**Recommended Native Plants for Sunny areas**

Developed by Rosemary Eiden, Wild Ones Mentor, 1/8/15

1. **Aster novae-angliae New England Aster**

New England Aster's rich color highlights the late season landscape with magnificent blooms ranging in color from blue-purple to lavender-pink, with yellow-orange centers. Large and showy this aster can grow up to six feet high. Like most asters it blooms late in the season and provides a critical fall nectar source for pollinators, especially Monarchs as they stock up for their fall migration to Mexico.

1. **Asclepias tuberosa Butterflyweed**

A highly popular groundcover, Wild Ginger's large heart-shaped leaves can be 6" in diameter, and its sturdy rootstocks create a dense network that creeps to cover woodland slopes. Once established, a cover of Wild Ginger can fend off Garlic Mustard and other invasive in the woodland environment. As a woodland native this deer resistant plant enjoys shade and tolerates a variety of soil types. An attractive dark red flower, usually hidden from view by the foliage, blooms in early spring and fades fairly quickly. The long-lasting and bright orange flowers along with its low mounded profile make this the most popular of milkweeds. True to its name Butterflyweed attracts legions of butterflies and is an important host plant for the caterpillars of Monarch, Grey Hairstreak, and Queen butterflies.

A favorite prairie plant for all types of gardens, mature plants in an ideal location can become gorgeous specimens, with multiple flowering stems spreading across a 2' high plant. Older mature plants have a deep tap root that extends down a foot or more. They can be transplanted if dug carefully during dormancy. This rugged species will thrive in sunny locations in dry sandy soil to well-drained loam.

**3. Coreopsis palmata Stiff coreopsis**

The highly popular Stiff Coreopsis sports bright yellow flowers during the dog days of mid-summer. The underground rhizomes spread and form a dense mat, making it excellent for stabilizing dry, sunny slopes and even sand dunes! A perfect match for the most difficult dry soils. Other common names include Tickseed, Prairie Coreopsis and Stiff Tickseed.

1. **Dalea purpurea Purple prairie clover**

This member of the legume family has it all: gorgeous purple flowers with golden flecks, and elegant foliage on multiple upright stems all combine to give it great garden form. Plus, this plant is not all that particular about soil type. Loam, clay, sand, or gravel – it is easily grown in any sunny location with average to dry soils. The deep taproot supports a long-lived plant that is virtually impervious to heat and drought.

This popular native is excellent in a variety of plantings including rock gardens, sunny perennial borders, native plant gardens or naturalized prairie areas. A pollinator favorite, Purple Prairie Clover is a host plant for Dogface Butterfly larvae and provides nectar to many species of butterflies, bees and other pollinating insects.

**5. Echinacea purpurea Purple coneflower**

Attract butterflies, songbirds, and hummingbirds to your garden with Purple Coneflower! Blooms profusely for up to two months in mid to late summer. Perfect for small gardens and large prairie meadows, Echinacea purpurea thrives in fertile soil in full sun to part shade.

1. **Eupatorium maculatum Sweet joe pye weed**

Perfect for Shady Butterfly Gardens - The large pink flowers of the Sweet Joe Pye are much sought after by Monarchs, Swallowtails and many other butterflies. The highly textured leaves look great all summer long. Eupatorium purpureum thrives in semi-shaded woodlands, woodland edges, and in full sun. Makes an excellent garden and border plant.

1. **Liatris aspera Rough blazingstar**

The Liatris genus has its share of "pollinator magnets" for the garden, and there's one that thrives in just about any soil type. The very popular Liatris aspera is perfect for medium to dry, well-drained soils. Usually reaching 2–3 feet high and occasionally higher, it is shorter than other Blazingstars but no less remarkable. Prized for its luxuriant flower stalks this seemingly modest plant is covered with tufted lavender blooms in late summer. The button-like flowers are attractive to butterflies – Swallowtails, Monarch, Sulphurs, Hairstreaks, Fritillaries, Painted Lady, Red Admiral – depending on what butterflies are in your area, they're likely to visit this plant along with hummingbirds and other pollinators.

1. **Monarda fistolosa Bergamont**

The intricate lavender flowers of Bergamot attract a plethora of butterflies, and the strong stems are sometimes used by Indigo Buntings to build their nests. The fresh leaves can be used to brew a tasty, minty tea, and the seedheads are excellent in dried arrangements.

1. **Penstemon digitalis Smooth penstemon**

Smooth Penstemon is one of the few Penstemons that thrives in clay! The pure white flowers bloom for a month or longer, and look great with the blue flowers of Ohio and Western Spiderworts. Grows in full sun to light shade, and tolerates seasonally damp conditions.

