

YARDSCAPING...

FOR A HEALTHY MAINE



Presented by Mary Wicklund

YardScaping Workshop Agenda

- Brief History of the Program
- Why do lawns matter for water quality?
- Steps for safe and healthy lawns
- Non-lawn options
- Questions



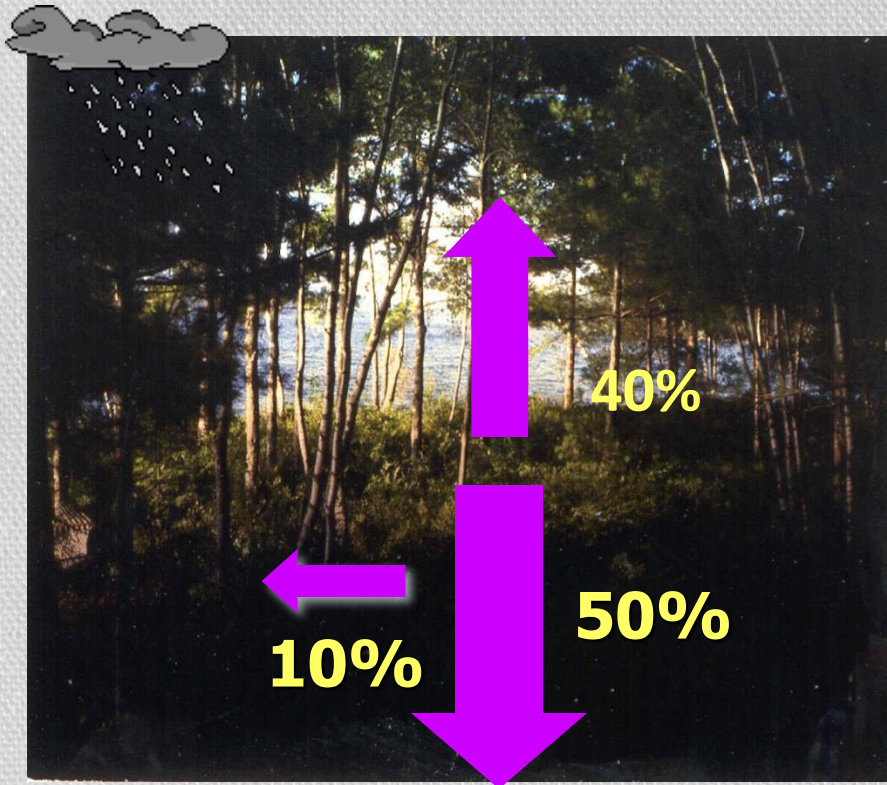
YardScaping

- A new way to think about your yard
- Some call it “Sustainable Landscaping” or “Ecological Landscaping”
- Simple steps we all can take



