



# Spring 2026 Lawns to Legumes Kick-Off Webinar



BWSR



your yard  
**CAN BEE**  
the **CHANGE**

#Lawns2Legumes

# Who We Are



## Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources

BWSR focuses on helping private landowners enhance conservation practices on their land to achieve state goals for clean water, clean air, and abundant fish and wildlife.

## Blue Thumb — Planting for Clean Water

A statewide partnership helping property owners reduce runoff and improve water quality. Blue Thumb partners include cities, watershed districts, landscape designers, contractors and native plant nurseries.

## Metro Blooms

A Minneapolis-based non-profit that coordinates the Blue Thumb partnership. Metro Blooms partners with communities to nurture and support thriving ecosystems, land, and water, practicing shared leadership and care to move toward environmental justice.

# Meet today's presenters:



## **Megan Reich**

Metro Blooms/Blue Thumb  
L2L Co-Manager

## **John Bly**

Metro Blooms/Blue Thumb  
Operations Director

## **Dan Shaw**

Minnesota Board of Water and Soils Resources  
Senior Ecologist/Vegetation Specialist

# About Lawns to Legumes

Building a movement to protect Minnesota's pollinators  
(Program started June 2019)

## Funding Sources:

- Legislative Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources, Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
- **Minnesota General Fund, USFWS**

## Program Focus:

- Establish pollinator habitat projects on residential landscapes across Minnesota to support the rusty patched bumblebee and other pollinators.



# About Lawns to Legumes: Three Components

## Pollinator Pathways

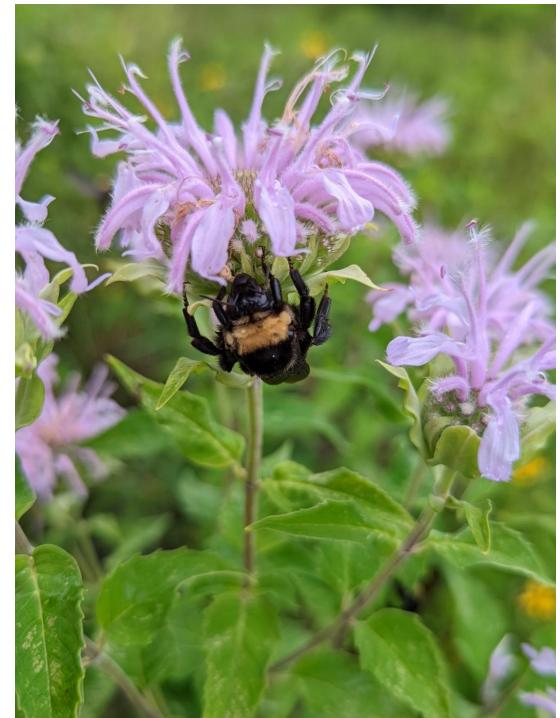
- Larger Grants to local communities to build pollinator corridors

## Individual Resident Support:

- Grants of \$400 to individual residents to install pollinator habitat in their own gardens, along with technical assistance to complete projects through our educational workshops and coaches

## Free DIY Resources

- Resources for DIY pollinator habitat projects: guides, plant lists, design templates, and more on [bluethumb.org](http://bluethumb.org)





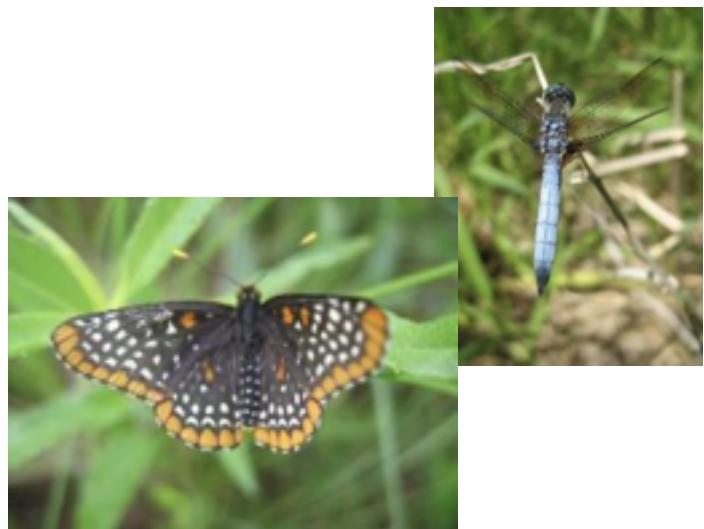
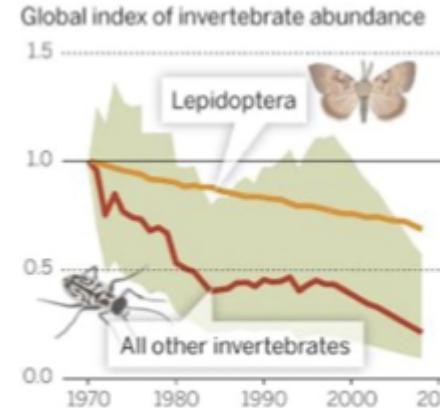
# Why Native Plants?



# Why Native Plants?

## Conservation Challenges

- Recent research shows significant declines in insects across the world—more than 40% of insect species are declining.
- Insects make up the base of the food web and are critical for many other forms of life.
- Native plants support insects.



# Minnesota's State Bee

## Rusty Patched Bumble Bee (*Bombus affinis*)

- Populations of the rusty patched bumble bee have declined more than 80% in 20 years!
- Listed as an Endangered Species in 2017
- Named Minnesota State Bee in 2019



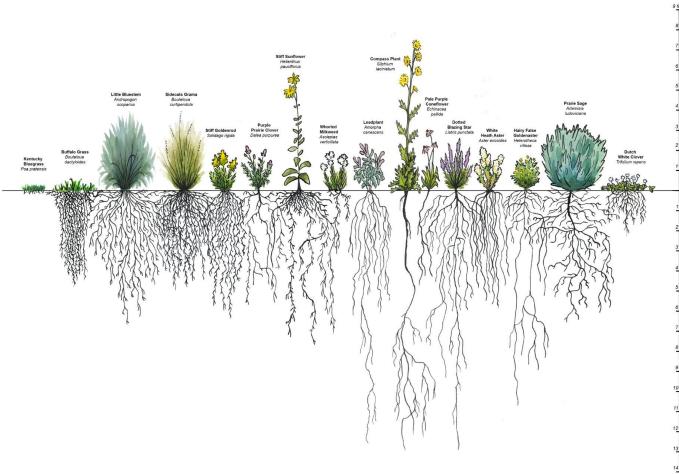
## Bumble Bees Need:

- Nesting areas/shelter
- Food: Blooming native flowers throughout the growing season
- Protection from chemicals, insecticides and fungicides.
- Connected, high quality habitat to increase foraging and reproductive success



# Other Benefits of Native Plants

- Support soil health and stabilize soil
- Increased stormwater capture
- Provide food for pollinators
- Create wildlife habitat
- Resilient to drought + environmental challenges
- Beautify our communities!



# A Note on Cultivars...

IMPORTANT: Cultivars, nativars, and hybrids are genetically modified for aesthetics or other traits and provide limited nutrition to pollinators. They are **not** reimbursed by Lawns to Legumes. *(More info on that later!)*

## Native plants vs cultivars/hybrids

### Identifying cultivars

- Cultivars usually have single quotes around their name
- Hybrids have an “X” in their name
- Check the plant tag! Look for whimsical names
- Shop at a native plant nursery instead of a chain store

### Examples of cultivars/hybrids

- Gaillardia 'Spintop Orange Halo'
- Spintop Orange Halo Blanket Flower
- Gaillardia X grandiflora



Native

Butterfly Weed  
(*Asclepias tuberosa*)



Cultivar

'Cinderella'  
Butterfly Flower  
cultivar of Swamp Milkweed  
(*Asclepias incarnata*)

# Lawns to Legumes Grant Basics



your yard  
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the **CHANGE**

#Lawns2Legumes

Steps to a successful grant project:

- Confirm participation in program
- Plan your project

# Five Project Types



## Pocket Planting

Variations:

