

## RAINY RAMBLES



# GARDENING WITH NATIVE PLANTS

Photos by Rebecca Lexa

**TOP:** Native plants can be grown in containers, like these rushes, just waiting for a bed to be prepared for them. **LEFT:** Remove grass and weeds in preparation for a native planting bed using layered cardboard, placed for six to eight weeks.

## Support local ecosystems by considering history, interactions

BY REBECCA LEXA

Incorporating native plants in local gardens is one of the best ways to reverse ecological damage done by invasive plant species. Native plant gardens also have the added benefit of improving local ecosystems overall.

With the arrival of spring, many are gardening, and it's a good time to think about working with native plants. A native plant is one that has evolved in a given location for

thousands, even millions of years alongside a plethora of other animals, plants and fungi in a complex, interrelated system. While ecologists have been finding more ways than ever that native species rely on each other, it's likely humans may never fully understand just how tightly interwoven all the beings in an ecosystem are, or just how devastating the loss of even one native species can be to the whole.

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