



HOW TO SELECT NATIVES FOR YOUR YARD USING THE FLORA OF VIRGINIA APP

USING THE GRAPHIC KEY AND MULTI-LIST FUNCTION

The **Flora of Virginia App** makes it easy to select **native plants** for your yard or garden using its **Graphic Key** feature. By filtering plants based on your location, habitat conditions, and desired plant characteristics, you can create **customized plant lists** for shopping or planning your landscape.

Tip: You can find similar instructions in the App's Reference Library.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO USING THE GRAPHIC KEY

1. Start: From the **home screen**, tap **GRAPHIC KEY**, then **SKIP** to go directly to the plant group

Answer Key Questions

- ✘ Begin by answering these top five questions to refine your search:
- ✘ **Plant Group** – Select the major plant group (e.g., wildflowers, trees, ferns).
- ✘ **Location** – Choose your **county** to filter native species.
- ✘ **Moisture Regime** – Indicate if the site is **dry, moist, or wet**.
- ✘ **Light Regime** – Select **full sun, partial shade, or full shade**.
- ✘ **Native to Virginia?** – Always answer **YES** to focus on native species.

Tip: You can change your answers by tapping an option again to toggle it off or selecting a different one.

2. Refining Your Search

Once you've set the basics, you can **further refine your plant choices** based on physical characteristics:



Flower Color



Blooming Time



Plant Height

(Note: Questions will vary based on plant group—for example, conifers won't have a flower color option.)

3. Viewing and Selecting Plants

- Tap **SHOW** to display a **list of plants** matching your criteria.
- **Scroll through the list** to browse plant options.
- Tap a plant name to **view images, read the description, and see its range map**.



4. Understanding Range Maps



If your county doesn't have a dot, it means there's no verified herbarium specimen yet. However, if a nearby county has it, the plant may be present in your area but undocumented.

5. Evaluating Plant Suitability

- Check the **Habitat and Status** section in the plant's description.
- If a plant has **Federal or Virginia Conservation Ranks**, it is likely rare and probably not available for purchase.
- Consider whether the plant's habitat matches your site conditions (e.g., a wetland or riparian species may not thrive in a dry upland).
- In the species description, read about the **ecological community**, if included, in the section *Examples of Natural Communities where found*.

6. Adding Plants to Favorites or Lists



To save a plant, tap the **star** to add it to your **FAVORITES**.



To create a list, tap the **+** icon to **"Add to List"**, then select an existing list or create a new one.

Repeat this process for different lists (e.g. **plant groups, locations or uses**).

SAVING AND ORGANIZING YOUR PLANT LISTS

Planning Your Plant Purchases

Before creating a shopping list, ask yourself:

1. What do I want to plant, and why?



Attract pollinators like bees and butterflies?



Enhance my landscape with native beauty?



Create a wildlife-friendly habitat?



Add a specific plant to my collection?

2. Where will I plant it?



How much **sunlight** does the site receive?



What are the **moisture conditions**?



What is the **soil type and pH**?

Answering these questions helps ensure **you choose plants that will thrive in your location** rather than just picking what looks appealing at the moment.