Runoff Changes with Development

Natural Cover



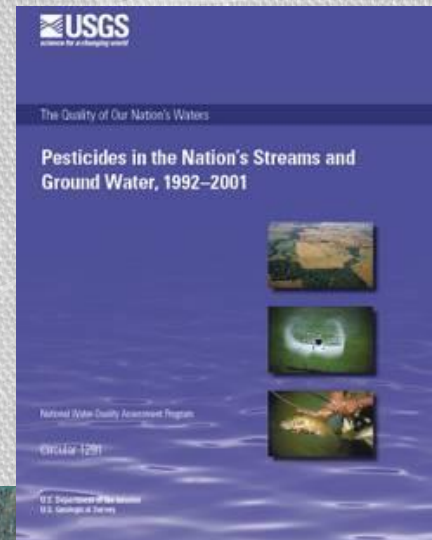
75-100%
Impervious Surface



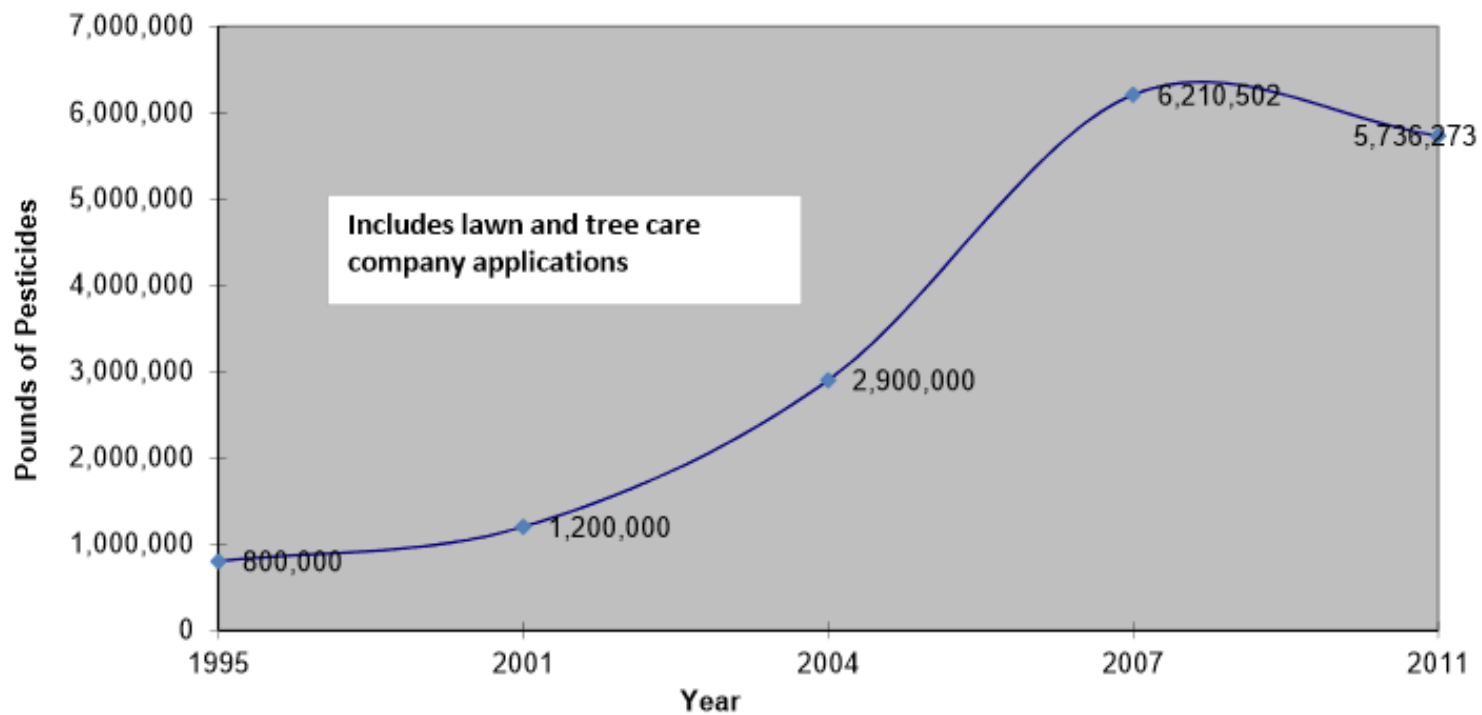
USGS National Water Quality Assessment

Urban streams

- Insecticides occurred more frequently than in agricultural area streams
- Herbicides detected in 99% of samples
- Phosphorous at same levels as in agricultural streams



Pounds of Home Use Pesticides Distributed into Maine



The Maine YardScaping Partnership

- ◆ Allen, Sterling & Lothrop
- ◆ Bar Mills Ecological
- ◆ Carroll Associates, Landscape Architects
- ◆ City of Portland
- ◆ Congress of Lake Associations
- ◆ Edwards & Kelcey
- ◆ Friends of Casco Bay
- ◆ Friends of Scarborough Marsh
- ◆ Kennebunkport Conservation Commission
- ◆ LakeSmart Program
- ◆ Lisa Cowan, Landscape Architecture
- ◆ Maine Board of Pesticides Control
- ◆ Maine Department of Agriculture
- ◆ Maine Department of Environmental Protection
- ◆ Maine Landscape/Nursery Association
- ◆ Maine Organic Farmers & Gardeners Association
- ◆ Maine Society of Landscape Architects
- ◆ Maine Storm Water Groups
- ◆ Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program
- ◆ Natural Resources Conservation Service
- ◆ O'Donal's Nurseries
- ◆ Shaw Brothers Construction
- ◆ Skillin's Greenhouses
- ◆ Soil & Water Conservation Districts
- ◆ Southern Maine Community College
- ◆ State Planning Office
- ◆ Think Blue Maine Program
- ◆ Town of Brunswick
- ◆ University of Maine Cooperative Extension



Includes Towns of Kittery, Eliot, S. Berwick, Berwick and York, Maine (regulated for stormwater runoff)



YardScaping Mission

To inspire Maine people to:

- create and maintain healthy landscapes
- through ecologically based practices that
- minimize reliance on water, fertilizer and pesticides



Proper use of fertilizers and pesticides help protect our waters.

Keep it:

- Off the roads
- Off the sidewalk
- Out of the catch basins



FOLLOW THE FLOW Where does water go?

Not all water that falls on your property soaks into the ground. As water flows off your property, it can wash pollutants such as soil, lawn chemicals and pet waste into where we fish, what we drink and where we swim.

It's up to all of us to protect our local rivers, lakes and bay from polluted runoff.

Learn how at
www.ThinkBlueMaine.org



6 Steps of Common Sense Lawn Care

#1 Mow Better

#2 Let the Clippings Lie

#3 Fertilize?

#4 Got Weeds?

