



CRWC

CLINTON RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL



NATIVE PLANTS AND WATER QUALITY

When rain falls and snow melts, the runoff produced picks up a variety of contaminants such as oil, metals, salts, pet waste, fertilizer, and grass clippings as it flows over roofs, roadways, sidewalks and lawns.

Stormwater runoff ultimately flows into storm drains.

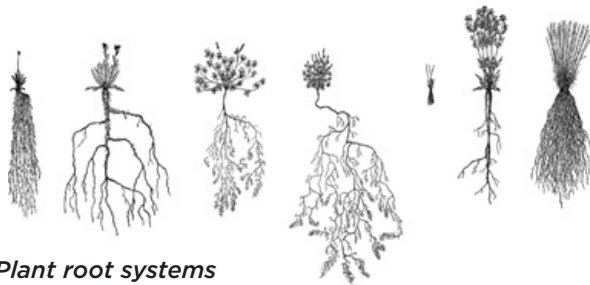
Remember: storm drains lead directly to our local rivers and streams.

WHAT IS A NATIVE PLANT?

- Found in nature
- In a given region
- Have evolved in their region over a long period of time, without human help
- Not brought to an area by people
- Grows unaided in its habitat



Butterfly milkweed, a plant native to southeast Michigan, with a monarch butterfly.



Plant root systems

HOW DO NATIVE PLANTS IMPROVE WATER QUALITY?

- Absorb stormwater
- Deep roots prevent soil erosion
- Filter stormwater pollutants, such as excess nutrients, heavy metals and chemicals

WHY SHOULD WE PLANT NATIVES?

Native pollinators, insects and animals have evolved over time with native plants. This has created healthy relationships within the ecosystem. Native plants can provide food and shelter to local wildlife, and wildlife can help spread native plants.

They are low maintenance and earth friendly to grow. Once established, native plants do not need fertilizer, pesticides, or excessive watering. This is because they are adapted to local soils and climate.

Shoreline protection using native plants is called a “riparian buffer. This is a planted strip along a shoreline, stream, or riverbank. This keeps the shoreline from washing away, provides habitat, and filters pollutants out before they enter the water.



Riparian buffer at Depot Park in Clarkston, MI.

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