



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Native Plant Trust and the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts Partner for Native Plant Garden Design Challenge, Provide Education and Resources for Thousands of Gardeners throughout Massachusetts

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(Framingham, MA) Native Plant Trust, the nation's first plant conservation organization and the only one solely focused on New England's native plants, announces the launch of a two-year collaboration with the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts (GCFM). The initiative anticipates reaching more than 11,000 member gardeners throughout the state, spreading the message of native plants to 147 communities.

The collaboration, called the Native Plant Challenge, sets goals for garden clubs throughout the state to learn about native plants, identify ones appropriate for their locations, and design and implement native plant gardens in their communities. "Native plants provide significant ecological and aesthetic value to our landscapes. The Native Plant Challenge will educate thousands of people on how to encourage healthier environments and ecosystems in Massachusetts," says Courtney Allen, Native Plant Trust's Director of Public Programs.

Under the leadership of GCFM president Bonnie Rosenthal, the Native Plant Challenge supports GCFM's century-long mission to assist member clubs with education and appreciation of horticulture, landscape and floral design, gardening and environmental concerns.

As part of the initiative, Native Plant Trust is making available special resources to GCFM member clubs, including an online course "Designing with Native Plants" and selected plants from Nasami Farm, its nursery in Whately, MA. Participants may also access Native Plant Trust's public resources, including the online Plant Finder, a tool to help gardeners discover plants native to New England that will thrive in specific garden conditions, while meeting practical and aesthetic preferences.

To learn more about Native Plant Trust programs and resources, including Plant Finder, visit www.NativePlantTrust.org.

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ABOUT NATIVE PLANT TRUST

Native Plant Trust is the nation's first plant conservation organization and the only one solely focused on New England's native plants. We save native plants in the wild, grow them for gardens and restorations, and educate others on their value and use. We are based at Garden in the Woods, a renowned native plant botanic garden that attracts visitors from all over the world. From this flagship property in Framingham, Massachusetts, 25 staff and many of our 1,500 trained volunteers work throughout New England each year to monitor and protect rare and endangered plants, collect and preserve seeds to ensure biological diversity, detect and control invasive species, conduct research, and offer a range of educational programs. Native Plant Trust also operates a nursery at Nasami Farm in western Massachusetts and manages six sanctuaries in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont that are open to the public. Native Plant Trust is among the first organizations worldwide to receive Advanced Conservation Practitioner accreditation by London-based Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI), which included an endorsement by an International Advisory Council representing six continents. Please visit www.NativePlantTrust.org.

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