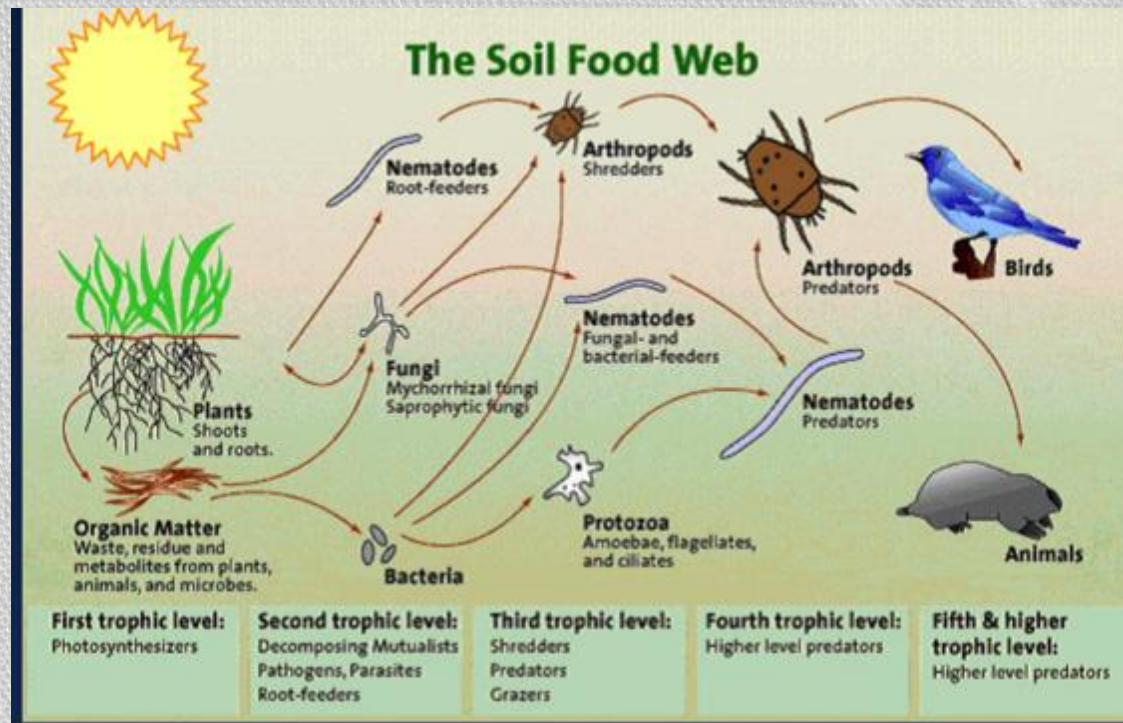
#5 Got Bugs?

#6 Water Wisely



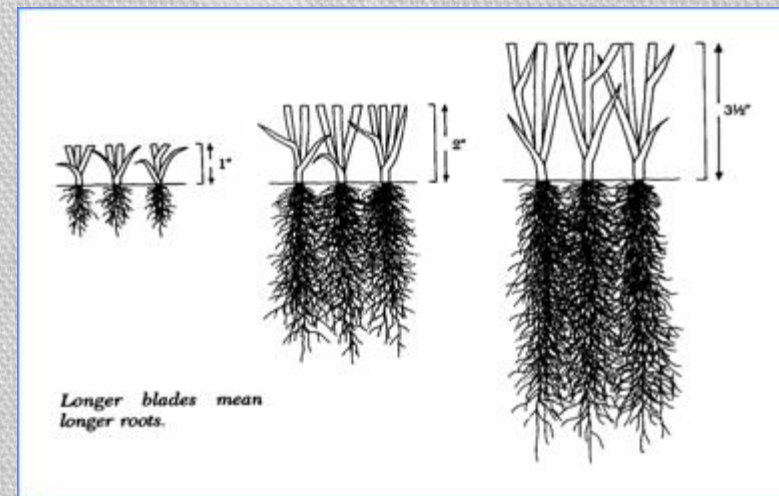
Remember ...

Stress free lawns need much less care –
less fertilizer and less pest control.



Step #1 - Mow Better

- Cut high (3-4 inches)
- Don't remove more than 1/3rd the blade of grass
- Sharp mower blades = clean cut (minimize disease)
- Vary mowing pattern to minimize compaction
- Mow when dry & leave clippings (adds lots of nitrogen)



