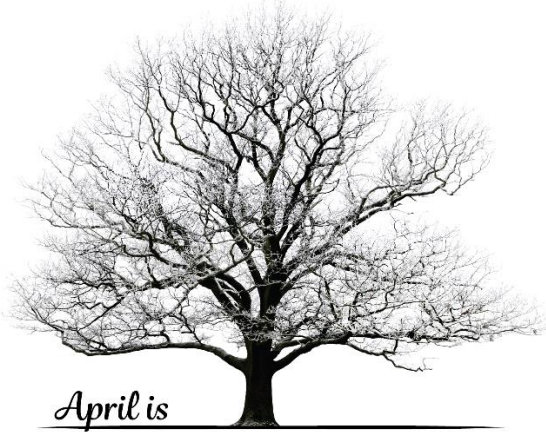


Colchester is certified as a **Community Wildlife Habitat** through the National Wildlife Federation since 2010; the first community in CT with this certification



April is

**NATIONAL NATIVE
PLANT MONTH**

April is designated as National Native Plant Month. It is a time to celebrate and advocate for the vital role native plants play in supporting biodiversity, pollinators, and healthy ecosystems.

Native plants are essential for resilient ecosystems and our natural heritage, supporting pollinators, wildlife, and healthy habitats.

A native plant is defined as one that has evolved over thousands of years in a specific geographic region, alongside local flora and fauna, without human intervention.

The Benefits of Native Plants:

- They are adapted to local conditions, making them hardier and less prone to pests and diseases.
- They support local wildlife and pollinators.
- They improve soil health and reduce erosion.
- They can save time and money by reducing the need for weeding, mowing, and pesticides.

Why are Native Plants so Important?



**Because Native Plants Provide Food and Shelter
for Native Wildlife**

Read more at <https://nationalnativeplantmonth.org/why-native-plants-are-important>

Connecticut has also proclaimed April as Native Plant Month



By His Excellency Ned Lamont, Governor: an **Official Statement**

WHEREAS, native plants are indigenous species that have evolved alongside native wildlife and occur naturally in a particular geographic region, ecosystem, and habitat; and

WHEREAS, native plants are essential for healthy, diverse, and sustainable ecosystems and are critical for cleaning air, filtering water, and stabilizing soils; and

WHEREAS, native plants are well-adapted to Connecticut's soils, temperatures, precipitation, and environmental conditions, making them the best option for conserving and protecting our environment, and adapting to its changes; and

WHEREAS, native plants provide food including nectar, pollen, seeds, and foliage for native birds, caterpillars, butterflies, bees, and other wildlife in ways that non-native plants cannot; and

WHEREAS, Connecticut is home to more than 2,427 native plant species which include large shade trees, shrubs, perennials, vines, grasses, and wildflowers; and

WHEREAS, some of Connecticut's rarest plants are federally listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973; and many native plants are protected under the Connecticut Endangered Species Act of 1989, including American Bittersweet, Yellow Lady's Slipper, Showy Aster, Creeping Snowberry, Goldenseal, White Milkweed, Prairie Goldenrod, and Eastern Prickly Pear; and

WHEREAS, it is important to encourage public awareness about the benefits of Connecticut's native plants to pollinators and other wildlife, to the economy, and to the health and sustainability of Connecticut's fragile ecosystems; now

THEREFORE, I, Ned Lamont, Governor of the State of Connecticut – in recognition of the importance of native plants to Connecticut's rich biological heritage, and as a source of food for pollinators and native wildlife – do hereby officially proclaim the month of April 2023, to be

CONNECTICUT NATIVE PLANT MONTH

in the State of Connecticut.



Ned Lamont

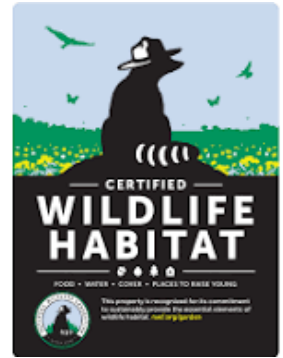
GOVERNOR



Do you care about Wildlife locally to help Colchester remain certified as a Community Wildlife Habitat by certifying your own property through the National Wildlife Federation?

Cost: \$25 application fee complete online application
<https://www.nwf.org/certifiedwildlifehabitat>

Components of a Wildlife Habitat:
Food, Water, Cover, Place to Raise Young,
Sustainable Practices



Benefits to NWF Wildlife Habitat Certification

When you certify you will become a member of the National Wildlife Federation's Garden for Wildlife™ community and receive the following benefits:

- Personalized certificate
- A one-year membership in the National Wildlife Federation and subscription to National Wildlife® magazine
- 10% off the National Wildlife Federation catalog merchandise, including nesting boxes, feeders, birdbaths, and other items to enhance your wildlife garden
- Subscription to monthly Garden for Wildlife e-newsletter with gardening tips, wildlife stories, and other resources
- Exclusive option to purchase attractive garden signs designating your garden as a Certified Wildlife Habitat® with the National Wildlife Federation

Learn About Native Keystone Plants for Wildlife Featuring Doug Tallamy

Keystone plants are natives essential to our ecosystems because they support 90% of the caterpillar species that enable our terrestrial birds to reproduce, as well as, all of our specialist native bee species. YouTube video (1:16:18 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5cXccWx030>

Native Plant Resources for You

- Use the Native Plant Finder offered by the National Wildlife Federation to make wise choices when adding more natives to your garden and landscape. Enter your zip code at <https://www.nwf.org/NativePlantFinder> to discover the best native plants, attract butterflies and moths, and support birds and other fauna is an indispensable tool, based on the research of Dr. Douglas Tallamy, University of Delaware and in partnership with the United States Forest Service.
- American Beauties Native Plants® is dedicated to promoting native plants that perform in the home landscape but also bring life to the garden by supporting wildlife and pollinators. <https://abnativeplants.com/>
- Bring more birds to your yard with native plants selected from the Audubon Native Plant Database: <https://www.audubon.org/native-plants>
- Read about featured native plants at Mt Cuba Native Plant Finder <https://mtcubacenter.org/nativeplant-finder/> then scroll down
- Alternative Plant Resources (UConn) <https://cipwg.uconn.edu/wpcontent/uploads/sites/244/2016/01/Alternative-Resources-handout-2015.pdf>

For Parents:



GREENHOUR™
Powered by L.L.Bean

Encourage your children to spend time outdoors in nature every day; the National Wildlife Federation's Green Hour has an abundance of activity suggestions at <https://thegreenhour.org/>



Help children learn, play, grow through gardening.

See activities at <https://kidsgardening.org/>

Visit Cohen Woodlands and Colchester's StoryWalk

Ruby and Elizabeth Cohen Woodlands is a 206 acre open space park with so much to offer to view and get close to nature and wildlife – two ponds, large fields, three hiking trails, picnic tables and demonstration gardens developed and maintained by members of the Colchester Garden Club with plants supporting pollinators through the seasons. For a map of the park and brochure about the pollinator garden: <https://www.colchesterct.gov/parks-facilities/pages/ruby-and-elizabeth-cohen-woodlands>.

To learn more about the ColchesterStory Walk, see brochure: <https://www.colchesterct.gov/parks-facilities/files/storywalk-brochure>