Creek Friendly Yards
Intentional Landscaping in the Plaster Creek Watershed

Plaster Creek Stewards Spring Event
April 30, 2016
David Warners
I don’t live on the creek, so how does this apply to me?
What can I do in my yard to help the creek?
1. Retain the Rain

- Think about your stormwater footprint
- How can you diminish the amount of water leaving your yard when it rains?
- Raingardens, Rain barrels, Porous pavement
Curb-cut Rain Gardens
2. Add Native Shrubs

- Native shrubs = host plants for many butterflies
- Many shrub flowers are great nectar sources
- Berries are nature’s bird feeders
Possible Shrubs

Elderberry (Common or Red)
Viburnums
Dogwoods (Red-stemmed, Silky, Gray, etc.)
Ninebark
Bladdernut
St. John’s wort
Hop-tree
Spicebush
Shrubby Cinquefoil
New Jersey Tea
More Trees Please!

- Trees Evapotranspire lots!
- Trees intercept lots!
- Trees hold and build soil.
Native Spring Ephemeral Wildflowers

- Ephemeral = Here today, gone tomorrow
- Typically bloom before trees leaf out
- ‘Guild’ of perennial forest species, often with bulbs, corms, rhizomes
- Among the oldest inhabitants of a forest
- Most were used by Native Americans for medicine, food, fiber, ceremony, etc.
- Uses, dosages often uncertain
- Can we get some for our yard?
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Wild Leek

Allium tricoccum

- Leaves appear first
- After leaves die, flowers appear
- Known as ‘ramps’ in the south
- Leaves eaten in April
- Bulbs eaten whenever
- [http://www.flagpond.com/festival/ramp/fest.htm](http://www.flagpond.com/festival/ramp/fest.htm)
Jack-in-the-Pulpit

*Arisaema triphyllum*

- Prefers moist, shady woods
- Known as Indian turnip, Adam’s apple, Plant-of-Peace, Wild pepper, Swamp cherries
- Dried peppery root eaten (‘Memory root’)
- Cooked or dried fruit eaten
- Ground root in water used for constipation, whooping cough, asthma
Yellow Trout Lily

_Erythronium americanum_

- Known as Adder’s tongue, Fawn lily, Dogtooth violet, Star-strikers, Amberbell, Bastard daffodil
- White flower = _E. albidum_
- Bulbs resemble dog’s teeth and were eaten raw or cooked
- Leaves and juice had many medicinal uses, one of which was to reduce swelling
There are 8 species of trillium in Michigan.

All trilliums are protected by law.

_Trillium grandiflorum_ grows best in Beech-Maple woods; petals turn pinkish with age.

Root was used to reduce swelling, especially for eye problems.

Root juice was ‘pricked in with needles’ into aching joints.
Spring Beauty

*Claytonia virginica*

- Also known as Grass-flower, Fairy spuds, wild potatoes, Good-morning-spring
- Roots boiled in salt water are ‘palatable and nutritious’
- Powdered roots given to children to stop convulsions
Canada Anemone
Anemone canadensis

- ‘Midewidjeebik’
- Clonal, forms patches
- Many medicinal uses: root eaten to clear throat for singing ceremonies, leaves used to stop bloody noses and bleeding sores, wooly fruits used as good luck charms when playing games
May Apple

*Podophyllum peltatum*

- Also known as Mandrake, Ground lemon, Umbrella plant, Indian apple, Duck’s foot, Raccoon berry
- When fruit is yellow, it is very edible
- Powdered root was used on ulcers and sores
- Root extract ‘podophyllin’ has been used to treat small cell carcinomas
- ‘Root ooze’ used to soak corn before planting to discourage crows and insects.
And will any poet sing
Of a lusher, richer thing
Than a ripe May-apple, rolled
Like a pulpy lump of gold
Under thumb and finger tips,
And poured molten through the lips.

James Whitcomb Riley (1890)
Bloodroot

*Sanguinaria canadensis*

- 7-10 petals, unique leaf shape
- Poppy family (drugs!)
- Many medicinal uses – jaundice, rattlesnake bite, bronchitis, sore throats, faintings and ‘fits’
- Seeds dispersed by ants
- War paint
Again we come to the resurrection of bloodroot from the dark, a hand that reaches up out of the ground, holding a lamp.

--Wendell Berry
Wild Columbine
Aquilegia canadensis

• Also known as Honey-horns, Rock-bells, Red bells, Culverwort
• Chewed seeds smeared on clothes as a ‘bachelor’s perfume’
• Root used to treat ‘stomach troubles’
• Pollinated by Ruby-throated hummingbirds
Virginia Bluebells
Mertensia virginica

- Wild populations only known from 3 Michigan counties (Kent, Ottawa, Schoolcraft), state endangered
- Taken for whooping cough and as an antidote for poisons
- Large showy plant that completely disappears by early June
Wild Geranium

*Geranium maculatum*

- Moist or dry woods, sometimes in the open
- Also called Cranes-bill, Alum root, Crow foot, Raven’s claw, Shameface
- Used to treat diarrhea, ulcers, venereal diseases, sore throats, mouth sores and colic
And Many Others . . .

Wild Ginger
Rue Anemone
False Rue Anemone
Early Meadow Rue
False Solomon’s Seal
Solomon’s seal