

Stewardship Calendar for Biodiversity

GENERAL PRINCIPALS

This calendar presents optimal times to carry out landscaping tasks, but many can be done at any time (or not at all).

When choosing plants, consider natives already thriving on your property and in your neighborhood.

Create centralized, open, well-defined spaces with dense plantings to define the edges and create rooms & corridors

Include "Cues to Care" like signs, edging, or mown paths.

TIME OF YEAR	NURTURE BIODIVERSITY	PROPAGATION + PLANTING	INVASIVES	MAINTENANCE
All year	Severely limit the amount of pesticides and fertilizer used	Gather seeds as they ripen (mostly in the autumn)	Inventory the invasives in your area	Minimize watering to establish deeper roots and save water
	Aim for at least 80% of plant mass to be native plants	You can plant anytime the soil is not frozen or water-logged	Remove pioneer invasives. Replace with natives	Planting in autumn reduces the need for watering dramatically
First frost	Make or add to a brush pile habitat (anytime)	Mulch a section of lawn for a new bed next spring	First to last frost - dig out identifiable invasives	Prune most deciduous trees and shrubs
Deep Winter	Plan for diversity and an abundance of native plants	Winter sow seeds that need cold stratification	Cut windows on invasive vines growing into trees - easiest to do in winter	Prune native vines for shape
	Plan for habitat connectivity	Order seeds or attend a seed swap	Make an invasives removal plan	Shake snow off evergreen shrubs
Early spring	"Chop and drop" last year's perennial growth, leaving some standing for bees	Divide well-established perennials (after blooming)	Dig out lesser celandine and pull or cut garlic mustard before seeds set	Prune evergreens and spring flowering shrubs after flowering done
Late spring - early summer	Let some areas grow tall, perhaps mowing paths through them for access and appreciation	Propagate by layering	Remove invasives' seed heads and dispose of them properly before they spread	Deadhead to encourage more flowers, leave some seed heads for food, propagation, and beauty
High Summer	Provide clean water for wildlife (all year but especially in summer)	Put cuttings into pots or directly into the ground	Cut & paint invasives that are difficult to remove mechanically (Anytime between full leaf out to early winter)	Water trees and new plantings during extended periods of no or little rain
	If you require a lawn, use organic practices	Sow native seed in bare soil areas	Begin stiltgrass management	Share your native gardens with neighbors.
Autumn	"Leave the leaves" and plant stalks to provide habitat & natural fertilizer	Divide well-established perennials (after blooming)	"All flourishing is mutual." <i>— Robin Wall-Kimmerer</i>	

SPRING



SUMMER



AUTUMN



WINTER



Mertensia virginica in early spring; *Rudbeckia fulgida* and *Euphorbia corollata* in summer; autumn color along the Goldmine Trail; snow on *Pycnanthemum incanum* seed heads. Photos by Pru Foster.