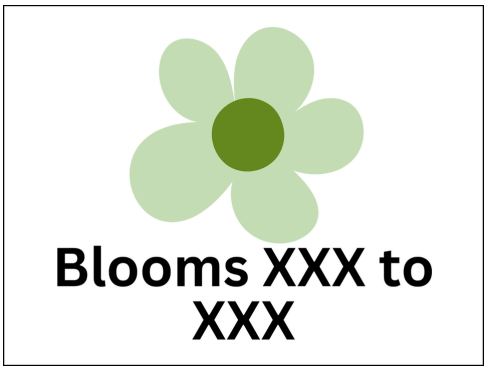
Plant Profile Key

This plant is a "true native," meaning that according to records, it existed on Cape Cod before colonization - it has been here for a very, very long time and it has evolved along with our local insects and wildlife. If you're a purist, then you need to stick with these. This information came from Go Botany.

This plant is a near-native and not a "true native." That may mean it is native to Massachusetts, New England, or Ecoregion 84 (Atlantic Coastal Pine Barrens). I've chosen to add some of these plants to my wildlife habitat because of the benefits they provide to pollinators and other wildlife. Some of these have been recommended by Xerces, Gegear Lab, and CapeCodNativePlants.org.



Shows the typical color of the flower (or foliage if it isn't a flowering plant, like a grass), and the average blooming months.

This plant provides pollen for bees with specialized pollen needs, or in the case of bees in the Macropis genus, specialized oil needs (yes, those bees collect oils, not pollen... how cool is that?). According to UMASS Amherst Extension, Massachusetts is home to 81 documented specialist bee species.

This plant is considered a keystone species, a native plant that supports a disproportionately large number of species. Keystone species provide essential food for insects like caterpillars, which are critical for the reproduction of many animals, especially birds. The number shows how many insect species the plant supports. This information comes from the National Wildlife Federation.

Pollinator Magnet

This plant attracts a large number of pollinators like bees and butterflies, usually because they make copious amounts of nectar.

Caterpillar/Moth Host Plant

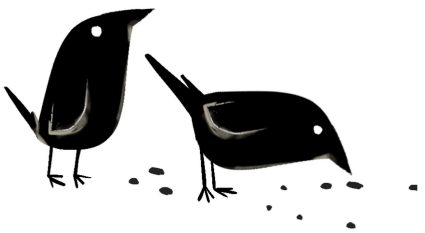
This plant serves as a host for month and butterfly species, meaning that female moths and/or butterflies can use their plant as a nesting site - they lay their eggs on the plant and when the caterpillars emerge, they feed on parts of the plant to grow. The poster child for this relationship is the Monarch Butterfly who can only use Milkweeds as a host plant. This information comes from Xerces.

Provides Nest Site/ Nest Materials

This plant serves a nest site or provides nesting materials for some native bees. This information comes from Xerces.

Hummingbird Favorite

This plant provides nectar and may attract hummingbirds. They are also often red or reddish, which is a color that hummingbirds, with their awesome eyes, can see from very far away.



Provides Bird Seeds/Fruit

This plant provides seeds and/or fruit that may attract birds.

Container Friendly

This plant can be grown in a container, provided their growing conditions are met.

Preferred by imperiled native bees and butterflies

This plant is on the Gegear Lab at UMASS Dartmouth Plant List to help native bees and butterflies at risk - species that have shown a significant decline in abundance over the past few decades.

Recommended by Xerces Society

This plant is on Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation's Plant List for Pollinators and Beneficial Insects.

Rabbit Resistant

This symbol means this plant "should not" be eaten by rabbits. These plants are usually very aromatic. Examples are the Pycnanthemums (Mountain Mints), Monardas (Bee Balms), and Solidago odora (Sweet Goldenrod). I have also noted on the plant profile if a plant might get nibbled when small (young leaves are the tastiest!) , sometimes nibbled (depending on what else is around), or always nibbled (in which case you need to cage or plant lots of them so grazing won't decimate your stock!)

Deer Resistant

This plant is not one that deer find appealing OR it may recover just fine if grazed.

Drought Tolerant

This plant can withstand drought conditions WHEN ESTABLISHED. Thus, please note that seedlings, young plants, and plants that are not established (newly planted) need to build up to being "drought tolerant," so they will require watering at the beginning. This is especially important if you put them in the ground in the late spring/early summer, or anytime during the summer.

Salt Tolerant

This plant can survive and thrive in soil or water with high salinity. Perfect for the Cape!

And lastly, I used asterisks to indicate when a plant prefers specific conditions to thrive. In the example below, this perennial could grow just about anywhere but would be happiest in a dry and sunny location!