

Alternative native species for planting in NJ:

- **Asclepias incarnata- Swamp Milkweed, Pink Milkweed**- This milkweed is native to most of the USA and eastern Canada with the exception being the west coast. It is a nice addition to a butterfly garden and is also attractive to many species of butterflies as a nectar plant. Swamp milkweed is **not invasive** as some other milkweeds are and behaves well in the garden. Likes moist soil/wetlands
 - Or [Asclepias tuberosa](#)- butterfly WEED (not butterfly Bush)- has a taproot, will do well in dry soils and will spread by self-seeding. It is not the favorite of Monarchs although swallowtails, bees and hummingbirds.
 - Do NOT plant common Milkweed- *A. syriaca* in your formal garden. (spreads by rhizomes and is difficult to control, creeping everywhere.
 - Whorled Milkweed- *A. verticillata* is a good choice for dry areas. It may not do as well in a manicured garden as it also spreads through underground rhizomes however it is not as invasive as common milkweed.

Monarda- Bee Balms

- *M. punctata*- horsemint, spotted bee balm. Native to NJ available from Pinelands Preservation Alliance. Good plant for barrier islands, coastal plains. Attracts pollinators. Grows in dry soil; flowers June, July.
 - *M. fistulosa*- wild bergamot. Wild Bergamot is a highly adaptable, wildlife-friendly perennial. Its showy, tubular, white, pink, or purple flowers form round, wispy clusters atop tall stems, July through September. The foliage is fragrant, offering additional interest in the garden. Wild Bergamot is valued by hummingbirds, butterflies, and bees, which benefit from the nectar.
 - *M. didyma*- scarlet bee balm. Flowers June to August.
- **Clethra alnifolia- Summersweet.** *The Morton Arboretum says- "A wide variety of butterflies and songbirds are attracted to summersweet clethra for its nectar and seeds. Native to the eastern United States, it provides exceptional four season interest with its lustrous green leaves in the spring, spiky white or pink fragrant summer flowers, golden yellow autumn leaves, and interesting, delicate dried seed capsules in winter."*
 - **Asters & Goldenrod**- more good news from Jersey-Friendly Yards- *"Forget chrysanthemums --please! Plant our native asters and help the bees, butterflies and other pollinators. Their one issue is aster wilt, which can be fended off by good air circulation, which you have at the always-breezy Shore. Try the hybrid goldenrods, such as 'Fireworks' or 'Crown of Gold,'*

*or go with the species, which grows wild along the coast. Why this works: Many gardens look pretty tired in late summer. This pair will perk things up with a fresh burst of bloom in August and September. Asters offer acid pinks and blues, pairing nicely with the mellow yellows of goldenrod -- which is **not responsible for your fall allergies**. Its pollen requires insects, not wind, for propagation.”*

- **Baccharis halimifolia**
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Pollinators and their importance:

The Monarch butterfly has become the poster child for saving the environment. Their annual migratory journey can encompass 4,000 miles and go through 4 generations of butterflies.

According to The Nature Conservancy- “Declining monarch populations across North America could be a sign that other elements of their habitats, such as wildflowers or other pollinators, might be fading too. We need to protect the balance and biodiversity of our natural ecosystems for humans and nature to thrive together.

The disappearance of large areas of native plant habitats is a major contributor to the decline of pollinator populations worldwide. Another major factor is climate change. For monarchs, if temperatures get too warm during spring, they might migrate farther north than before. Then when winter comes, the longer trip to overwintering sites in Mexico could overtax them and decrease their reproduction.

Changes in the monarchs’ migration patterns impact diverse ecosystems across the continent, and ultimately affect our human food systems, too. Although butterflies are among the more noticeable—and charming—pollinators when they visit a garden or field, bees, hummingbirds, moths, and bats also play an important role pollinating many food crops, as well as 75% of the world’s flowering plants”.

There are many helpful websites to guide you on your way to choosing the right native plantings for your garden. Check out these selections:

- **Ocean County Soil Conservation District** offers for download the following brochure, published by the Barnegat Bay Partnership- [“Going Native: A Guide to Natural Landscaping with Native Plants in the Barnegat Bay Watershed”](#). It offers tips, suggestions, and easy to use plans for creating a natural landscape for your yard. ○ Numerous links and resources
- **Native Plant Society of NJ**

- Comprehensive list of [NJ Nurseries with native plants](#) • [Jersey Friendly Yards](#)

- Native Plant lists
- NJ invasive plant lists
- Landscaping in the Pinelands

- **Native Plant Gardens at Jakes Branch County Park**

- Includes the 5 different types of native plant gardens designed and installed by The American Littoral Society”.
- Jersey Friendly Plant Database- for your region- complete with photos • **Pinelands Preservation Alliance**
 - Spring and Fall native plant sales with hard-to-find varieties • **Rutgers Water Resources Page**
 - Backyard stormwater management
- Rain garden manuals and