- Rain garden
- Boulevard Planting
- Lakeshore Buffer

## Trees and Shrubs

## Pollinator Meadows

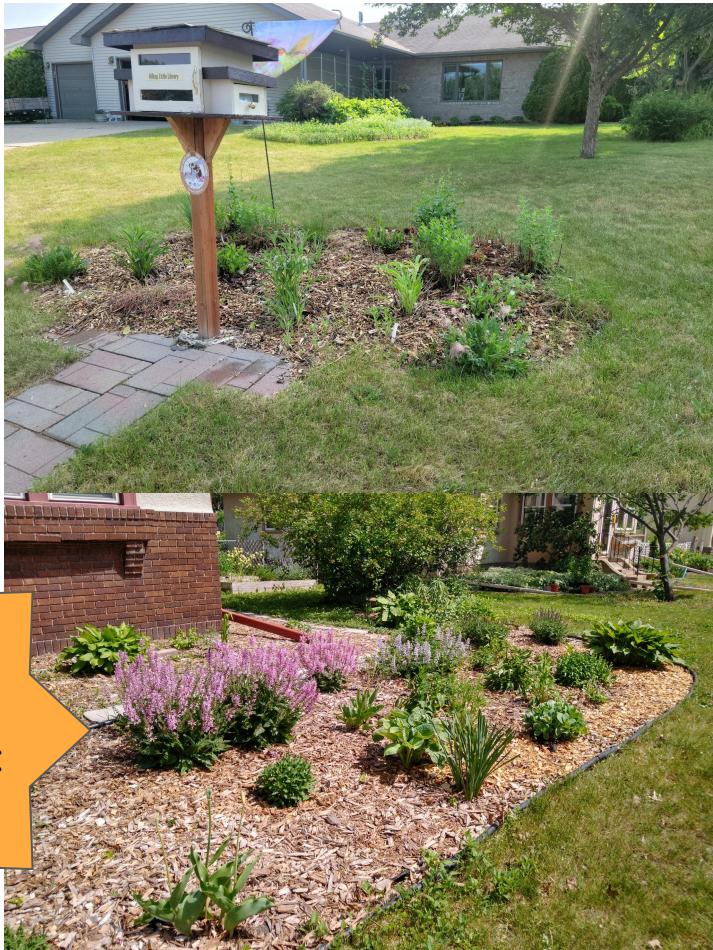
## Container Garden

## Pollinator Lawn

# 1 - Native Plant Pocket Planting

- There's room in almost every yard for a small native plant garden
- A small garden can be enough to offer pollinator habitat throughout the year.
- Starting small is often the smartest approach. Even a small project makes a difference for pollinators!

Biggest expense tends to be:  
**Plants**



## 2 - Pollinator Beneficial Trees and Shrubs

Trees and shrubs add another dimension to your yard and garden.

They can also provide:

- Early-season food for pollinators
- Habitat for moths and butterflies
- Shade
- Autumn color
- Winter structure

Biggest expense tends to be:  
**Plants**



## 3 - Pollinator Meadows

- A large planting of diverse and native plants can be created all at once, or you can start with a small garden and expand it every year.
- Especially in a larger garden, it is good to have a strong mix of grasses and flowers. Native grasses provide many benefits, not least being the number of pollinator species that nest in them or feed on them in their larval states.



Biggest  
expense  
tends to be:  
**Site prep**



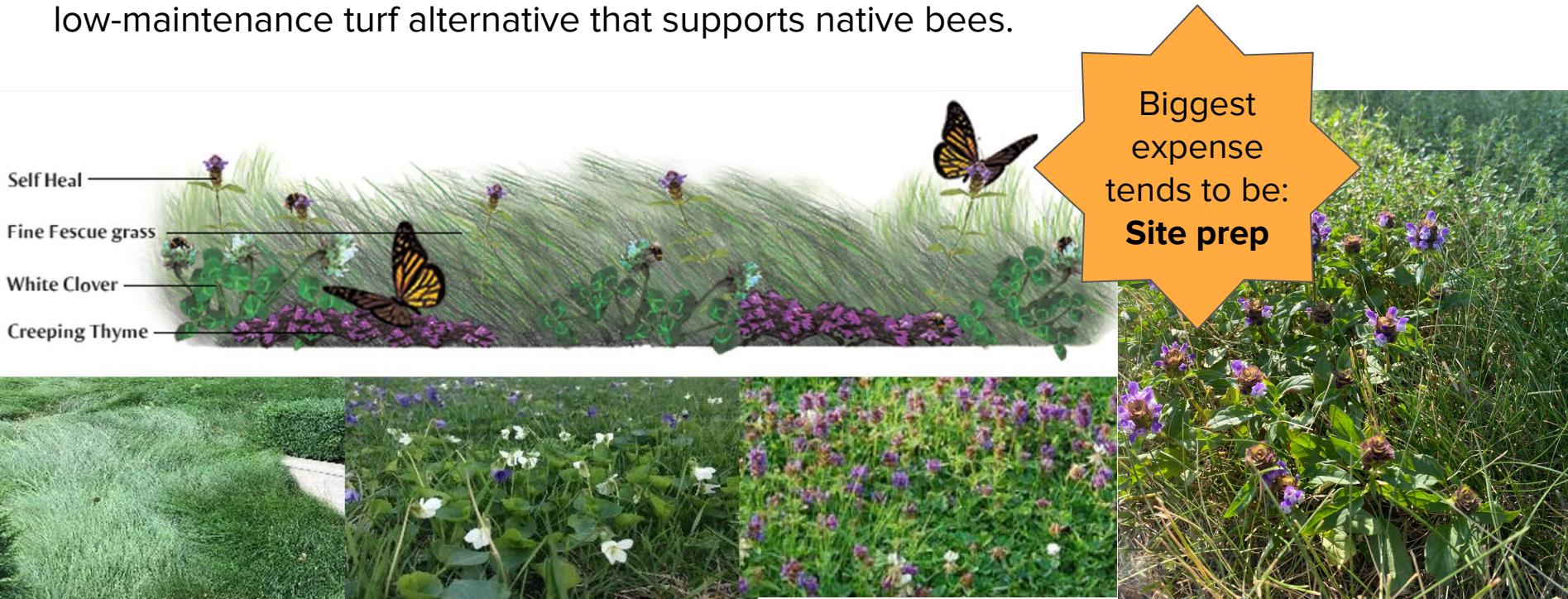
## 4 - Container Garden

- A great option if you live in an apartment or don't have outdoor space for a garden.
- You can still help pollinators by planting native plants in pots on your balcony or porch, and native container plantings can thrive for years with proper care.



## 5 - Pollinator Lawns

**Fine Fescues**, along with **low growing flowers** can work together to provide a low-maintenance turf alternative that supports native bees.



# Choosing Plant Species

- How much sunlight is there?
- What is the soil moisture of the site?
- Do you have blooming flowers throughout the growing season (3 species in spring, summer, and fall)?
- Add native grasses and sedges too!
- Find plant ideas with Blue Thumb's **Plant Finder** ([bluethumb.org/plants](http://bluethumb.org/plants)) or plant lists on Blue Thumb's **Resources page**



## Plant Finder

This tool contains information on plants native to MN that are generally commercially available. It is meant to help project planners identify plants that are most likely to thrive given each project's unique mix of site characteristics and design criteria. It contains a number of optional filters to help select appropriate plants. There is no need to mark every checkbox or define every range in each filter category; you can just use the filter categories that best help "define" your project site and design intentions. Hover your mouse over a filter category for its definition, or learn more about the terminology and data sources used by the Plant Finder through the link below.

[ABOUT THE PLANT FINDER](#) [MAP OF MN ECOREGIONS](#) [MN NATIVE PLANT NURSERIES](#)

Enter a plant name to search (optional) ...

