LAWN TO MEADOW

Why?
- Require less water, fertilizer & pesticides
- Increase soil’s capacity to store water
- Help prevent erosion
- Reduce air pollution
- Provide shelter and food for wildlife
- Provide habitat for pollinators
- Promote biodiversity and stewardship

Keys to Success
- Preparing the area
- Eliminate all/most of the grass
- Rough up soil for good seed contact
- Select seed for light and soil conditions
- Do frost seeding in late Fall
- Manage after planting

PREP TECHNIQUES

Option 1
Mow the grass short and cover with dark plastic, cardboard, or newspaper - put weights on. In Fall, till shallow, less than two inches, rake out vegetation, repeat until fairly clean.

Option 2
Keep the grass mowed short, almost scalped, from Spring/Summer until Fall. In Fall, till shallow, less than two inches, rake out vegetation, repeat until fairly clean.

Option 3
Keep the grass mowed short, almost scalped, from Spring/Summer until Fall. In Fall, immediately before frost seeding, use a lawn aerator to cut plugs.

Option 4
In Fall, immediately before frost seeding, use sod cutter to strip away sod, then rough up the soil with a spade or shovel.

If for any reason you thickly cover an area of lawn with soil, plant that area!

SEED MIXES & PLANTS

SELECT FOR SOIL CONDITIONS
- Dry, mesic (good drainage/moisture) or wet
- Sun or shade

DECIDE IF YOU WANT FLOWERS, GRASSES OR BOTH
- Flower-only mixes look less “weedy”
- Good for suburban areas where “tidiness” is an issue
- Include annuals in seed mix - more color the first year
- Some perennials take several years to establish
- Milkweed can take several years - consider separate bed
- First summer, augment with small plugs or plants

SEEDING
- Mix seed with vermiculite or sand
- Scatter by hand or with a seed spreader
- Stay low if windy
- Can cover lightly with leaf mulch when seeded (optional)

MANAGEMENT

WEED OUT AGGRESSIVE PLANTS
- Honeysuckle, Mulberry, Hemlock, Clover, Mare’s/Horse Tail, Dandelions & Grasses

LEAVE
- Common Blue Violet - host plant for fritillary butterflies
- Queen Anne’s lace

MOWING
- Every 3-4 years mow very low in late winter/early spring - helps with thick grasses/thatch.

RESOURCES - PLANTING, SEEDS & PLANTS
- Zacharias Gardens, Chris Zacharias, cell: 937-623-8147, email: zachgardens@gmail.com
- OPN Seed (formerly Ohio Prairie Nursery) https://www.opnseed.com
- Seed Savers Exchange, Inc. https://www.seedsavers.org
- Natives in Harmony https://www.nativesinharmony.com
- Prairie Moon Nursery https://www.prairiemoon.com
- Marianist Environmental Education Center (MEEC), Mount St. John • https://meec.center/native-plants/plant-sale

HELPFUL TERMS

NATIVE • Can occur naturally in a habitat without human introduction.

WILDFLOWERS • Some sources include only uncultivated plants and others include native plants.

MEADOWS • Areas of grass, flowers & hay.

PRAIRIES • Enormous stretches of flat grassland, may have flowers.