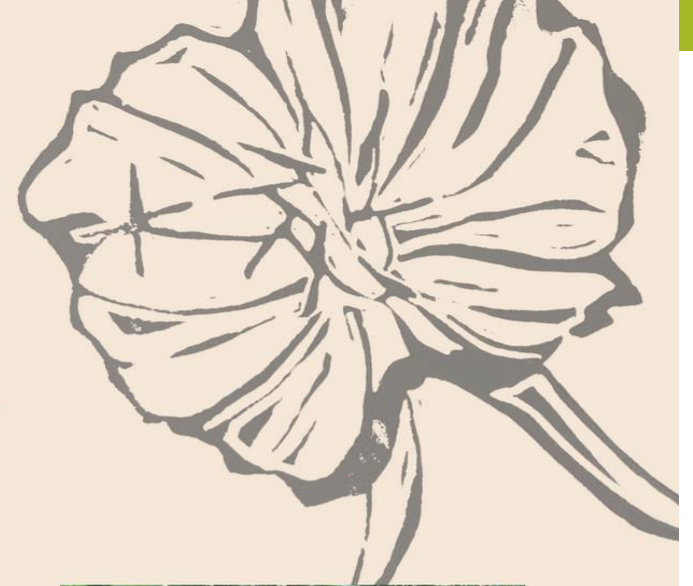
# About Wild Heart Farm

FARMER - FLORIST -  
FORAGER

Regenerative approach to farming & floristry



# Why Grow Natives?



DROUGHT  
RESISTANT



CREATE  
HABITAT



LOCALLY  
ADAPTED



## UNIQUE LOOKS

Using native elements at many stages of growth (flower, branch, pod/seed, dried) set your designs apart

## ECOLOGICAL STYLE

Using native elements creates a sense of place, helps customers appreciate where they are, stimulates curiosity

## REGENERATIVE FLORISTRY

Native flora reduces the impact of floristry; require less resources to grow, are local, support habitat for native species.

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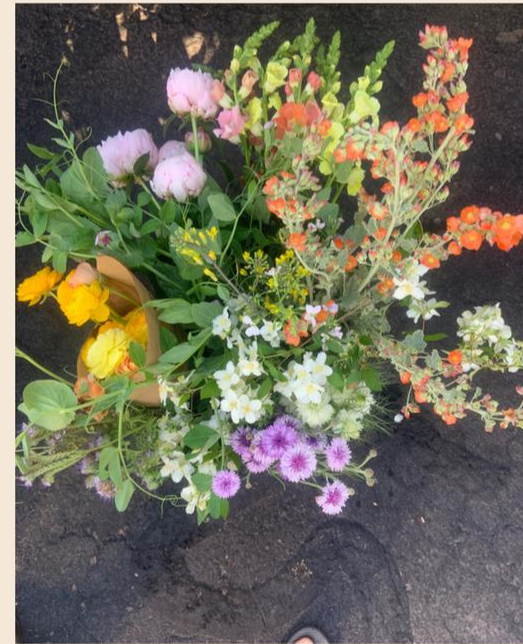
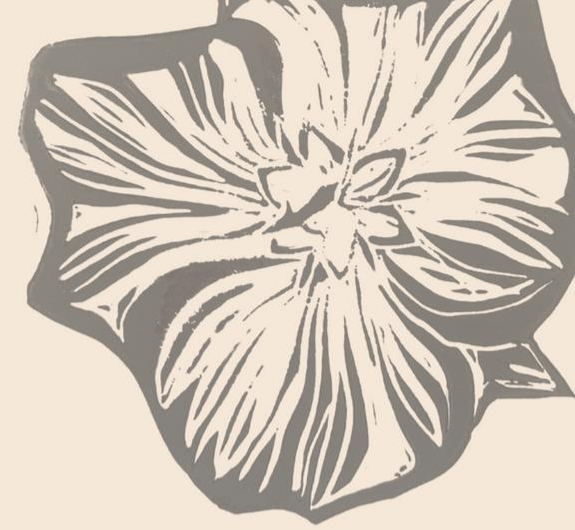


Why  
Design  
with  
Natives?



# Native Florals

INFLUENCING THE INDUSTRY





# Wild Elements

PLANTS IN DIFFERENT STAGES



Fluffy seed heads



Greenery & seeds



Pods





## FLORAL EDUCATION

Introducing alternatives to  
invasive & non-natives - esp.  
grasses



Needle & thread



Sacaton





# Growing Public Demand

FOR SUSTAINABLE & LOCAL

Customers looking for rustic, natural and  
bohemian aesthetics for weddings & events





# Flower Collectives

GROWING - SELLING - INFLUENCING

Uniquely poised to test and distribute to the public

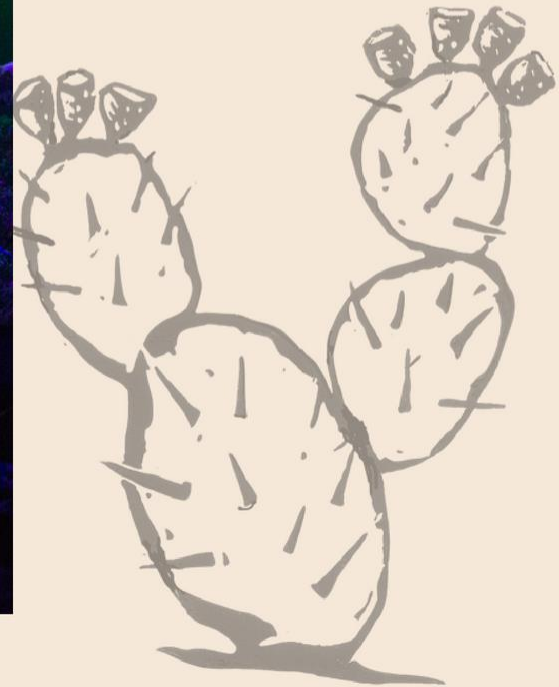




# Potent Possibilities

## FLOWER STORYTELLING

Blooming from the Ashes - Forest fire, pole dancing, poetry and flowers





# THANK YOU!

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