Native Plants of Oklahoma
Garfield, Kay & Noble Counties
OHCE Leader Lesson
January 2013
Why Grow Native Plants?

- Promote Biodiversity
- Reduce the use of water
- Reduce the use of pesticides
- Enjoy a low maintenance garden
Xeriscaping

- Xeriscaping uses slow-growing, drought tolerant plants to conserve water and reduce yard trimmings. Landscaping and gardening in ways that reduce or eliminate the need for supplemental irrigation.
Xeriscaping

Plants suitable for a xeriscape range widely across the State of Oklahoma with the list of plants for the eastern part of the state being longer than that for the western areas. However, attractive, tough plants that thrive in dry climates are available for all areas of the state.
Xeriscaping

- The range of plants suitable for xeriscaping in Oklahoma is so broad that it’s easier to give examples of plants that don’t typically thrive as xeriscape plants in this state. Azaleas, fescue lawns, bluegrass lawns, most maples (except for the eastern part of the state), and beeches are generalized examples of plants not well suited for Xeriscapes in our state.
Seven Principles to Xeriscaping

1. Planning and Design
2. Soil Improvement
3. Create Limited Turf Area
4. Use Appropriate Plants
5. Mulch Cover
6. Irrigate
7. Maintain Your Landscape
Native High Capacity Trees

- Native Oaks support over 500 species of caterpillars
- Willows support over 450 species
- Wild Cherries and plums support over 450 species
- Birch support over 400 species
- Poplars, including cottonwood support over 350 species
If You Want This In your Garden

Zebra Swallowtail
Then You Need to Have This

- Paw Paw trees are the exclusive host plant to the Zebra Swallowtail caterpillar

Paw Paw (Asimina triloba)
And This

- You not only need a host plant for the larvae, you need a food source for the adult

Butterfly Weed  (Asciepias tuberosa)
If You Want This in your Garden

Spicebush Swallowtail
Then You Need to Have These

Sassafras (Sassafras albidum)  Spicebush (Lindera benzoin)
And This

Pale Purple Coneflower (Echinacea pallida)
If You Want This in Your Yard

Eastern Bluebird
Then You Should Have This

- Bluebirds eat insects in the Spring and Summer.
- In winter, they survive by eating berries of various plants, including sumac.

Shining Sumac (Rhus copallinum)
One of Our Favorite Natives

- Sassafras
  - Host plant for the spice bush swallow-tail caterpillar
  - Produces berries eaten by numerous species of birds and wildlife
  - Excellent fall color
  - Hard to get started
One of Our Favorite Natives

- **Paw Paw**
  - Exclusive host to Zebra Swallowtail caterpillar
  - Produces fruit that attracts raccoons, foxes, opossums and bears.
One of Our Favorite Natives

- Coneflowers
  - Nectar plant for numerous butterflies
  - Seeds eaten by American Gold Finches
  - Nice variety of colors, new cultivars introduced every year
  - Drought tolerant
One of Our Favorite Natives

- **Possum haw**
  - Beautiful red berries in fall and winter
  - Berries eaten by robins, mocking birds and cedar waxwings in the spring

Possum Haw (Ilex Decidua)
One of Our Favorite Natives

- Black Cherry
  - Supports large number of caterpillars
  - Berries eaten by numerous species of birds
  - Berries are edible by humans
  - Beautiful wood
  - Leaves and bark poisonous to animals

Black Cherry (Prunus serotina)
One of Our Favorite Natives

- Blazing Star (Liatris)
  - Nectar plant for numerous butterflies
  - Beautiful blooms, provide color late in the season
  - Drought resistant

Dense Blazing Star (Liatris spicata)
One of Our Favorite Natives

- Rusty Black Haw
  - White blooms in Spring
  - Black berries eaten by numerous species of birds in fall
  - Brilliant red, maroon foliage in fall
  - Drought resistant
One of Our Favorite Natives

- **Red Honeysuckle**
  - Beautiful red flowers all summer long
  - Attracts Ruby Throated Hummingbirds
  - Drought resistant

Red Honeysuckle (Lonicera sempervirens)
One of Our Favorite Natives

- Blanket Flower
  - Beautiful blooms
  - Attracts butterflies
  - Many different colors
  - Drought resistant
  - Oklahoma’s state wildflower

Blanket Flower (Gaillardia aristata)
One of Our Favorite Natives

- Butterfly Weed
  - Nectar source for many butterflies
  - Comes in many colors

Butterfly Weed (Asciepias tuberosa)
One of Our Favorite Natives

Wine cup

- very pretty
- Deer browse
- Very drought tolerant
- Can be used in many settings
- Can take over an area

Wine Cup (Callirhoe Involucrata)
Additional Resources

Publications that lists native and non-native plants which thrive in Oklahoma is located at:


http://www.okplanttrees.org/nativeplants.pdf
Sources of Information

- Internet – just Google a plant name – many great internet sites for information
- OSU County Extension Offices
- “Keep Oklahoma Beautiful”
- Oklahoma Proven