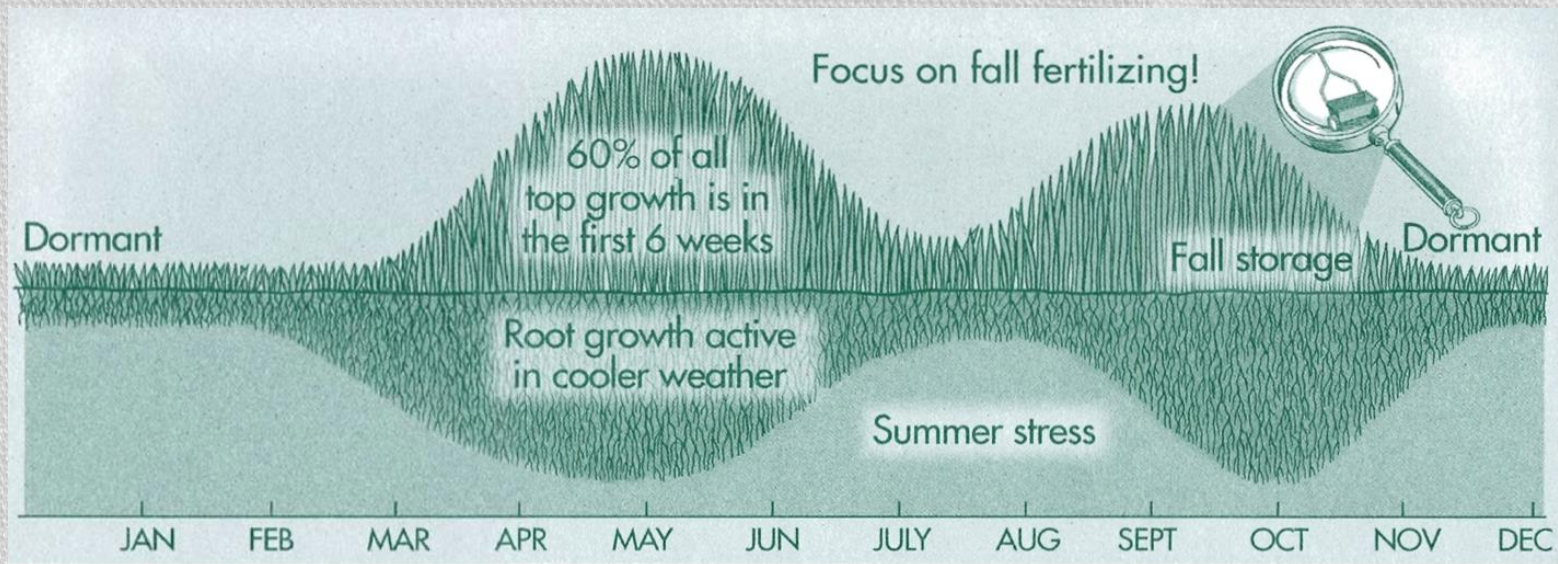
Step #2 – Let the Clippings Lie

- Lawns that are more than 10 years old typically only need clippings



- Lawns that are less than 10 years old may need nitrogen (get a soil test first!)

Step #3 - Fertilize (in the fall... if at all!)



Best to do in fall (early Sept.) when soil temps are warm and grass roots have the highest absorption rate

Topdress with Compost

(the best fertilizer!)

Top dress with 1/8 - 1/4 inch of compost

- Reduces need for synthetic fertilizers
- Improves nutrient and water holding capacity
- Helps root development

Compost tea

- Can be applied anytime



Step #4 – Got Weeds?

Healthy soil, with dense, tall turf tends to reduce weed invasion

Mow High – shades out weeds

Hand weed (tolerance!)

Aerate

Overseed

- Yardscaping mix
- No Mow Mix
- Clover

*(Spot treatment **only** when necessary)*



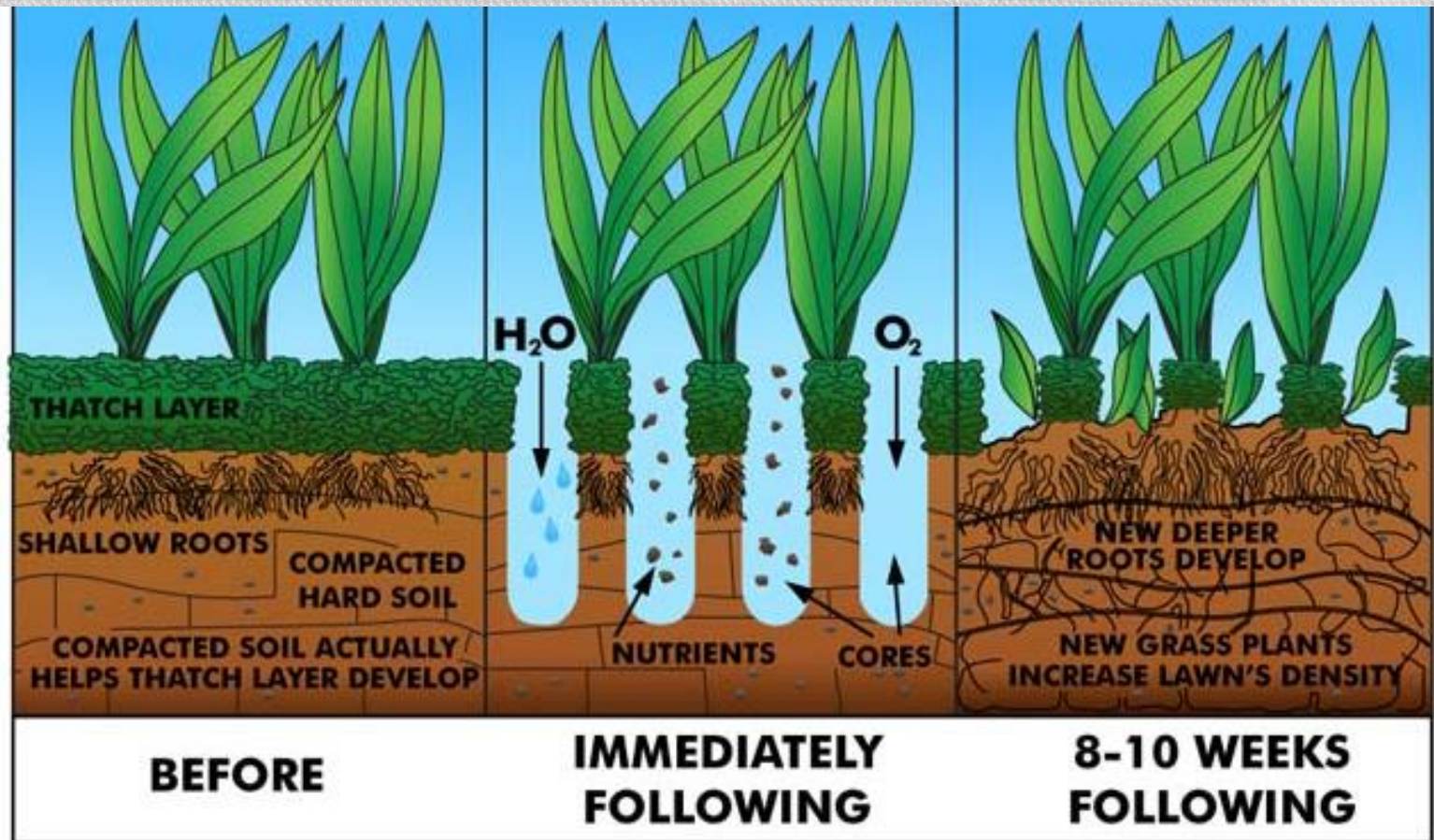
Redefine “Weeds”

