

5 Benefits of Native Plants

1. Native plants provide us with natural beauty.
2. Native plants provide critical habitat for wildlife.
3. Native plants are drought tolerant and increase soil capacity to store water.
4. Native plants can save money, time and need for inputs.
5. Native plants provide us with a sense of place.

Native plants provide us with a sense of place that should be appreciated and celebrated in our gardens and landscapes. Lady Bird Johnson noticed how the pallet of native plants, especially wildflowers changed as she traveled throughout the country with her husband and our 36th President, Lyndon B. Johnson. Her work and appreciation for nature and native plants led to the passage of over 200 environmental bills in the 1960's as well as the establishment of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin, Texas. This center continues to be a national leader in research, education and landscape sustainability.

Over 20 years ago I had the privilege of meeting Lady Bird Johnson, while traveling with MWF's founder, Elin Doehne to visit the Center. Elin was invited to present at the Wildflower Center's conference and I recall Lady Bird Johnson asking me what was my favorite native Michigan wildflower. I chose Lupine for my answer. Let us carry on Lady Bird's efforts to learn about what Michigan native plants would be suitable for our own gardens or landscapes in Michigan and then plant them. Celebrate Michigan's unique flora heritage!