1. **Phlox pilosa Downy phlox**

The bright pink flowers of Phlox pilosa really light up the spring wildflower garden! A favorite nectar source of hummingbirds, it makes a great addition to hummingbird gardens. Downy Phlox is also known as Prairie Phlox - it grows in well-drained sand to slightly damp loam.

1. **Rudbeckia hirta Black eyed susan**

Black Eyed Susan is a hallmark of prairies and meadows with an extravagant floral display! A biennial, it is easy to grow from seed. Transplants bloom the year they are planted, and will self-sow onto open soil. Butterflies are frequent visitors to this bright sunny wildflower!

1. **Solidago regida Stiff goldenrod**

A Monarch Favorite, Stiff Goldenrod is a widely adaptable and thrives in even the most inhospitable soils, from clay to dry sand. The stems serve as perches for songbirds, and the seeds are an important late season bird food. The dried heads are lovely in arrangements.

1. **Tradescantia ohioensis Ohio spiderwort**

The delightful deep blue flowers of Ohio Spiderwort bloom for an extended period in late spring and early summer. Tradescantia ohioensis can be planted with Smooth Penstemon for a fantastic color combination. Spiderworts go dormant in summer, so plant them with other later-blooming prairie flowers and grasses.

1. **Vernonia fasciculata Ironweed**

The flowers of Ironweed are like crimson torches in the late summer prairie. Named for its tough stem, Ironweed has excellent posture and never slouches in the garden. A favorite for adding late season color to the landscape, Vernonia fasciculata is one of only a few red prairie flowers.

**Grasses**

1. **Buteloa curtipendula Side oats gramma**

The bright purple and orange flowers of this short grass make it among the most attractive of all grasses. Sideoats Grama is equally appealing when in seed, when the small oat-like seeds are suspended on one side of the stalk. Very effective when planted with other short prairie grasses and flowers in a meadow landscape. Sideoats Grama is a larval host plant for the Green Skipper & Dotted Skipper butterflies.

**2. Panicum virgatum Switchgrass**

Excellent for winter wildlife, Switchgrass is the best native grass for creating dense cover for wildlife habitat. Its stiff stems stand up over winter better than all other grasses. At home on almost any soil, it will grow three to six feet tall in your driest sand or most horrendous clay!

**3. Schizachyrium scoparium Little bluestem**

Incomparable Fall Color! The blue-green foliage provides a great backdrop for prairie flowers in summer, and then turns a striking crimson in fall. A patch of Little Bluestem waving in the wind is truly a wondrous sight, resembling ocean waves. A clump former, it combines nicely with prairie flowers. Excels in dry sandy soils. Not recommended for heavy clay or damp soils.

**4. Sporobolus heterolepsis Prairie dropseed**

The showiest prairie grass for gardens, Prairie Dropseed's magnificent fountain of fine textured, emerald-green leaves adds a touch of elegance to any planting. Considered by many to be the most handsome of the prairie grasses, it makes a well-defined and distinctive border when planted 18 to 24 inches apart. Plains Indians ground the seed to make a tasty flour. Plant seed in fall or early spring for best results.

**Shrubs**

**1. Baptisia australis Blue false indigo**

Rising 3–5 feet from woody stems, Blue False Indigo forms a bush at maturity. Dense clusters of deep blue flowers surround this robust perennial on upright, 4–16 inch long spikes. In its first few years this long-lived plant develops mostly below ground. And while it may not flower for the first few seasons, the spring blossoms get showier and more developed as the plant matures. The attractive bluish-green foliage provides a good backdrop to other flowering plants later in summer. Its seed pods are also very attractive.

**2. Ceanothus americanus New Jersey tea**

New Jersey Tea plant is excellent for attracting hummingbirds. The luxuriant glossy leaves and bright white flowers make this  durable shrub a real winner. Plant two to three feet apart to create a low growing, drought tolerant native hedge. Ceanothus americanus is visited by hummingbirds, which eat the tiny insects that pollinate the flowers.

**3. Rosa setigera Climbing prairie rose**

Climbing Prairie Rose has fragrant deep pink flowers 2 inches in diameter. Clustered blooms arrive in early to mid-summer, fading to white in late summer. Rosa setigera is thornless, though it does bear scattered prickles. Birds relish the showy red fruit that forms late summer into autumn. This great native vine tolerates a wide range of soils and is a versatile garden addition.