Clover

- ✓ Nitrogen source
- ✓ Outcompetes weeds
- ✓ Fills in where grass struggles
- ✓ Less mowing!



Aerate and Overseed





Weeds are the RESULT of a poor turf, not the CAUSE of a poor turf.



Step #5 – Got Bugs?

Identify the pest and monitor the progress – **know the good bugs!**

Pick it, trap it, exclude and select biological controls if available (e.g., parasitic nematodes).



Maine.gov Agencies | Online Services | Help Page Tools GO State Search: GO

Got Pests?

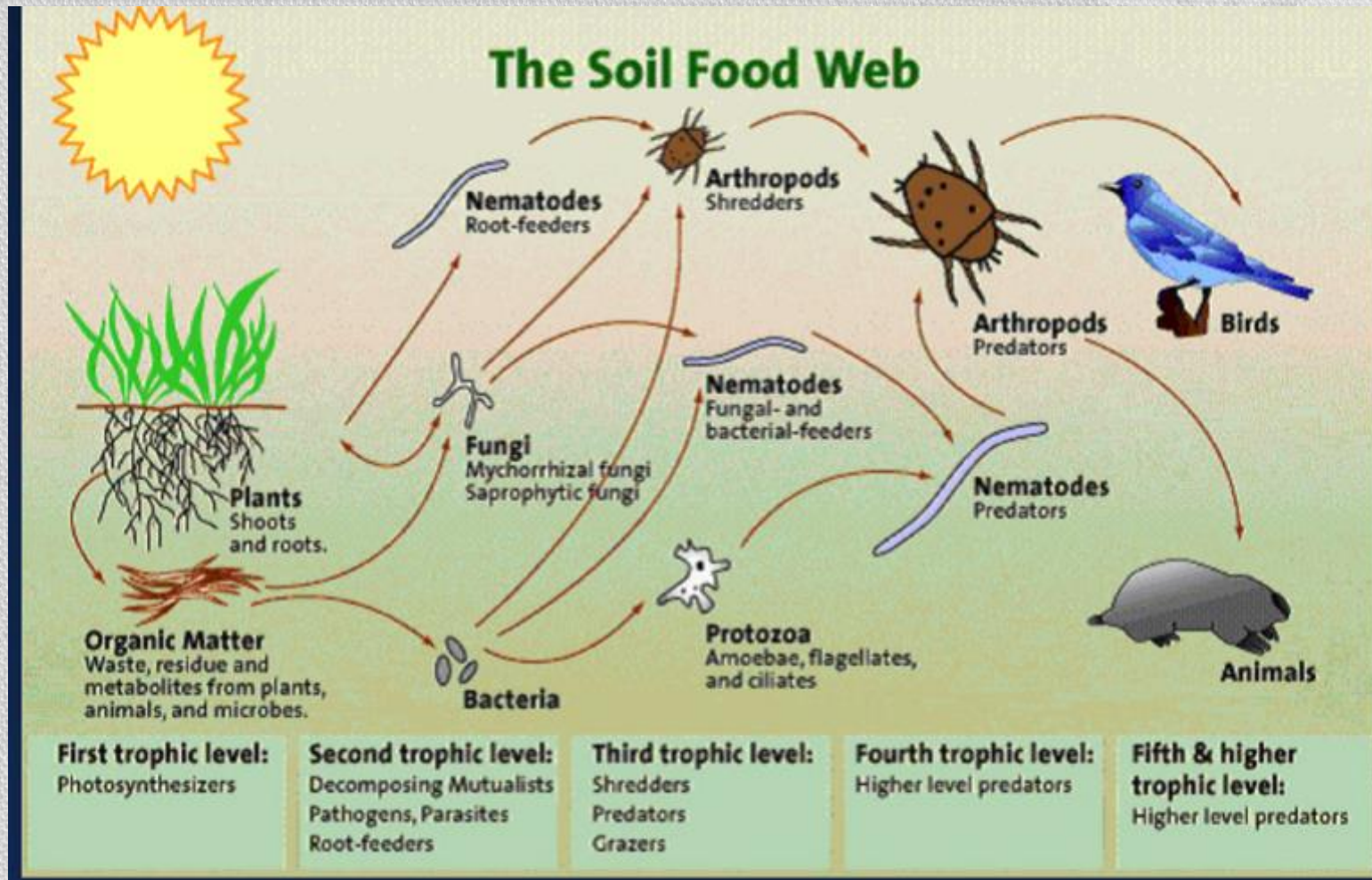
Home | Contact Us Site Index | Search Got Pests: GO QUICK FIND

GOT PESTS? Home > Pests and Beneficial Organisms Found in Lawns and Yards

Maine Integrated Pest Management Council

Grubs – tolerate if less than 10 per square foot

Healthy Soil = Healthy Plants = Fewer Pests



Think Twice Before Using Pesticides

Healthy Soil = Healthy Plants = Fewer Pests

Start with Prevention – avoid a “Lawn on Drugs!”