Plant Type	Height	Light Exposure	Soil Moisture
<input type="checkbox"/> Fern	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-10 feet	<input type="checkbox"/> Sun	<input type="checkbox"/> Dry
<input type="checkbox"/> Forb	<input type="checkbox"/> 10-20 feet	<input type="checkbox"/> Part Sun	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium
<input type="checkbox"/> Grass	<input type="checkbox"/> 20+ feet	<input type="checkbox"/> Shade	<input type="checkbox"/> Wet
<input type="checkbox"/> Shrub			
Bloom Color	General Resilience	Ecoregion	



### Plants for the Rusty Patched Bumblebee

Herbaceous Species				
Common Name	Scientific Name	Light	Soil	Height'
Red Columbine	<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	sun to shade	dry	3
Wild Geranium	<i>Geranium maculatum</i>	full to part sun	dry to mesic	1 to 2
Virginia Waterleaf	<i>Hydrophyllum virginianum</i>	full to part shade	mesic	1 to 2
Wild Lupine	<i>Lupinus perennis</i>	full sun	dry	2
Virginia Bluebells	<i>Mertensia virginica</i>	full to part shade	mesic	2
Wood Betony	<i>Pedicularis canadensis</i>	full to part sun	dry to mesic	1
Shooting Star species	<i>Prismula spp</i>	full to part sun	mesic	1
Giant Hyssop species	<i>Agastache spp</i>	full to part sun	dry	4
Milkweed species	<i>Asclepias spp</i>	full to part sun	dry to mesic	2 to 4
Wild White Indigo	<i>Baptisia alba</i>	full sun	dry	4 to 5
Cream Indigo	<i>Baptisia bracteata</i>	full sun	dry	2
White Prairie Clover	<i>Dalea candida</i>	full sun	dry	1 to 3
Purple Prairie Clover	<i>Dalea purpurea</i>	full sun	dry	1 to 3
Coneflower species	<i>Echinacea spp</i>	full to part sun	dry	3 to 4
Joe Pye	<i>Eutrochium spp</i>	full to part sun	mesic	4 to 6
Jewelweed	<i>Impatiens capensis</i>	sun to shade	mesic to wet	2 to 5
Blazingstar species	<i>Liatris spp</i>	full sun	dry to mesic	2 to 4
Bee Balm	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	full to part sun	dry to mesic	3 to 4
Beardtongue species	<i>Penstemon spp</i>	full to part sun	dry	1 to 3
Mountain Mint	<i>Pycnanthemum virginianum</i>	full to part sun	dry to mesic	3
Culver's Root	<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>	full to part sun	mesic	6
Native Field Thistle	<i>Cirsium discolor</i>	full sun	dry to mesic	3 to 7
Native Swamp Thistle	<i>Cirsium muticum</i>	full to part sun	mesic to wet	3 to 8
Gentian species	<i>Gentiana spp</i>	full to part sun	dry to mesic	2 to 3
Goldenrod species	<i>Solidago spp</i>	full to part sun	dry	2 to 5
New England Aster	<i>Sympphytum novae-angliae</i>	full to part sun	mesic	3 to 6

# Planting Layout

- Mixture of grasses, flowers, and shrubs
- Keep species together in groups: easier for you to identify and maintain, and for bees to find!
- Put shorter plants in “front”
- Sample design templates available on Blue Thumb’s Resources page

**NATIVE GARDEN TEMPLATE SHADE + 75 SF**

Metro Blooms  
651.699.2426  
P.O. Box 17099  
Minneapolis, MN 55417  
[www.metroblooms.org](http://www.metroblooms.org)

**PLANTING PLAN**

**PLANT LIST**

ICON QTY	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	HT	SPACING	BLOOM
11	Wild Ginger	<i>Asarum canadense</i>	6"	1"	Apr-May
5	Jacob's Ladder	<i>Polemonium reptans</i>	1'	1"	Apr-June
3	Wild Geranium	<i>Geranium maculatum</i>	1'-2"	1"	May-June
3	Big-Leaved Aster	<i>Aster macrophyllus</i>	2'-2"	18"	Aug-Sept
3	Tall Goldenrod	<i>Solidago altissima</i>	2'-2"	36"	Aug-Sept
3	Big Ziz Goldenrod	<i>Solidago gigantea</i>	1'-3'	48"	Aug-Oct
9	Bottletbrush Grass	<i>Elymus hystrix</i>	2'-3'	1"	July-Sept
6	Columbine	<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	2'-3'	1"	May-July
3	Rose Turtlehead	<i>Chelone lyonii 'Hot Lips'</i>	2'-4'	2"	July-Sept

**GRAPHIC SCALE**  
0' 2' 4' 8'  
1 inch = 4 feet

**PLANTING NOTES**

- If your native garden is a different shape than shown on this plan, that's ok. These notes will help you place the plants in the right spots.
- Consider where you will view the garden from when placing the plants.
- Plant in clusters or groups of 3 or more.
- Put shorter plants near the outer edge.
- Put taller plants in the center.
- Use the plant list as a guide for heights. It is organized from shortest to tallest plants.
- Have fun. Don't stress. Enjoy your new garden and pollinator guests!

**PLANT PHOTOS**

**Sunny and Low Garden for Pollinators**

**Profile** **Drooping** Fine leaves create a high mound of texture that will offset the height and color of the blooming ground. It, Prairie Drooping is most beautiful in groups.

**Wild Strawberry** This low ground-cover will spread throughout this planting, helping to stabilize soil and conserve moisture as well as providing fry but delicious summer fruit.

**Purple Prairie Clover** It is a graceful legume that is a favorite of butterflies and bees. It's shorter than its vase-shape of blooming bell flowers, but it's still a favorite of butterflies and bees.

**Narrow Leafed Coneflower** Minnesota's only Coneflower, it's shorter than its purple flower spikes but it's still a favorite of butterflies and bees.

**Butterfly Milkweed** Bright orange flowers attract butterflies and bees. Vibrant color and tough, this plant is a favorite of rabbits and deer. Butterflies Milkweed is amazing!

**Wild Bergamot** One of the best plants for attracting native pollinators and blooms in the hottest months of summer when pollinator food can sometimes be scarce. Beautiful, fuzzy flower spikes last from summer into late fall.

**Pearly Everlasting** This aster has a sprawling habit and when supported by other plants, it is a great plant for Slivery Checkerspot butterflies. Plants in this design are tough enough for a dry boulevard.

**Sunny Aster** This aster has a sprawling habit and when supported by other plants, it is a great plant for Slivery Checkerspot butterflies. Plants in this design are tough enough for a dry boulevard.

**W.B.** 4 plants

**WS** 4 plants

**AR** 6 plants

**PP** 7 plants

**NP** 8 plants

**BM** 12 plants

**WB** 7 plants

**PE** 4 plants

**SA** 5 plants

**Note:** To make this planting smaller, simply reduce the portion of the design shown in the dotted blocks line.

**Keep plants in groups to create more visual impact. This will make it easier for pollinators to navigate.**

**Low growing plants are on the edges, taller plants in the center.**

**Featured Pollinator:** Minnesota's State Bee: Bumble Bee *Bombus occidens*  
Key nectar and pollen plants include Purple Prairie

# Design Elements

- Mulch retains water, suppresses weeds, and keeps your planting looking neat.
- Edging looks nice and can help frame your garden.
- Plant identification tags educate passersby and help you keep track of your plants.
- The L2L yard sign helps convey the purpose of your planting (you'll be mailed one once you complete your project!)



# Lawns to Legumes Grant Basics



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#Lawns2Legumes

Steps to a successful grant project:

- Confirm participation in program
- Plan your project
- Install your project

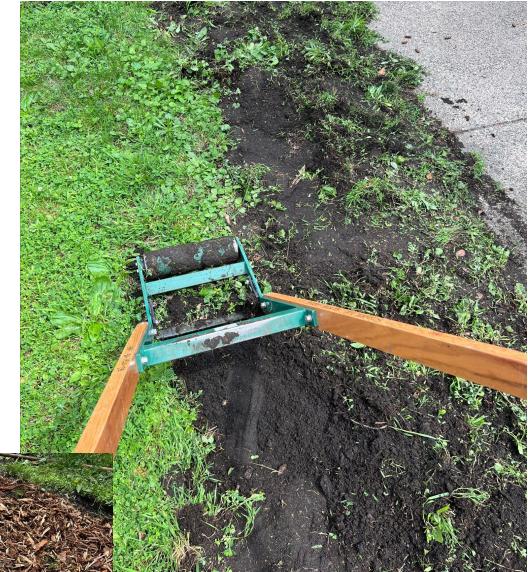
# Site Preparation

- Removing sod
- For tree plantings and rain gardens: call 811 (Gopher State One) to locate public utilities
  - Dig at least 10 feet away from buried lines
- For boulevard plantings: check your city for height restrictions



# Sod Removal: The Manual Method

- Remove sod with a sod kicker
- Turn, loosen and rake soil
- Apply mulch
  - shredded hardwood mulch  
stays in place best
- Plant!



