

PREPARE

Choose a location for your garden that receives full or partial shade from either nearby canopy trees or existing structures. Once you choose a suitable location, determine the size of garden based on how much space you are willing to dedicate to the project and your budget. Once you determine the size of the area you are planting, work with a landscape professional/designer or native plant nursery that specializes in native plants to receive an estimate on how many plants should be ordered for your space. If there are existing plants in the space you identified, take an inventory and decide what to retain and what to remove and replace. Pay particular attention to the guidelines for the plants' recommended height and spacing.

Gain inspiration from local woodlands by noting the various vertical layers of plant life and aim to echo these layers in your design by including a mix of native plants in the upper canopy, understory and ground layers. Use the plant list on the back of this page as a guide.



PLANT

Prior to digging holes and removing the plants from their containers, place them in the garden according to your intended design; this will allow you to visualize the layout and adjust plant spacing and location as desired.

We recommend planting the trees and shrubs first. To start, dig holes at least as deep as the container and twice as wide. Remove the plant from the container and loosen the roots, especially if they are tightly bound. Adjust your plant in the hole, adding or removing soil as needed so the root flare/crown (where the roots start to spread from the trunk or stems) is just above ground level. Tamp the soil around the roots as you fill the hole to ensure that the plant is firmly planted.

Once the trees and shrubs are planted, add the herbaceous plants as appropriate. Planting guidelines are similar to trees and shrubs, with a focus on proper hole depth and width, loosened roots and tamped soil around the plant to provide the support it needs to grow. A good dose of water after all plants are in the ground--and regularly thereafter--will help ensure their successful adaptation to their new home.



PRESERVE

Once you have planted your shade garden, it is important to mulch it annually and weed it regularly to give the native plants the best chance to establish successfully. Including a mix of diverse herbaceous plants that will spread and expand will also help to suppress weeds. Following the first 3 +/- years after installation, the garden should require less maintenance. While native plants are best suited to their region and generally require less care and maintenance than many non-native ornamental plants, it will likely be necessary to water plants for the first couple of years, especially during periods of drought or high heat during the height of summer.



RESOURCES

PLACES TO BUY NATIVE PLANTS

**Mostardi Nursery**  
Newtown Square, PA | [www.mostardi.com](http://www.mostardi.com)

**Redbud Native Plant Nursery**  
Media, PA | [www.redbudnativeplantnursery.com](http://www.redbudnativeplantnursery.com)

**Octoraro Native Plant Nursery (wholesale only)**  
Kirkwood, PA | [www.octoraro.com](http://www.octoraro.com)

SHADE GARDEN INSPIRATION

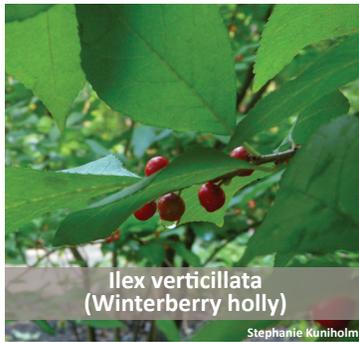
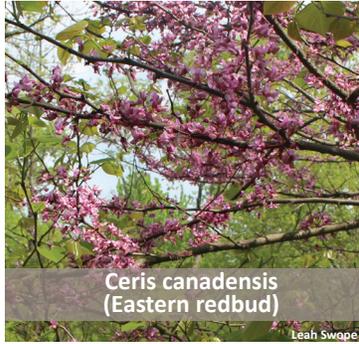
**Willistown Conservation Trust Office** | 925 Providence Road, Newtown Square  
*The shade garden at the Trust's office was designed by GreenWeaver Landscapes and installed by volunteers in 2016. The garden features many of the native plants listed on the Plant List (back cover).*

**Rushton Woods Preserve & Farm** | 911 Delchester Road, Newtown Square  
*The lush woodlands of Rushton Woods Preserve are an excellent space to gather ideas to create your own shade garden. In the spring, native ferns, including Northern maidenhair ferns can be seen along the trails throughout the woodland. Additionally, a woodland restoration project completed in 2017 features a variety of understory trees and shrubs including, eastern redbud, silky dogwood, and winterberry holly.*

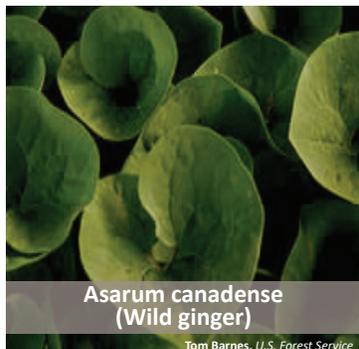
# WCT STAFF FAVORITES PLANT LIST

The plant list below includes a few Trust staff favorites. There are many available options when it comes to selecting native trees and shrubs, perennials, grasses and ferns. This plant list is intended to provide you with a starting point and inspiration as you move forward to create and design a shade garden.

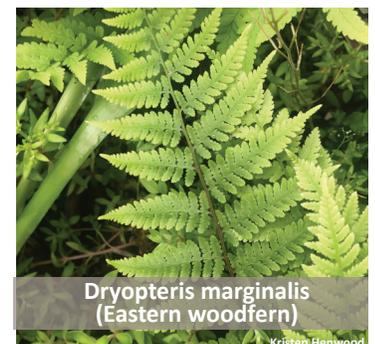
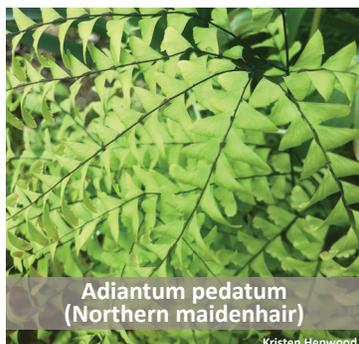
## TREES & SHRUBS



## PERENNIALS



## GRASSES & FERNS



FRONT COVER: KRISTEN HENWOOD