- ✓ Pest resistant plants
- ✓ Healthy soil
- ✓ Right conditions

Identify the pest and condition before spraying

Try low impact/risk solutions first

Be extra careful with lawns – play area!



Ants

Ants are a natural part of a healthy lawn ecosystem. You should be concerned with keeping them out of your house but not out of your lawn.

Step #6 – Water Wisely

- **Allow water to soak into soil and avoid runoff**
- **Water in early morning**
- **AVOID mid-day watering = more evaporation and evapotranspiration**
- **AVOID evening watering = increased fungal growth**



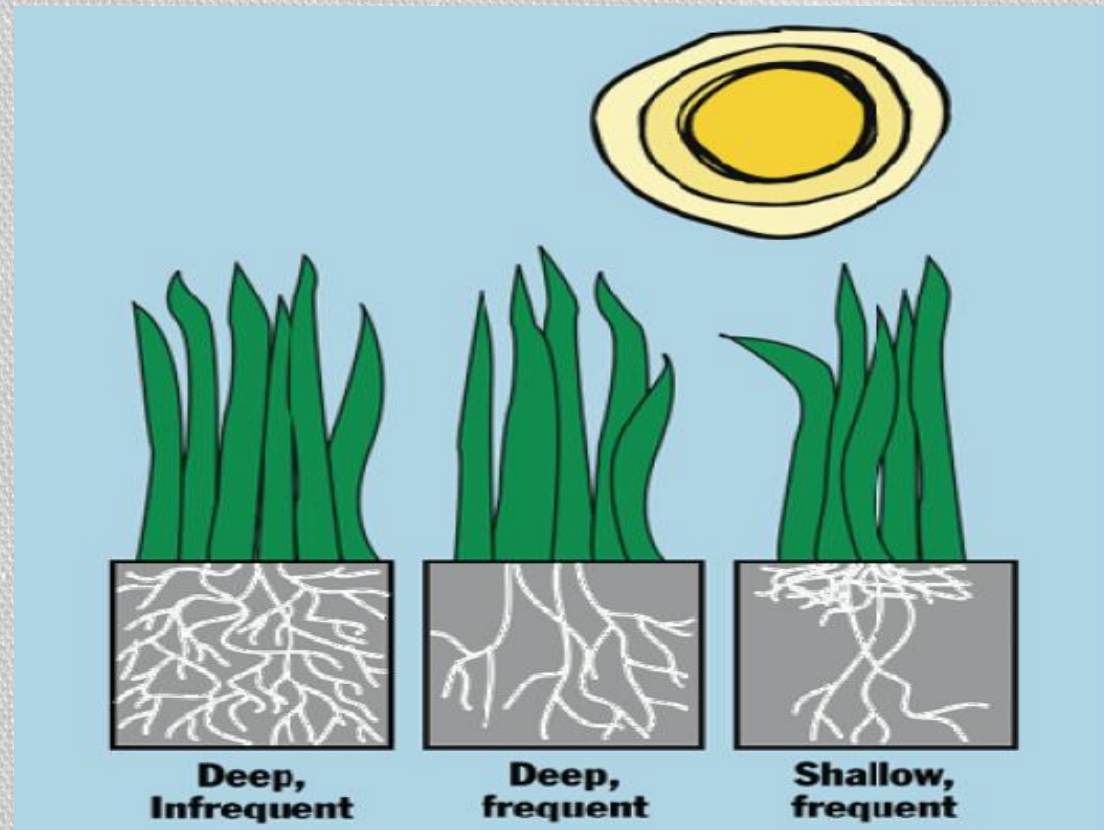
Step #6 – Water Wisely

Grass only needs 1 - 1.5” per week May to October (Buy a rain gauge).

Deep, infrequent watering.

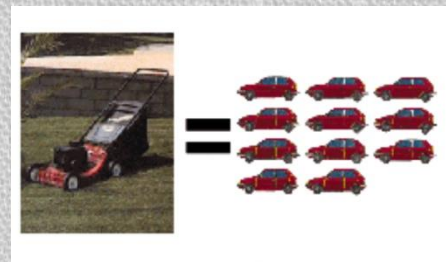
Know your soil type.

Allow to go dormant during dry spells of summer.



Consider... Reducing Lawn Area

- Reduces
 - Water & air pollution
 - Water usage
 - Maintenance
 - Costs
- Gives
 - More free time!
 - Increased biodiversity



Mower exhaust = 11 small cars' exhaust

Right Plant, Right Place

Use Diversity of Plants

Less noticeable damage from pests and disease

Incorporate many layers of plant types





- ✓ Trees
 - ✓ Shrubs
 - ✓ Ground covers
 - ✓ Perennials
-and Lawn



YardScape
For a healthy lawn

Groundcovers

Grass needs at least 6 hours of sunlight to thrive. For very shady areas where grass won't grow, consider these perennial groundcovers.