# Sod Removal: Sheet Mulching

- “Sheet mulch” with a layer of cardboard covered with mulch to suffocate the grass beneath.
  - Cut vegetation as short as possible
  - Cover with cardboard
  - Thoroughly soak each layer of cardboard
  - Cover with layer of compost and mulch
- Be sure to plant through the layers into the soil



*Learn about these site preparation methods and more with the  
**Xerces Society guide to Organic Site Preparation***

# Buying Native Plants

- Check the Eligible Expenses Guide before purchasing plants!
  - Only native Minnesota plants can be reimbursed. Check the native range of a plant using the **USDA PLANTS database** or the **Minnesota Wildflowers** website (linked on Grantee Guide).
  - Cultivars, “nativars,” hybrids and non-native annuals are not eligible for reimbursement. Review our **Native Plants vs Cultivars handout** (linked on Grantee Guide).
- We recommend choosing vendors from our **Native Plant Nurseries and Retailers** page.
  - If you don’t have a nursery near you, many on our list offer delivery. Don’t forget to save your receipts!



*Install your project*

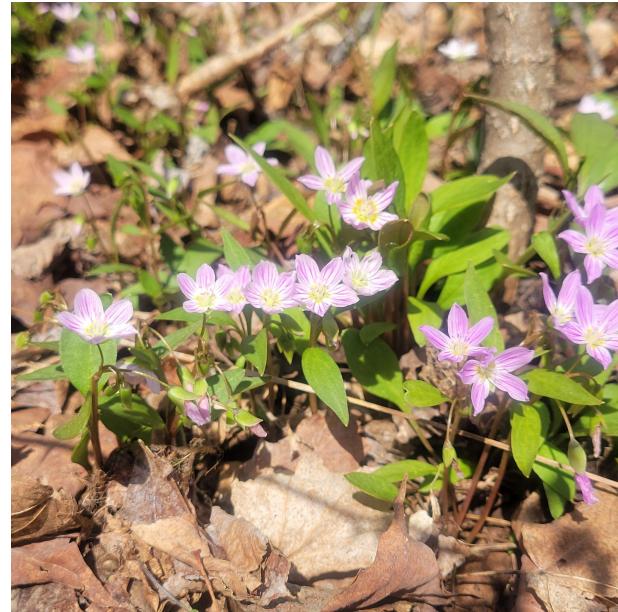
# Install your Project



*Installation tips for each project type are covered in depth on our website and in our upcoming project webinars*

# Spring Planting Timing

- Wait until soil temperatures rise to 50 degrees. When you see dandelions flowering, it's a good sign that you can start your projects.
  - Pre-order plants in winter, or buy from plant sales and retailers in spring
- Mid to late May through early June is an ideal window to get plants in the ground, before the summer heat.
- If planting in late June and early July, be sure your plants get enough water (more on that soon).



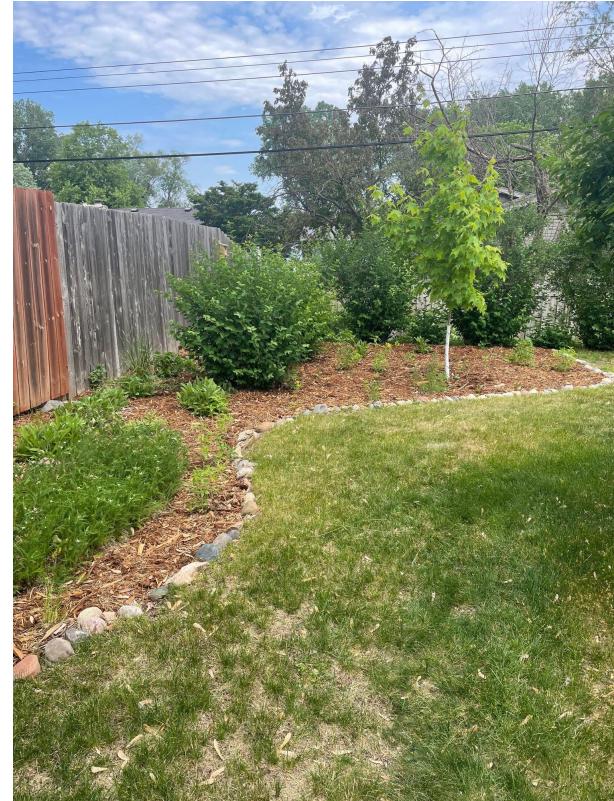
# Native Pocket Plantings

- Once any sod is removed, turn, loosen, and rake the soil. Avoid deep tilling.
- Apply mulch before planting to prevent soil erosion.
- Lay out the plants before you put them in the ground so that you're happy with their spacing.



# Trees and Shrubs

- Dig a hole as deep and at least twice as wide as the root ball
- Straighten, cut, or remove circling roots
- Place tree in hole at appropriate height (root flare or top root should be at or slightly above ground level) and straighten the tree
- Gently but firmly backfill hole, watering periodically to reduce air pockets

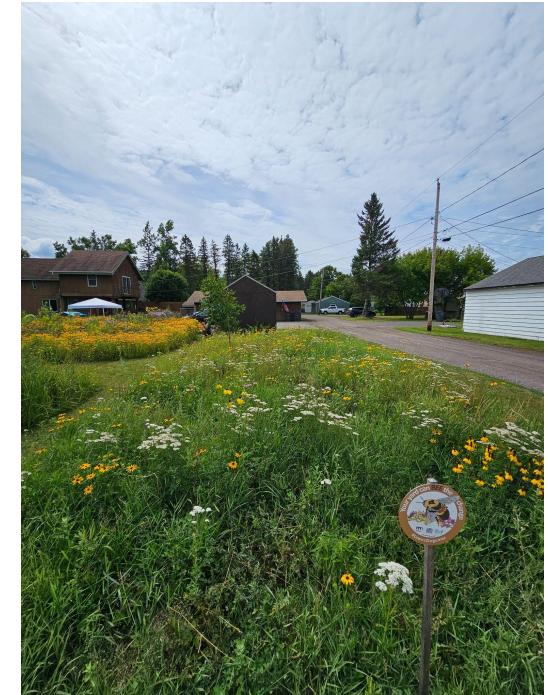


# Pollinator Meadow

**Bit-by-bit:** Multiple pocket plantings side by side and over time.

**All at once:**

- Use smaller plants (plugs) and/or seed, to cover more area for the same cost.
- Check with the supplier of your native seeds or seed mixes for specific planting instructions.
  - Some seeds are best sown in the fall
  - Most plantings grown from seed will take at least 3 years before they are even close to establishment
- Protect against erosion



# Pollinator Lawns

## Basic Example and Instructions

\*If the lawn doesn't have a lot of aggressive invasive plants that will spread, this method may be right for you:

1. Mow lawn as short as possible
2. Rake clippings to expose soil as much as possible

*For seeding rates and more options and info, see  
[bluethumb.org/turf-alternatives](http://bluethumb.org/turf-alternatives)*



# Pollinator Lawns

**3. Spread seed.** Compost or sand make good bulking agents.

**4. Keep moist** until sprouting, and then cut back on watering and stop fertilizing.

**5. Maintenance:** **Never again mow below 3 inches.** Trim in the fall. Herbicides will kill your flowers, so hand weed.



*For seeding rates and more options and info, see [bluethumb.org/turf-alternatives](http://bluethumb.org/turf-alternatives)*

# Container Plantings

- Choose containers with drainage holes made of plastic, metal or composite
- Add mulch to bottom couple inches of your container to fill space and create air pockets for root growth.
- Before the first freeze, let the planter dry out to avoid cracking. Leave your container out in the winter and your native perennial plants will come back in the spring!



# A note on protection from herbivores

- Squirrels, rabbits, and deer see many native plants as a welcome snack.
- When tender seedlings are first in the ground, consider putting up chicken wire around your planting or placing individual mesh nets over the plants.
- Select plants around the perimeter of your garden that are less appealing to herbivores. (Natives in the mint family and onion family, plants that are rough, prickly, or hairy).



