

## **Improving Our Environmental Footprint: HOAs, Condos, Schools and Faith Communities**

### **What can you do to help?**

#### **Learn more about:**

- **The benefits of native plants**
- **Invasive removal and preventing the planting of invasive plants**
- **Managing storm water on-site**
- **The benefits of reducing turf grass**
- **Reducing/eliminating the use of fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides**
- **Ecological and economic benefits of sustainable practices**

#### **In your HOA, condo, school or faith community:**

- Volunteer for the grounds committee; help educate broader community
- Help educate landscaping contractor and grounds committee; ask them about their expertise with invasive plant removal and/or plans for removal
- Encourage the addition of native plants to the approved plantings list
- Encourage public landscaping with native plants
- Ensure that non-native invasive plants are prohibited from the planting list
- Encourage the removal of non-native invasive plants from your grounds
- Plant a “pollinator corner” with native plants that appeal to butterflies and other pollinators
- Assess where additional trees can be planted on your property
- Work to improve storm water management
- Install a rain barrel or cistern to collect and utilize water from your roof; rain barrels and cisterns can be connected to a slow-drip hose
- Work to become a certified wildlife habitat

#### **Tips and Techniques:**

- Take advantage of the wide range of resources in our area
- Focus on education: short presentations, monthly articles in newsletters, encouraging others to attend programs like this
- Visit existing properties with sustainable projects for ideas
- Start small and work to build a coalition of partners; don't go it alone
- Recognize legitimate concerns of others about aesthetics and help to demonstrate the beauty and value of native plants
- Plan fun and educational events around invasive removal and plantings
- Involve children and families, where appropriate; children are great messengers!
- Stay focused and celebrate small successes; be willing to make progress incrementally
- Embrace mistakes and use as learning opportunities
- Vision, persistence and patience yield results
- Have fun, keep learning and bring people along with you in the process

## **Resources:**

### **Arlington County**

- Stormwater wise program: <http://environment.arlingtonva.us/stormwater-watersheds/>
- Invasive species: <http://environment.arlingtonva.us/trees/invasive-plants/invasive-plant-program/>
- Tree Distribution: <http://environment.arlingtonva.us/trees/plant-trees/>
- Tree Care and Removal: <http://environment.arlingtonva.us/trees/care-for-trees/>

### **Arlington Regional Master Naturalists (ARMN)**

Attend public programs, follow the blog, sign up to be notified about upcoming native plant sales, become a master naturalist volunteer: <http://armn.org/>

### **Audubon Society of Northern Virginia (ASNV)**

Sign up for a free Audubon at Home backyard habitat site visit of your property:

<http://www.audubonva.org/index.php/audubon-at-home-v15-121>

### **Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia (MGNV)**

Attend public education programs, use the MGNV help desk, become a master gardener volunteer, use the Tried and True native plants for the landscape: <http://mgnv.org/plants/>

### **Plant NOVA Natives**

Regional campaign to encourage selling and planting of native plants that evolved and thrive in our region: <http://www.plantnovanatives.org/>

### **Virginia Native Plant Society – Potowmack Chapter**

Local chapter that provides public programs and native plant sales: <http://vnps.org/potowmack/> and on facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/VirginiaNativePlantSociety>

### **Spring Native Plant Sales (full list to be posted at armn.org)**

Earth Sangha, a source of local ecotype ecological restoration plants, will have their 2016 Spring Open House on **Sunday, May 1 from 10am to 2pm.** [www.earthsangha.org](http://www.earthsangha.org)

Northern Alexandria Native Plant Sale on **Saturday, April 30 from 9am to 2pm**  
[www.facebook.com/NorthernAlexandriaNativePlantSale](http://www.facebook.com/NorthernAlexandriaNativePlantSale)

### **Speakers' contact information:**

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### **Grounds Committees Panel:**

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