	Wintergreen <i>Godtheria procumbens</i> Grows up to 6 inches and spreads 4 to 6 inches annually. Favors well-drained, acidic soils with average moisture. Grows in partial to full shade. Leaves are evergreen and red berries remain on the plant all winter. Young leaves and berries have a wintergreen flavor.	
	Pachysandra <i>Pachysandra procumbens</i> Medium-sized herbaceous perennial evergreen groundcover. Fragrant, white flowers develop in the spring. Grows best in deep shade and prefers moist, well-drained, acidic soil. Slow growth rate; grows to 10" tall and forms a mat on the ground.	
	Sweet Woodruff <i>Gaultheria odoratum</i> Shade to partial shade; fast growing; quick to establish; beautiful, white spring flowers and attractive foliage through to snow. Is seldom bothered by pest or disease. Prefers slightly acid soil pH of around 5.0, and moist, well-drained soil in the shade. DEER RESISTANT.	
	Bunchberry <i>Cornus canadensis</i> Grows approximately 6 inches in height and spreads easily. Favors moist, rich, acidic soils. Grows best in partial to full shade. Larger white bracts surround small green flowers. A red berry is produced in the fall and is attractive to birds. NATIVE.	

Invasive vs. Native



Burning Bush

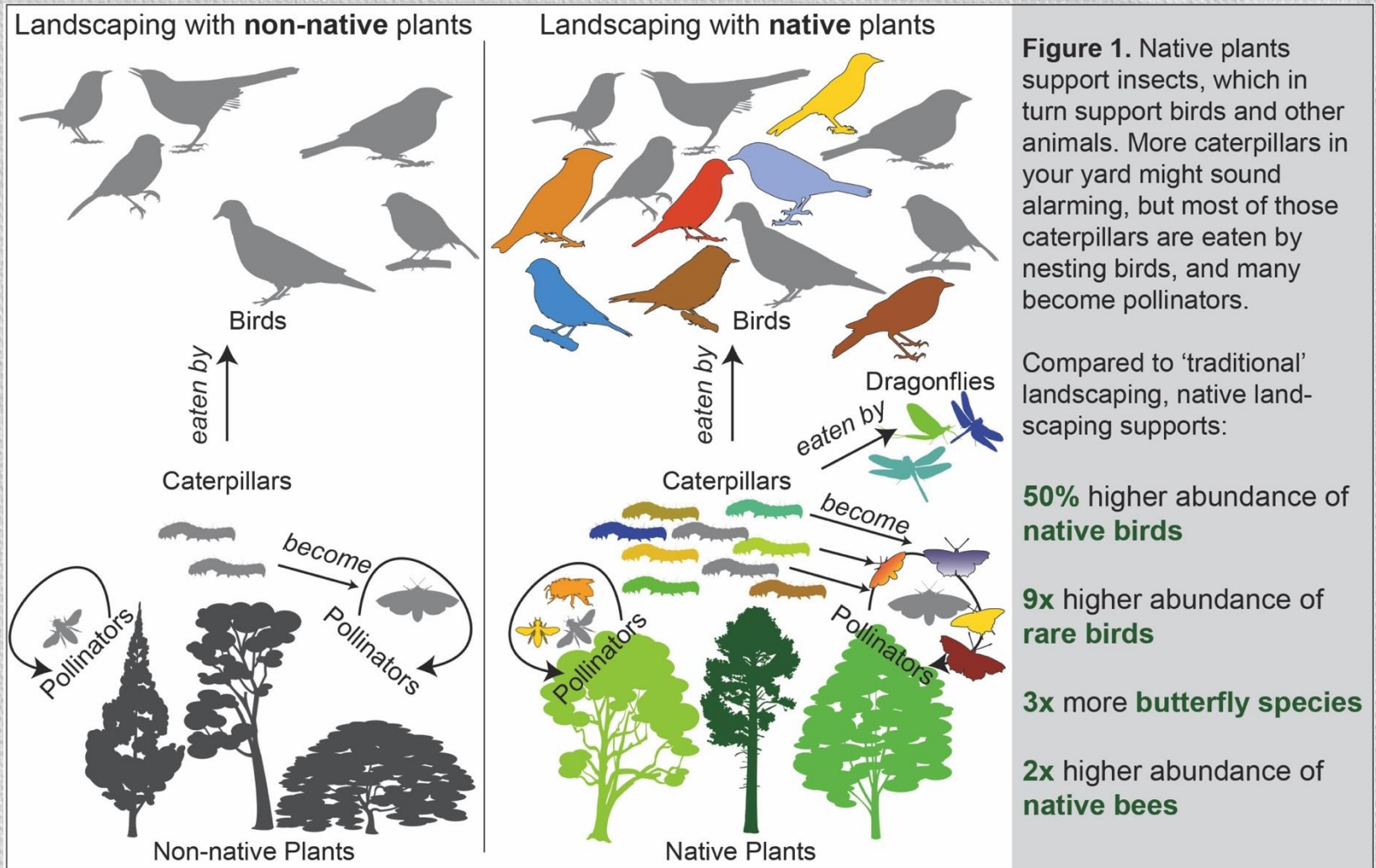


Vaccinium corymbosum



Japanese Barberry

Native Plants Support a Healthy Ecosystem



Bees are our most effective pollinators, and flowers are food for bees. To support native bees and honey bees, provide a succession of flowers through the entire growing season. Plants differ in their attraction to bees, and the differences could be subtle. In a University of Maine experiment at four gardens in Old Town, Jonesboro, and Blue Hill, researchers count insects that land on flowers in good weather during three one-minute observations per plant. To date we have tested more than 60 species of native wildflowers, shrubs, bedding plants, cover crops, and herbs. These easy-to-grow bee plants are likely to be successful in your garden:



Amise hyssop, *Agastache foeniculum*, attracts bumble bees. July-Aug. Annual, self sows.