# Maintain your project

- Water during dry periods – **at least 1"** per week for the first year.
- Pull weeds! Get them while they are small
- Keep plantings clear of debris
- Replace mulch and plants as needed

*Which one of these would you rather pull?*



# Lawns to Legumes Grant Basics



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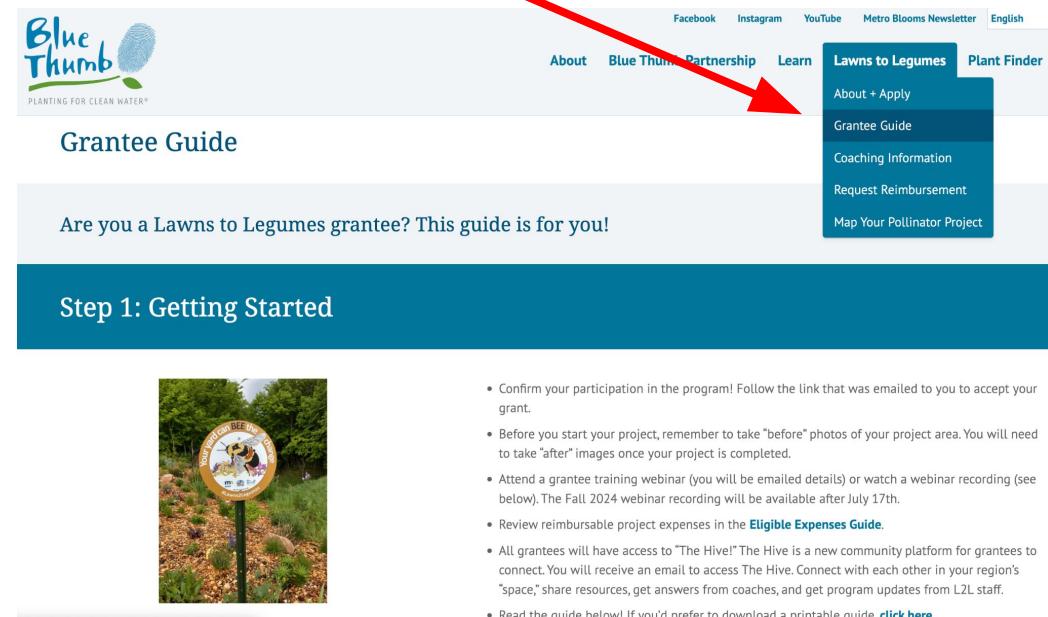
## Steps to a successful grant project:

- Confirm participation in program
- Plan your project
- Install your project
- Resources to help

# Online Resources: Grantee Guide

Your main resource for program requirements, deadlines, and questions

- Step by step guide to completing and submitting your project
- Project Gallery
- Frequently Asked Questions



The screenshot shows the Blue Thumb website with a red arrow pointing to the 'Grantee Guide' link in the sidebar menu. The sidebar menu includes links for Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Metro Blooms Newsletter, and English. The 'Grantee Guide' link is highlighted with a red arrow. The main content area features the Blue Thumb logo and the text: 'Are you a Lawns to Legumes grantee? This guide is for you! Step 1: Getting Started'. Below this, there is an image of a 'Your Pollinator Bee-Lieve' sign in a garden.

- Confirm your participation in the program! Follow the link that was emailed to you to accept your grant.
- Before you start your project, remember to take "before" photos of your project area. You will need to take "after" images once your project is completed.
- Attend a grantee training webinar (you will be emailed details) or watch a webinar recording (see below). The Fall 2024 webinar recording will be available after July 17th.
- Review reimbursable project expenses in the [Eligible Expenses Guide](#).
- All grantees will have access to "The Hive!" The Hive is a new community platform for grantees to connect. You will receive an email to access The Hive. Connect with each other in your region's "space," share resources, get answers from coaches, and get program updates from L2L staff.
- Read the guide below! If you'd prefer to download a printable guide, [click here](#).

<https://bluethumb.org/lawns-to-legumes/grantee-guide/>

# Online Resources: Eligible Expenses Guide

## Linked on the Grantee Guide

- Understand what plants and materials are eligible for reimbursement
- Items not on this list are not reimbursable under the Lawns to Legumes program
- **Review this guide before making purchases!**



## Lawns to Legumes Eligible Expenses Guide



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The Lawns to Legumes program has requirements on the types of purchases that can be eligible for reimbursement. Refer to the guide below when purchasing native plants and materials for your pollinator habitat project. If you have any questions about whether a purchase is reimbursable, please email the [L2help](mailto:L2help@bluethumb.org) (L2help@bluethumb.org). Refer to your participant agreements (emailed to you after you filled out the Confirmation Form) for additional grant commitments.

[Click here](#) for a downloadable PDF version of this guide.

[BACK TO GRANTEE GUIDE](#)

### Native Plants and Seeds

To make the biggest impact for pollinators, Minnesota native plants and seeds should be the primary focus of your project. **To be reimbursed, your project must involve the addition of new native plants within the grant period.** Non-native plants, hybrids, and cultivars are not reimbursable.

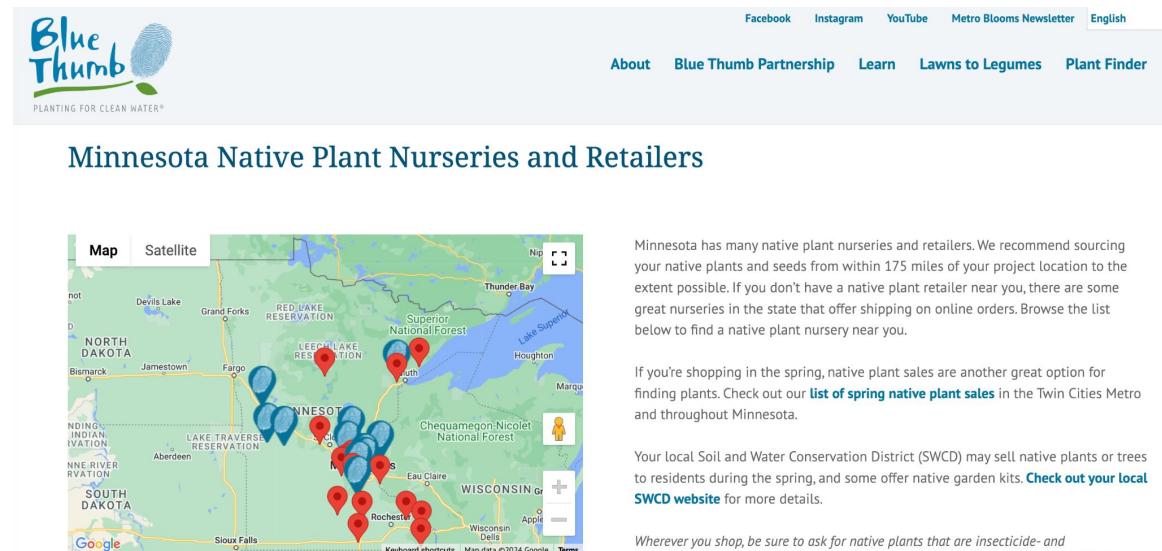
Eligible Minnesota native plants and seeds include:

[bluethumb.org/lawns-to-legumes/eligible-expenses-guide/](http://bluethumb.org/lawns-to-legumes/eligible-expenses-guide/)

# Online Resources: Native Plant Nurseries List

Linked on the Grantee Guide

- Find Minnesota nurseries and retailers that specialize in native plants
- Shopping from these retailers is recommended but not required
- Don't have a nursery near you? Many offer delivery, and delivery fees are reimbursable!



The screenshot shows the Blue Thumb website with the following elements:

- Header:** Includes the Blue Thumb logo, a "PLANTING FOR CLEAN WATER" tagline, and a navigation bar with links to Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Metro Blooms Newsletter, and English.
- Sub-navigation:** Links to About, Blue Thumb Partnership, Learn, Lawns to Legumes, and Plant Finder.
- Section Title:** Minnesota Native Plant Nurseries and Retailers.
- Map:** A Google map of the upper Midwest showing the locations of native plant nurseries and retailers. Minnesota is the central focus, with points marked in both the northern and southern parts of the state. Other states shown include North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, and Wisconsin. Major cities like Bismarck, Devils Lake, Jamestown, Fargo, Grand Forks, Red Lake, Superior, Duluth, Marquette, Houghton, Marquette, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, Eau Claire, and Rochester are labeled.
- Text:** A paragraph explaining that Minnesota has many native plant nurseries and retailers, and recommends sourcing from within 175 miles of the project location if possible. It also suggests shopping in the spring for native plant sales.
- Additional Information:** A section about local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) selling native plants or trees, and a note about avoiding insecticide- and neonicotinoid-free plants.
- Footer:** Includes keyboard shortcuts, map data copyright, and terms links.

Minnesota has many native plant nurseries and retailers. We recommend sourcing your native plants and seeds from within 175 miles of your project location to the extent possible. If you don't have a native plant retailer near you, there are some great nurseries in the state that offer shipping on online orders. Browse the list below to find a native plant nursery near you.

If you're shopping in the spring, native plant sales are another great option for finding plants. Check out our [list of spring native plant sales](#) in the Twin Cities Metro and throughout Minnesota.

Your local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) may sell native plants or trees to residents during the spring, and some offer native garden kits. [Check out your local SWCD website](#) for more details.

Wherever you shop, be sure to ask for native plants that are insecticide- and neonicotinoid-free. Plants raised with these chemicals can be harmful to bees. [Use these tips](#) for avoiding cultivars, nativars, and hybrids, which are not reimbursable.

# The Hive: Community Forum for Grantees

Connect with fellow grantees!

Share resources, get answers from coaches, and get program updates from Lawns to Legumes staff.

Search

- Home
- Following
- Members (170)
- Events
- SPACES ▾
- + L2L Announcements
- Gardening Questions
- Connect Hub
- Marketplace
- + CREATE SPACE

The HIVE  
Where L2L grantees can BEE together!

THE L2L HIVE: Spring 2025 Grantees

The Hive is a community platform for Spring 2025 Lawns to Legumes grantees. Connect, share resources, get answers from coaches, and get program updates from L2L staff.

What's on your mind?

UPCOMING EVENTS

L2L Kick-Off Webinar

February 10 at 6:00 PM CST

L2L Q+A Session

February 17 at 6:00 PM CST

CREATE EVENT + SEE ALL

# Optional Project Webinars

## Pollinator Plantings Webinar

- Tuesday, February 24, 6-7:30 pm
- Metro Blooms Design+Build landscape designers Jennifer Ehlert and Jennifer Moeller will cover pocket plantings, tree plantings, and pollinator meadows.



## Pollinator Lawns Webinar

- Tuesday, March 3, 6-7:30 pm
- James Wolfin from Twin City Seed will talk through the steps of converting your turfgrass lawn into a flowering bee lawn.

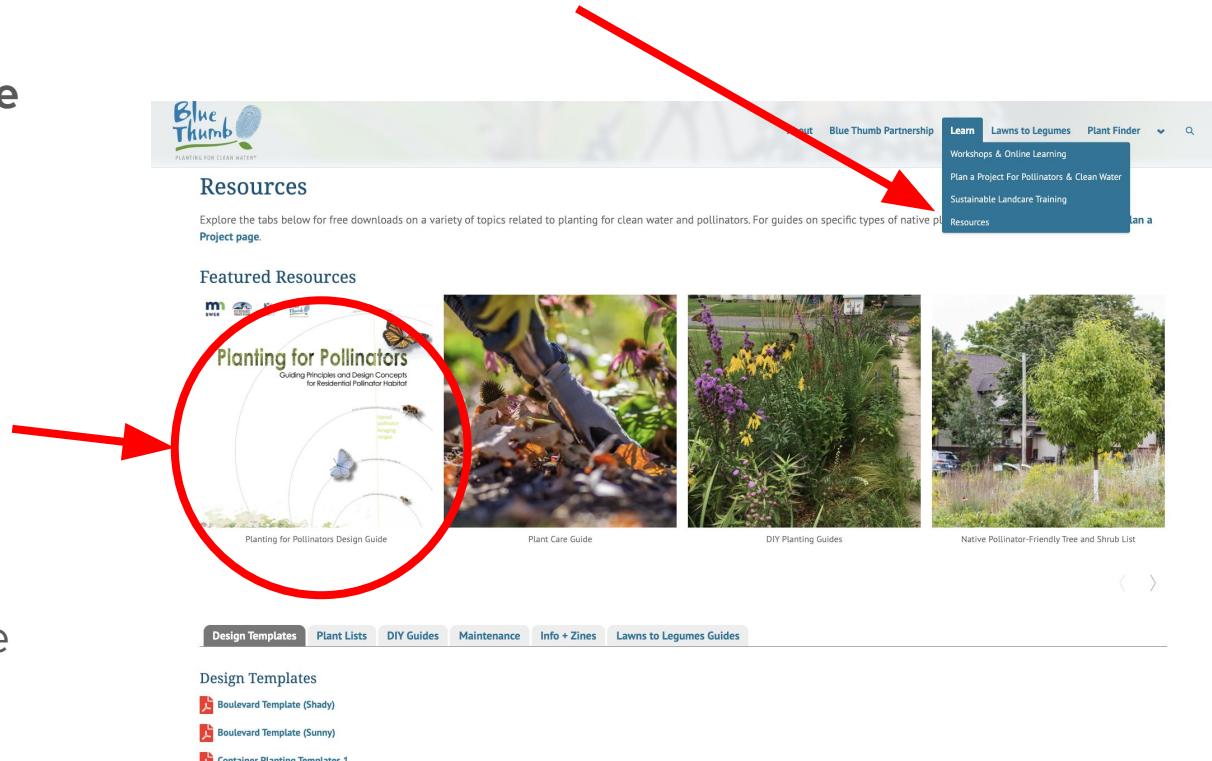


*Both webinars will be recorded and shared via email.*

# Online Resources: Planting Guides + Plant Lists

## Blue Thumb Resources Page

- Plant Lists
- Design Templates
- Downloadable Guides
- Download the Planting for Pollinators Design Guide!
  - VERY thorough project guide made for L2L grantees



The screenshot shows the 'Resources' section of the Blue Thumb website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with tabs for 'Learn', 'Lawns to Legumes', 'Plant Finder', and a search bar. Below the navigation, there's a sidebar with links to 'Workshops & Online Learning', 'Plan a Project For Pollinators & Clean Water', 'Sustainable Landcare Training', and 'Resources'. The main content area is titled 'Resources' and features a sub-section 'Featured Resources'. One resource, 'Planting for Pollinators', is highlighted with a large red circle and a red arrow pointing to it. The page also includes images of a pollinator garden, a person planting, and a native pollinator-friendly tree and shrub list. At the bottom, there are tabs for 'Design Templates', 'Plant Lists', 'DIY Guides', 'Maintenance', 'Info + Zines', and 'Lawns to Legumes Guides'. A sidebar on the left lists 'Design Templates' including 'Boulevard Template (Shady)', 'Boulevard Template (Sunny)', and 'Container Planting Templates 1'.

# Online Resources: Plan a Project Pages

Step-by-step guidance from planning and design to installation and maintenance for:

- Pocket Plantings
- Turf Alternatives
- Pollinator Meadows
- Container Plantings
- Native Trees and Shrubs
- Shoreline Stabilization
- Rain Gardens



## Plan a Project For Pollinators & Clean Water

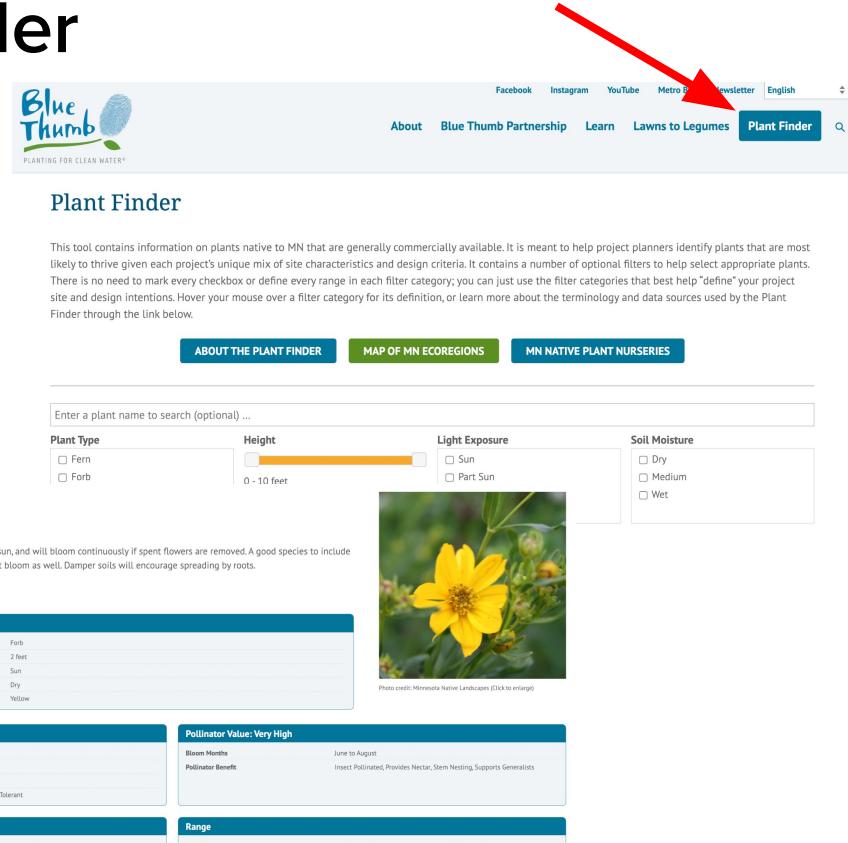
What type of pollinator habitat is the best fit for you and your yard? Explore the project types below to see what best suits your goals and space.