Butterfly milkweed, *Asclepias tuberosa*, is much favored by bumble bees. Aug-early Sept. Native, perennial, late to emerge in spring. Protect from slug damage when first sprouts appear in early June.



Borage, *Borago officinalis*, either blue or white, is eagerly visited by honey bees, bumble bees, sweat bees, and other small native bees. July-Aug. Annual, self-sows.



White meadowsweet, *Spiraea alba* var. *latifolia*, attracts bumble bees, sweat bees, and copious other insects. July-Sept. Native shrub, hardy and easy to grow. May already be in your area.



Summersweet, *Claytonia alabifolia*, attracts many bees. Aug-Sept. Hardy native shrub.



Purple coneflower, *Echinacea purpurea*, has often been recommended for bee gardens, attracts bumble bees over a long season. Aug-Sept. Hardy perennial, easy to grow.



White wood aster, *Eurybia divaricata*, is one of many native asters that attracts Honey bees, bumble bees, and sweat bees. Sept. Hardy perennial, easy, spreads.



Greek oregano, *Origanum vulgare hirtum*, is popular with bumble bees and sweat bees. June-Aug. Hardy perennial, easy to grow, highly edible for people, too.

In cooperation with Dr. Francis A. Drummond, Dr. Lois Berg Stack, and Eric Venturini. Funding provided by the USDA and the University of Maine.

Wildlife Habitats

- Add nectar and fruit producing plants
- Strive for continuous blooms
- Add water, walls, feeders, woody debris

Reduce Runoff & Encourage Infiltration

Remember every home near a storm drain or ditch = waterfront property

- Reduce amount of impervious (hard) surfaces
- Collect roof runoff in rain barrels
- Direct water into vegetated areas
- Create a rain garden



Rain garden in Leominster, MA
(Photo Credit - MA Watershed Coalition)



Stabilized Pathways



Go WILD with it!



Thanks to Gale Turner from Kittery

A few local sources....

Home About - Seeds & Sowing - Plants & Design - Walks, Talks & Workshops Native Pl



Wild Seed Project

Returning native plants to the Maine landscape

Allen Sterling & Lothrop



COASTAL LANDSCAPING
AND GARDEN CENTER
YORK, MAINE

Home Garden Center Outdoor Plants

SALMON FALLS GARDEN CENTER 16
NURSERY LN. BERWICK ME. 03901 PH.
207-3332-6243

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Welcome to

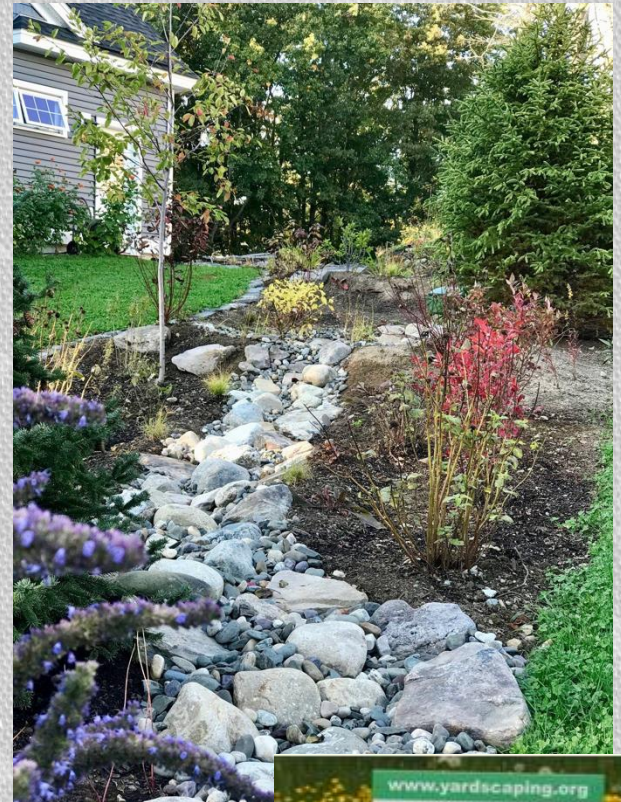
YOU Can Yardscape!

Remember...

YardScaping = Low Impact Gardening

- ✓ Mix of Lawn and Non-Lawn
- ✓ Use 6 Common Sense Steps for Lawns
- ✓ Use native species for non-lawn
- ✓ Right plant in the right place (sun/shade and wet/dry considerations)
- ✓ Tolerance (for bugs and weeds)

Saves you time, \$, and is good for us all!



Thank You!



Yardscaping.org

ThinkBlueMaine.org



Southern Maine Stormwater Working Group