We recommend selecting a project type that meets your needs for your yard while supporting as many pollinator species as possible. But, don't bite off more than you can chew! It's better to have a smaller, successful project than a bigger project that you're unable to finish or maintain. Click on the project types below to learn more about the steps involved in each:



# Online Resources: Plant Finder

- A search tool that helps you find Minnesota native plants best suited to your project type and site conditions.
- Contains over 300 native plants typically available in Minnesota native plant nurseries



The screenshot shows the Blue Thumb Plant Finder website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links to Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Metro P, Newsletter, English, About, Blue Thumb Partnership, Learn, Lawns to Legumes, and a blue 'Plant Finder' button. A red arrow points to the 'Plant Finder' button. The main page features the Blue Thumb logo and the text 'PLANTING FOR CLEAN WATER'. Below this is a section titled 'Plant Finder' with a descriptive paragraph about the tool's purpose. There are three buttons: 'ABOUT THE PLANT FINDER', 'MAP OF MN ECOREGIONS', and 'MN NATIVE PLANT NURSERIES'. The search interface includes a search bar with placeholder text 'Enter a plant name to search (optional) ...', filter categories for 'Plant Type' (checkboxes for Fern and Forb), 'Height' (a slider from 0 to 10 feet), 'Light Exposure' (checkboxes for Sun and Part Sun), and 'Soil Moisture' (checkboxes for Dry, Medium, and Wet). To the right, there is a photograph of a yellow flower, identified as Prairie Coreopsis (*Coreopsis palmata*). Below the photo is the text 'Photo credit: Minnesota Native Landscapes (Click to enlarge)'. The page also includes sections for 'General Information', 'Tolerances', 'Project Planning', 'Pollinator Value: Very High', 'Range', and footer links for 'About', 'Blue Thumb Partnership', 'Learn', 'Lawns to Legumes', 'Facebook', 'Instagram', 'YouTube', 'Newsletter', and 'English'.

# Online Learning Series

Sign up for the free Resilient Yards Online Learning Series for in-depth, video-based courses covering rain gardens, turf alternatives, seed saving, and shoreline plantings.



Facebook Instagram YouTube Metro Blooms Newsletter English

About Blue Thumb Partnership Learn Lawns to Legumes Plant Finder

## Workshops & Online Learning

Beautify your landscape while planting for clean water and pollinator habitat.

Resilient Yards workshops give participants the skills to create their own rain gardens, native plantings, pollinator habitat, and more. Use our free online learning series, register for a live virtual workshop, or do both!

Register for the FREE Resilient Yards online learning series



Fill out the form below to gain immediate access to our Resilient Yards Online Learning Series, FREE to all Minnesota residents. The series contains four courses: **Resilient Yards, Turf Alternatives**, and our new **Seed Saving and Resilient Shorelines** courses. If you've already signed up for the Online Learning Series, the new Seed Saving and Resilient Shorelines will automatically appear when you log in to your account.

All courses contain video lessons written and delivered by experts in the field and numerous do-it-yourself resources that will guide you through each step of your own planting project.

First Name (Required)

Last Name (Required)

Address (Required)

Street Address

City

State

Register for a virtual consultation with a landscape expert



If you find yourself wanting to take the next step after completing these courses, we recommend that you sign-up for one of our live workshops, which you can learn more about below. All of our live workshops include 1-on-1 Q&A time with a professional landscape designer. All workshop registrants are automatically enrolled in the Resilient Yard Online Learning Series as well.

*Our live workshops are complete for the spring season. Check back in the fall for more workshop offerings!*

Show events matching:

July 2024

Thursday July 25

5:30 pm

Rain Garden Maintenance Workshop: St. Louis Park

Willow Park, 2500 Rhode Island Ave S, St Louis Park, Minnesota, 55426, United States

# Coaching

## Coaching Interest Survey

- In mid-February, we will share an optional coach request form in Submittable. Please fill it out if you would like to be matched with a volunteer coach.
- **We have a limited number of coaches, so encourage grantees who are first-time gardeners or don't have much experience gardening with perennial plants to request a coach.**

## Coaching Expectations

- You will have the opportunity to request a coach and our team will do our best to get you matched.
- You may be connecting with your coach via phone or email, so **be sure to check your spam folder!**
- Our coaches are volunteers, most are former L2L participants. Coaches usually spend a couple hours with grantees to help guide you through planning a project.



# Lawns to Legumes Grant Basics



your yard  
**CAN BEE**  
the **CHANGE**

#Lawns2Legumes

## Steps to a successful grant project:

- Confirm participation in program
- Plan your project
- Install your project
- Resources to help
- Submit your reimbursement request

# Submitting a Reimbursement Request

Submit your reimbursement request **after** your project is fully installed.

You can be reimbursed up to \$400 for eligible expenses.

The reimbursement request form will be open for spring grantees in **May** — you'll be **notified by email with a link to the form in Submittable**.



# 4 things you need for your reimbursement request:

- Itemized receipts
- Before and after photos
- Approximate size of your project (square feet or acres)
- Number of hours spent on your project and total spending amount on your project



# Eligible Expenses

**IMPORTANT:** Look at the Eligible Expenses Guide before making project purchases!

- Native plants, trees and shrubs or bee lawn seed
- Wood mulch
- Edging and herbivore protection, up to \$100
- Delivery fees
- Contractor installation or DIY equipment rental
- For container gardens ONLY: Soil, planters or raised bed materials (up to \$100).



[Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [YouTube](#) [Metro Blooms Newsletter](#) [English](#)

[About](#) [Blue Thumb Partnership](#) [Learn](#) [Lawns to Legumes](#) [Plant Finder](#)

## Lawns to Legumes Eligible Expenses Guide



your yard  
CAN BEE  
the CHANGE  
#Lawns2Legumes

The Lawns to Legumes program has requirements on the types of purchases that can be eligible for reimbursement. Refer to the guide below when purchasing native plants and materials for your pollinator habitat project. If you have any questions about whether a purchase is reimbursable, please email the [L2 Helpline](mailto:L2Help@bluethumb.org) ([L2Help@bluethumb.org](mailto:L2Help@bluethumb.org)). Refer to your participant agreements (emailed to you after you filled out the Confirmation Form) for additional grant commitments.

[Click here](#) for a downloadable PDF version of this guide.

[BACK TO GRANTEE GUIDE](#)

## Native Plants and Seeds

To make the biggest impact for pollinators, Minnesota native plants and seeds should be the primary focus of your project. **To be reimbursed, your project must involve the addition of new native plants within the grant period.** Non-native plants, hybrids, and cultivars are not reimbursable.

Eligible Minnesota native plants and seeds include:

[bluethumb.org/lawns-to-legumes/eligible-expenses-guide/](http://bluethumb.org/lawns-to-legumes/eligible-expenses-guide/)

# Eligible Expenses

To find out whether a plant is native to Minnesota, use these tools:

- Minnesota Wildflowers database ([minnesotawildflowers.info](http://minnesotawildflowers.info))
- USDA PLANTS Database ([plants.usda.gov/home](http://plants.usda.gov/home))
- Blue Thumb Plant Finder ([bluethumb.org/plants](http://bluethumb.org/plants))

The image displays three screenshots of plant databases:

- Minnesota Wildflowers:** A field guide to the flora of Minnesota. It features a search bar, a map of Minnesota, and sections for "What's Blooming", "Plants by Name", "Flowers by Color", "Trees", "Shrubs", and "Vines".
- USDA PLANTS:** United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service. It includes a search bar, a "Find a plant..." input field, and a "PLANTS Database" section with a "Plant List" and "About" links.
- Blue Thumb Plant Finder:** A tool for identifying native plants. It features a search bar, a "Plant Finder" section with a description, and filter options for "Plant Type", "Height", "Light Exposure", and "Soil Moisture".

# Eligible Expenses: Watch out for cultivars!

- Cultivars, nativars, and hybrids are not reimbursable under Lawns to Legumes, apart from a few exceptions noted in the Eligible Expenses Guide.
- See our **Native Plants vs. Cultivars handout** on the Grantee Guide for tips on telling them apart.
- Shop from a nursery knowledgeable in native plants, and ask staff for help.
- When in doubt, email the L2L Helpline ([l2lhelp@bluethumb.org](mailto:l2lhelp@bluethumb.org))

**Native plants vs cultivars/hybrids**

**Identifying cultivars**

- Cultivars usually have single quotes around their name
- Hybrids have an "X" in their name
- Check the plant tag! Look for whimsical names
- Shop at a native plant nursery instead of a chain store

**Examples of cultivars/hybrids**

- Gaillardia 'Spintop Orange Halo'
- Spintop Orange Halo Blanket Flower
- Gaillardia X grandiflora

 PLANTING FOR CLEAN WATER™

 **Native**  
Butterfly Weed  
(*Asclepias tuberosa*)

 **Cultivar**  
'Cinderella'  
Butterfly Flower  
cultivar of Swamp Milkweed  
(*Asclepias incarnata*)

A large red 'X' is placed over the cultivar tag, and a green checkmark is placed over the native tag.

# Receipts

- Lawns to Legumes can only reimburse purchases made on or after the day you were awarded your grant (January 13, 2026).
- Make sure that your receipt or invoice photo is readable and shows key details (**date, retailer name, item names, and total**) so that staff can review your request.
- If your receipt includes purchases that are not part of your L2L project, **circle or highlight** the purchases you are requesting reimbursement for.





# Before and After Photos

## Before photos

- 1-4 simple shots from far enough away to establish some context
- Make a note of where you took your photo from

## After photos

- Take from the same general location and vantage point as your “before” pictures so they are easy to compare
- Your project might not be “beautiful” yet, we just need to see the components of your project you are asking to be reimbursed (plants, seeded area or sprouting seeds, other eligible materials).



# Track your Spending + Time

## Spending

- Track the total expenses spent on your project, including any expenses beyond the amount you request reimbursement for. (This will help us demonstrate the many outcomes of the Lawns to Legumes program!)

## Time

- Grantees are expected to spend at least 2 hours of time on their projects. This includes time spent watching the L2L Kick-Off Webinar and planning. You will need to share the total number of hours you spent on your project.



**Average  
time spent  
on projects:  
15+ hours**

# Other Lawns to Legumes Commitments

The following actions are **strongly encouraged but not required** for reimbursement:

- Native plants are sourced from within ~200 miles of your location
- Verify that your plants are free from systemic pesticides
- Pesticide and herbicide are not applied on the project site (this harms pollinators)
- Following through with project maintenance (weeding and watering)



# Lawns to Legumes Grant Basics



your yard  
**CAN BEE**  
the **CHANGE**

#Lawns2Legumes

Steps to a successful grant project:

- Confirm participation in program
- Plan your project
- Install your project
- Resources to help
- Submit your reimbursement request



Overview of project timeline + final reminders

# Program Timeline

- Tuesday, February 17, 6-7:00 pm: Optional **Q+A Session** via Zoom
- Tuesday, February 24, 6-7:30 pm: Optional **Pollinator Plantings Project webinar**
- Tuesday, March 3, 6-7:30 pm: Optional **Pollinator Lawns Project webinar**



# Program Timeline

- Coach interest survey in mid-February
- July 15, 2026: **Project Deadline**,  
reimbursement request must be submitted  
with all supporting documents by this time
  - Following reimbursement submissions, we'll  
mail you a L2L yard sign!



# Program Timeline

A suggested project timeline and one-page checklist can be found on the Grantee Guide!



## Example Lawns to Legumes Project Timeline (Spring Grant)

Jan + Feb	March	April	May	June	July
Accept your grant award via the Confirmation Form (linked in your award email)	Choose your project type	When snow melts and the ground thaws, start any site prep (sod removal)	Once soil temps reach 50° (when dandelions bloom), you can start planting!	Project installation and planning continues	Finish your project by July 15 or request an extension
Review grant info and watch the optional Kick-Off, Q+A, and project webinars	Plan your project (location, plant selection, pre-order plants, etc.)	Continue project planning and purchases/pre-orders	Purchase plants and materials, keep receipts	Care for your installed project by watering regularly until the ground freezes in fall (1 inch a week when no rain)	Submit a reimbursement request form by July 15
Request a coach (watch your email for the request form)	If you have a coach, start discussing ideas with them		Reimbursement request form opens May 1 (you will be emailed a link)		After filling out the form, staff review your project. Reimbursement checks take 4-12 weeks to process after project approval.

# Lawns to Legumes Q+A Session

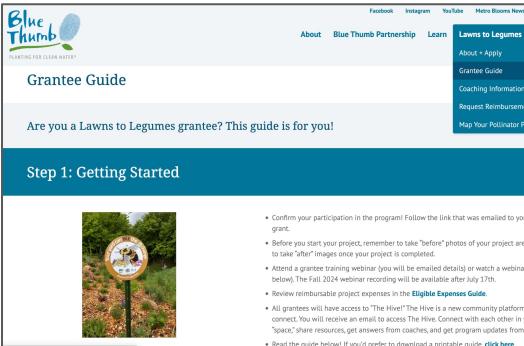
Tuesday, February 17, 6-7 pm, Zoom

- Submit your questions in this webinar Q+A or email them to the L2L Helpline: [L2Lhelp@bluethumb.org](mailto:L2Lhelp@bluethumb.org)
- Check the FAQ at the bottom of the Grantee Guide first!
- The session will be recorded



# When in doubt...

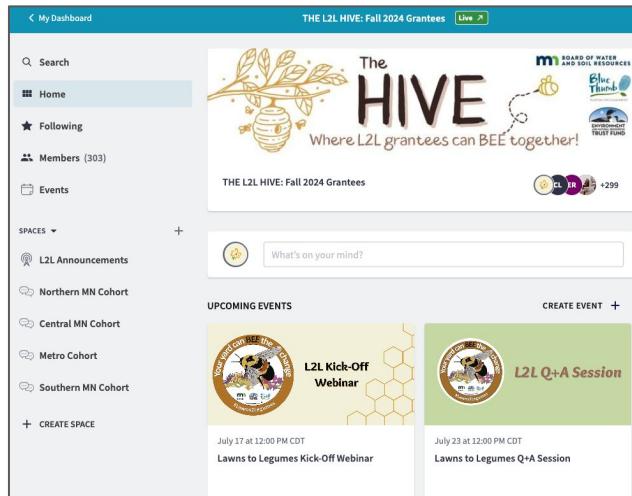
Go to these three places for help!



Are you a Lawns to Legumes grantee? This guide is for you!

**Step 1: Getting Started**

- Confirm your participation in the program! Follow the link that was emailed to you!
- Before you start your project, remember to take "before" photos of your project area to take "after" images once your project is completed.
- Attend a grantee training webinar (video will be emailed details or watch a webinar below). The Fall 2024 webinar recording will be available after July 17th.
- Review reimbursable project expenses in the [Eligible Expenses Guide](#).
- All grantees will have access to "The Hive". The Hive is a new community platform to connect. You will receive an email to access The Hive. Connect with each other in your "space," share resources, get answers from coaches, and get program updates from L2L.
- Read the [guide](#) below if you'd prefer to download a printable version [click here](#).



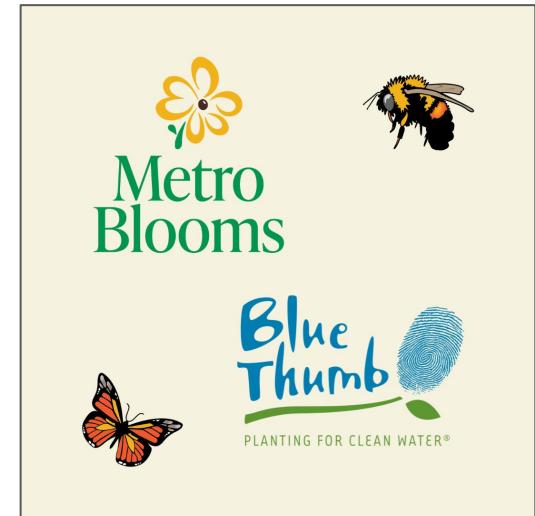
1 - Grantee Guide



2 - The Hive



3 - Email the L2L Helpline  
(l2lhelp@bluethumb.org)





# Thank You!

